



Lifestyle Improvement Program

The New Way to Look at Health

AlphaOne[®] brings you a world first, Lifestyle Improvement Program

Sustainable Health in the Workplace

Traditionally, health has meant the absence of sickness. But today, the term has a broader meaning. To be healthy means to be able to cope with and adapt to the changes going on around us; health refers not only to our physical condition, but also to our state of mental and social well-being .

What is Health Promotion?

Health promotion means to give people the tools to improve their own health - tools in the form of information and health programming. In other words, health promotion helps people take care of themselves and their lifestyle.



Why Your Organisation Should Be in the Health Promotion Business

From management's perspective, having healthy employees is a definite plus. Healthy employees are sick less often and recover from illness faster. They are more efficient, energetic, alert, less prone to accidents and more able to manage stress. Studies in a number of countries, point to the same conclusion: that lifestyle improvement programs lower job accident rates, reduce sick leave absenteeism, employee turnover and improve performance. With the evidence of the positive effects of comprehensive workplace health programming mounting, companies can ill afford not to get involved.

But improvements in employee health need not be equated directly with the bottom line. Employers who care about the people who work for them will want to play a part in improving the quality of their lives - so long as the cost is manageable. From the employee's perspective the benefits of having access to health programming include better eating habits, lower smoking rates, better working conditions, less conflict between management and staff, and an increased sense of self-worth. Most importantly, healthy people feel more in control of their life, and that kind of attitude has positive benefits on and off the job.



The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program

Deciding your organisation and its employees could benefit from a comprehensive Lifestyle Improvement Program is one thing. Setting it up is quite another. The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program provides a proven way forward - a practical, flexible formula for devising effective health policies and for setting up health programming that meets employees' real needs. Using the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program offers a number of advantages over starting from scratch:

- > You benefit from the experience of other worksites. Often, we can suggest approaches that have worked elsewhere or caution against approaches that haven't.
- > The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program offers an approach that is detailed enough to save you from "reinventing the wheel" while at the same time is flexible enough to be shaped to your particular circumstances and requirements.

Principles

To set an overall framework for lifestyle improvement-related programming and policies developed by companies who use the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program, the program rests on the following five principles:

- 1) Meet the needs of all employees, regardless of their current level of health;
- 2) Recognise the needs, preferences and attitudes of different groups of participants;
- 3) Recognise that an individual's "lifestyle" is made up of an independent set of health habits;
- 4) Adapt to the special features of each workplace environment; and
- 5) Support the development of a strong overall health policy in the workplace.

Avenues of Influence

The principles are linked to another very important premise: that creating a healthy working environment requires addressing the three broad avenues of influence on health:

1) Environment:

Factors in the home or work environment that effect employee health, such as air, noise and light conditions, the quality of machinery and equipment, the type of work, responsibilities at work, relations with supervisors and co-workers, and relations with family at home.

2) Personal Resources:

The sense of influence employees feel they have over health and work, how much social support they feel they receive from others and the degree to which they actively participate in improving their own health.

3) Health Practices:

Practices that effect health, including exercise, smoking, drinking, sleeping and eating habits.

To be truly effective, an organisation's Lifestyle Improvement Program must address all three avenues of influence. In other words, the program should go beyond simply offering fitness classes at noon or fruit in the lunch room. It could include literacy or other forms of skills upgrading, workshops for those who want to quit smoking or maintain a healthy weight, stress management workshops, or financial planning. It could include counseling/coaching services or any number of other forms of programming, constrained only by the imagination and the realistic limitations of what is affordable.

It should be a practical, businesslike plan that directs resources towards the identified needs of the employees and the organisation. It should be a plan that takes the guesswork out of putting in place effective lifestyle programming.



How Does the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program Work?

In Stages. Stages you put into play at your own pace, and according to the resources the company can make available at any given time.

The Stages

The seven distinct stages of the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program are:

- 1) Access, Support & Commitment
- 2) Workplace Health Committee
- 3) Lifestyle Improvement Questionnaire
- 4) Workplace Health Profile
- 5) Corporate Health Plan
- 6) Lifestyle Improvement Program
- 7) Evaluation – Review of Progress

STAGE ONE: Access, Support & Commitment



The first phase is to get expert help. The second is to get senior and middle management involved right from the start. Inform them about your plans, introduce the program to them - experience has shown that this type of a thorough orientation is essential to ensuring full participation and support for future programming. So take the time to ensure that

management at all levels, union representatives, employees and coordinators of existing programs are fully informed.

STAGE TWO: Workplace Health Committee

A committee made up of management, employee representatives and union representatives is established to oversee the implementation of the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program and coordinate the health promotion initiatives.

STAGE THREE: Lifestyle Improvement Questionnaire



At the core of the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program is an employee Lifestyle Improvement Questionnaire (LIQ). It provides the worksite committee with invaluable information upon which to base a future course. The questionnaire's questions deal with the whole spectrum of health-related attitudes and practices.

In particular, the LIQ assesses employees' beliefs and attitudes, medical history, modifiable lifestyle risk factors, readiness for change, quality of life, pain profile, job strain, and their special health interests.

The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program makes provision for the LIQ to be entirely confidential, the data is managed off site and analyzed in comprehensive or standard form. This approach puts employees at ease because they know their responses will be kept confidential.

