



Toolkit



NEVADA
Wellness

STEP 3

Assessing Your Worksite



STEP 3: INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Your worksite assessment should contain four main components:

Part 1: An assessment of the current worksite wellness programming, environment and policies.

Part 2: An employee survey and/or other means for employee input to identify interests and the types of programming that might be used.

Part 3: A health risk assessment (HRA).

Part 4: Gathering of other existing data that might be helpful in your decision making.

HOW TO ASSESS THE WORKSITE WELLNESS ENVIRONMENT?



Why do an assessment?

The purpose of completing the assessment is to identify your worksite's strengths and areas in need of improvement. The assessment will lead your committee to recommend actions for changes to make the worksite more supportive of healthy behaviors (i.e. healthy food choices in vending machines, policies to enforce no smoking on worksite grounds or encouraging walking during break times). You may find some of the actions for supporting healthy behaviors are easy to do and others may not be feasible or efficient in your worksite. The assessment results can also be used as a baseline measure for evaluation. The initial assessment can later be compared with a follow-up assessment several months later to note progress.

What do I need?

- An Assessment Workgroup
- The Worksite Assessment Tool (part 1)
- The Employee Survey Tool (part 2)
- Knowledge of and access to other data that might be helpful (part 3)
- Some time
- Someone to collate and summarize the results

Who should do the assessment?

Identify a workgroup (at least 4-5 people) who will be responsible for completing the assessment. This may be a subgroup of your wellness committee. Forming a diverse group from all areas and levels of your organization is important for meaningful assessment and successful planning and implementation. Suggested participants include human resources, employees from various departments, administrators, supervisors and wellness staff.

When should the assessment be done?

Use the assessment as a starting point for your wellness initiative. Once you have completed the assessment, determine which areas the committee will focus on (i.e. healthy eating, physical activity, general health, etc.). Establish a time for the committee to meet and monitor the progress. Also, determine a schedule for annual assessments, so the assessment can serve as a tool for continuous improvement and accountability over time. How to use the annual assessment as part of your program evaluation plan is covered in Step 6.

Where can I get HELP?

You may be able to complete the assessment checklist and employee survey without any help. Both documents are ready to use, but if you would like more detail, or want to tailor the assessment more to your worksite, you can contact the Nevada Wellness at CDPHP@health.nv.gov.

Assessment Checklist

PART 1: WORKSITE WELLNESS ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Complete the Worksite Wellness Assessment Checklist to determine what wellness components you currently have at your worksite. This can be done with the full committee or you may want a few key personnel (such as the Human Resources lead, Wellness Coordinator or Committee Coordinator) to do a preliminary scan based on information they gather and then let the full committee react to their findings.

A complete version of the checklist can be found in Appendix B.

Completion of the checklist provides a reference point of the wellness policies, environmental supports and program activities that are currently in place or in process and it provides an overview of some of the items that should be considered for a comprehensive Wellness Program.

Checklist Components:

- 1 CATEGORIES.** There are seven major categories: General Worksite Components, Health Screening and Disease Prevention and Management, Physical Activity, Nutrition, Mental Health and Stress Management, Tobacco Use, and Emergency Medical Response Plan. Each category has several questions that address what you currently have in place at your worksite.
- 2 CURRENT STATUS.** Initially, list whether you have the component (Yes), are in the process of instituting the component or you are planning for the component (In Process) or don't have the component at all (No). At the end of each category, sub-total the number in each column and then total all of the categories at the end of the checklist to get an overview of where your worksite wellness program currently rates (A sample can be found on the next page). You should also use this baseline measure as a benchmark for later evaluation. By evaluating where your worksite is on each wellness component, you will be able to get a general idea of your status across each category and all 68 items.
- 3 POTENTIAL PRIORITIES.** After you have completed the assessment, the employee interest survey and reviewed available data, you can use the potential priority column to indicate what components you might want to focus on that are either currently in process or don't exist. This can serve as a first screening of possible areas to focus on as you develop your action plan, which is described in Step Five.

Worksite Assessment Checklist (Completed sample)

#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	POTENTIAL PRIORITY
1	Do you have a commitment from key stakeholders such as senior management, human resource managers, safety officers, staff members, etc.?		X		X
2	Does the worksite have a Wellness Committee representative that meets at least quarterly to oversee worksite wellness programs?		X		
3	Does the worksite have a worksite wellness plan in place that addresses the purpose, nature, duration, resources required, participants involved, and expected results of a worksite wellness program?		X		X
4	Does the worksite have a mission statement, clearly defined goals and an action plan to implement the program?			X	
5	Does the worksite have at least part-time dedicated staff time to implement a wellness program?			X	
6	Is there a worksite budget for employee health promotion that includes some funds for programming?	X			
General area totals (# of Yes, In Process and No items)		1	3	2	2

Full Worksite Scorecard (Sample)

TOTALS FOR ALL CATEGORIES	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	POTENTIAL PRIORITY
Infrastructure (6)	2	3	1	2
Program Components (9)	4	1	4	1
Health Screening and Disease Prevention (4)	1	1	2	0
Physical Activity (15)	5	3	7	4
Nutrition (20)	7	2	11	3
Mental Health (6)	2	1	3	1
Tobacco Use (5)	2	1	2	1
Emergency Medical Response Plan (3)	2	0	1	0
Assessment and Evaluation (4)	1	1	2	1
Worksite Total (72)	26	13	33	13

Employee Input

PART 2: HOW TO GET EMPLOYEE INPUT

Why do an employee survey?

