

Health in Corporate America for Profit and Productivity

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In a rush to satisfy job requirements, do you think you ate some quick, unhealthy snacks that may have left you lackadaisical? Could it be that you love your job, but may wish that you had a higher income and could work fewer hours?

Or is everything wonderful, but you may not be sure if you have health insurance that would cover the upcoming doctor and physical therapy bills?

The employment statistics suggest that people are turning to self -employment more than they were a decade ago and fewer employers are offering healthcare coverage. According to the U.S. Census Bureau for Health Insurance, 47 million Americans are without health insurance and young adults are the fastest growing uninsured population. It is time to think about preventative health.

Just as on a job an employee is to be prompt, prepared, and productive, when it comes to one's health everyone should be prompt, prepared, and preventative.

Being health preventative and productive with profit is a doable combination in Corporate America and below one can find out.

Rule # 1: Biofeedback Without Barriers.

Any great athlete can explain the monumental wins from biofeedback and mental preparation including Michael Jordan, Greg Louganis, Tiger Woods, and Venus Williams. Sports or business, one must think about what they want to have happen regularly and let the thoughts go from awareness to actions. You have to have a vision before going on a mission. Many times I thought of how I wanted things to be and before I knew it everything happened and it was normally better than what I dreamed. I would have to keep pinching myself!

"Empty pockets never held anyone back. Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that." - Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

Rule # 2: Eat Smart to Think Smart.

Getting rid of soda pop and enriched, bleached white flour products alone, I see 50% increased energy level and productivity with my personal clients and not to forget to mention weight loss! If it is white, don't bite! The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports an almost 5 percent annual growth rate for food eaten at home. People might be pinching pennies for cheaper food, but don't get cheap with your health. Your health is everything. Smart shopping can keep one healthy and save money. During a tough time in '02, I was able to keep my grocery bills under \$70/month and spend no more than \$30/month at restaurants. By making large quantities that can be frozen or refrigerated and buying good proteins to consume, one can save money and stay healthy as I did. My favorite is making a huge bowl of fresh salad and adding fish to it to eat during the week! Certain dishes including chili, lasagna, pasta, and soups are other foods that can be made in large quantities and gobbled throughout the week. Key nutrients that can keep one smart and healthy include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Omega 3 Fatty Acids - imperative for mental and heart health found in salmon, tuna, and nuts
2. B vitamins - maintain mental skills and keep depression at bay also found in salmon and nuts, as well as chicken breast, avocado, banana, broccoli, orange juice, baked potato with skin, spinach, black-eyed peas, garbonzo beans, lentils, pinto beans, and spaghetti
3. Vitamin C - strengthens immune system and can be found in all citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes, and green peppers.
* These vitamins are also known to prevent heart disease, certain cancers, and stroke.

Rule # 3: Fitness for Richness.

Some people might think of fitness and associate it with sweat, long-enduring workouts, pain, perserverance, and muscle aches. On the contrary, obtaining fitness can be about taking just 5-minutes to exert muscles in multiple movements (see upcoming article for details). Fitness at the workplace could be about taking a few deep breaths of deep breathing, taking the stairs, performing a few moves of chair yoga, and walking brisk intervals around the office with a few final stretches.

In any event, studies show exercise has a direct benefit to alertness and keeping stress down on the job. One easy and beneficial "belly-breathing" exercise called Tortoise Breathing is S-L-O-W and known to help with alertness, better concentration, and stronger immunity and it is easy to do on the job!

Just take a minute and try Tortoise Breathing below:

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1. Stand or sit without slouching. Inhale slowly so that your chest, diaphragm, and lower abdomen expand.
 2. Exhale slowly so that your chest, diaphragm, and lower abdomen contract.

3. Finally, begin timing your breathing for one minute: an inhalation and exhalation count together as one breath.

Goal 2 - 4 breaths a minute. Typically people just starting out take 8-12 breaths a minute. Combine biofeedback with this breathing exercise and you will be on your way to better health, profit, and productivity!

* Taking preventative health measures has been a proven success with one of the most stressful jobs of that of a Deputy Sheriff of the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Orlando, Florida.

Corporal Pat Reilly, Wellness Coordinator for the Orange County Sheriff's Office knows how preventative health measures work wonders for employees on and off the job and he starts by saying, " With the inherent risks connected to Law Enforcement, individual health and fitness may be the difference in winning or not winning a confrontation. A regular exercise program is proven to reduce health care expenses, limit work time missed due to illness, aid in recovery time from injury or illness, improves sleeping habits, impacts performance and daily activity, etc. These are some of the obvious benefits of becoming and staying involved with any Wellness program."

Corporal Pat Reilly, Wellness Coordinator, has over 1,000 fitness center users a week in a wellness program and he says, "The most applicable benefit of our preventative health and exercise programs is the overwhelming physical fitness gains observed and documented by employees participating in our Diagnostic Fitness Assessment Testing program also known as "The Program FDS". We have developed a digital, diagnostic testing program which gives a participant immediate readings of Body Composition, Flexibility, Upper Body Strength and Lower Body Strength assessment testing. This 5 minute assessment program keeps our personnel "connected"; mainly because of the "awareness" and "comparison" factors attached to The Program. Employees immediately see health and fitness gains as well as allowing them to learn of negative gains before "slip-ups"; have disappointing effects."

Preventative Health in Corporate America is clearly the proven way to go for TOP profit and productivity!