Ensuring confidentiality goes a long way towards ensuring a good response rate. And that's important for two reasons: it means the data derived from the LIQ's are accurate; and it gets employees involved in the process right from the start. Employees then rightfully feel that they had a say in helping the program planners to develop a package of programs that responds to their needs.

The LIQ provides powerful behavioural change strategies in the form of an easy to read individually tailored report including actions, education and steps that are linked to the employee's specific job task and work environment with the aim of reducing their health risks and improve their lifestyle.

For example, an employee may be identified as having untreated symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes. That same employee also operates heavy plant machinery. Not only is that employee provided with evidence based, user friendly information, guidance and support relevant to their "readiness to change", but also provided with an understanding of the potential occupational risks associated with their health status.

STAGE FOUR: Workplace Health Profile

AlphaOne® tabulates LIQ results and provides the worksite committee a Workplace Health Profile in standard or comprehensive format. The standard report provides an overview of the responses given by employees to each survey question. In the comprehensive report, responses to specific questions are linked with responses to other questions.

Take the comprehensive report on Job Strain for example. It compares the level of job strain employees say they feel with how much employees say they drink, smoke, how many children they have, type of work they perform, etc. By identifying the root causes of job strain, by looking at the characteristics of employees who say they are suffering from undue strain or stress, the Workplace Health Profile provides a valuable tool for identifying the unnecessary and unproductive “stressors” at work and at home. The Worksite Committee can then develop programming to limit these sources of strain, leaving in place only those that are a necessary part of work and home life.

STAGE FIVE: Corporate Health Plan

Now with a comprehensive profile of what employees’ needs are, the worksite committee has the tools to draw up an effective long-term strategy for addressing workplace health issues. Going the long-term route provides a realistic framework for tackling large as well as small health-related issues. While some pressing health concerns might be addressed in the first year’s budget, others can be slated for a year or two down the road. Furthermore, the cost of some capital projects (to improve office air quality for example), can be extended over a number of years. The worksite committee recommends priorities to management. Management then relates these priorities to the reality of existing and projected resources.

STAGE SIX: Lifestyle Improvement Program

The Lifestyle Improvement Program translates the Workplace Health Profile into programs, policies and activities.

Over an initial 12 month period employees will be provided with many programs within programs dealing with their own personal lifestyle based risks and individual readiness for change. Employees will learn more about exercise and fitness, nutrition, safe drinking, worry and happiness, pain and injury management strategies, sleep and fatigue, smoking cessation, planning and goal setting.

The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program includes powerful and proven motivation strategies including a comprehensive Incentive Scheme working along side the

program, the Workplace Health Committee decides on what external incentives are provided for participation such as gifts, discount vouchers, time off for participation to name a few examples.

A key feature of the Lifestyle Improvement Program is the interaction between the LIQ and an employees own program. The LIQ is not a stand alone questionnaire. The individual results obtained at the initial LIQ are continually verified and updated throughout the program and that data is used to align the course of the program to the employees’ needs.

For example an employee is metabolically healthy yet under strain or pressure. That strain or pressure is associated with a high level of job strain. This information is used to tailor the Lifestyle Improvement Program towards targeting these high priority areas (work related psychosocial factors) whilst aiming to prevent low risk areas (body composition, activity, diet) shifting to high risk. If the employee’s status improves throughout the program the program will re-align in accordance with the employees’ new health priorities.

STAGE SEVEN: Evaluation – Review of Progress

The most important stage of the AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program is the ongoing task of ensuring that the health programming set up is effective and remains relevant. To help your organisation with this review, AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program has inbuilt process, impact and outcome evaluation tools and guidelines. These tools include monthly participation reports linking to the employee incentive scheme mentioned above, employee satisfaction and perceived support, workplace change and individual attitudes, behaviour, medical and fitness risk change reports.



How Much Will it Cost?

You set the priorities. You decide how fast to move and how much in the way of resources to invest. The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program costs as low as \$3.25* per employee per month. The costs of eventual programming depend entirely on how much your company is willing and able to spend.

Putting it Together

The process of managing human risk is the process of managing people. This means that even the best products and systems will ultimately fail to achieve their full potential if they do not adequately engage the workforce. In occupational health and safety (OHS), the challenge is to engage each worker as a 'safety officer'.

In rehabilitation, the challenge is to engage the injured worker as an active participant in the return-to-work process. The challenge in health promotion is to engage the workforce in the process of changing behavioural, environmental and cultural features at work and home to improve and sustain lifestyle and reduce illness.

Now Conquer the Challenges

The AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program has all the tools, resources and proof to help your organisation overcome the traditional challenges in applying effective health promotion initiatives. Every step of the way you have the information at your finger-tips to make the right decisions in tailoring your own health programming, to be most relevant to your employees. You can feel confident knowing that results are measurable and you will see the benefits it brings your organisation.



How You Can Get Started

Now is the time to contact us so you can commence your own AlphaOne® Lifestyle Improvement Program tailored to your employees real needs. As the evidence illustrates, by implementing effective comprehensive lifestyle improvement programs you can lower job accident rates, reduce sick leave absenteeism, employee turnover and improve performance for as little as \$3.25* per employee per month.

Call AlphaOne® on 1300 668 407 for a demonstration or for more information.

* Pricing current at time of publishing this brochure, March 2009. Subject to change.