You should conduct an employee survey to get a better understanding of your target audience (your company's employees) and get an initial idea of their current health habits and interest areas. The survey can be tailored to your worksite and can be done in paper form or using survey instruments on the internet. Using a computer survey instrument has the added advantage of being able to collect and analyze data automatically. There are software packages available for under \$100 to collect basic information. (There are also free versions of some survey software, but make sure the software has the features you need before you use it). Many free versions have limited access to certain types of questions, little or no analysis capabilities and may only leave the survey "live" for a small number of days before it closes the survey link.)

As was the case with the worksite environmental assessment, the employee survey results can also be used as a baseline measure for later evaluation. The initial survey results can later be compared with a follow-up survey several months later to note progress.

You should also consider engaging employees in focus groups or informal interviews to gather information on their wants and needs. This can be done either before or after the survey, or if you don't have the resources to survey employees, you could use this method to gather information in place of the survey.

Whatever method you use to gather information, make it as easy as possible for employees to complete and submit the information so you get a high return rate. Consider offering an incentive or prize for people who complete the survey.

Listed on the next page are sample results of questions answered as part of a survey and how you might use the information. The full sample survey can be found in Appendix C. You should modify the survey to meet your needs.

Other sample surveys can be found at:

1. Healthy Workforce 2010

Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook for Employers, Large and Small (pages 62-64)

http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/documents/Healthy_Workforce_2010.pdf

2. Wellness Council of America

<http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/index.php?category=11>

3. Michigan Healthy Communities Collaboration

http://www.mihealthtools.org/work/Sample_Employee_Survey.pdf

Employee Habits & Interest Survey (completed sample):

WELLNESS QUESTIONS

1. Current physical activity level.

12% I don't exercise or walk regularly now, and I don't plan to start in the near future.

29% I don't exercise or walk regularly, but I've been thinking about starting.

36% I'm doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes on some days, but fewer than 5 days a week.

11% I've been doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes in a day, on five or more days a week, and have been doing it for the last 1 to 6 months.

12% I've been doing moderate or vigorous physical activities for at least 30 minutes in a day, on five or more days a week, and have been doing it for 7 months or longer.

2. When do you get most of your physical activity each day?

9% Before work

20% During work hours on break and lunch times

66% After work

6% None of the above. I am not physically active or am only active on weekends.

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender
28% Male
72% Female

2. Age
0% <20
6% 20-29
16% 30-39
26% 40-49
45% 50-59
7% 60+

HOW DO MY SURVEY RESULTS COMPARE TO OTHER GROUPS?

Survey return rates will vary depending on a number of factors: ease and time to complete the survey, survey audience, audience interest, etc. Keep in mind that voluntary survey completion tends to attract those that are most interested in the topic, so your survey results may not be representative of all your employees. Using incentives to increase participation in the survey may give you a better idea of the interests and current health habits of your employees. Survey participation rates above 30 percent are good and rates over 50 percent are excellent. Average return rates from worksites participating in a recent pilot project were in the 40 to 50 percent range.

How do your employees compare on certain key health indicators? Average numbers for Nevada adults on key health indicators are:

- 53% of adults participate in 30+ minutes of moderate physical activity five or more days per week, or vigorous physical activity for 20+ minutes three or more days per week
- 17% of adults consume 5 or more fruits and vegetables per day
- 77% of adults are non-smokers

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH THIS DATA? – SOME EXAMPLES.

The activity information from Question #1 shows that 41 percent of employees are not active at all and that an additional 36 percent are not active at least five times per week. This suggests that any physical activity program proposed will have to start out slowly to engage participants at a relatively low level and build their stamina.

The demographic information in question 15 & 16 shows a largely female workforce (72%), and an older workforce with 78% over age 40 and 52% over age 50. This should greatly influence the type and intensity of any physical activity programming you might do that would have mass appeal.

Health Risk Assessment

PART 3: HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENTS

What does it mean to complete an HRA?

Workplace health promotion programs in most settings conventionally ask participants to complete a brief questionnaire that summarizes key health information, which can then generate a statistical estimate of one's overall health risk status at the beginning of program participation. These questionnaires (or surveys) are often referred to as "health risk assessments." Health risk assessments help identify health issues and should provide a feedback mechanism or follow-up plan to help employees to understand the results and what they should do with the information. Biometric Screenings, such as blood pressure readings or blood analysis, may be part of a health risk assessment or may be done separately. In either case, like HRAs, there should be a follow-up plan to make good use of the results.

Most would agree that completion of an HRA alone will not likely result in a significant change in one's overall health risk profile. What most experts recommend is that all HRAs should be followed by specific risk-factor counseling and opportunities to participate in health promotion strategies (like nutrition counseling, organized physical activity, or smoking cessation programs) relevant to the significant modifiable risk factors identified through the completion of an HRA. HRA results, when aggregated in a confidential manner across multiple members of a workplace population, and where HRA results are periodically available from the same respondents, can provide useful and powerful means of tracking the impact of workplace health promotion and wellness programs over time. For this reason, most experts in the field recommend that HRAs be the fundamental starting point in any workplace health promotion effort and that these measures serve as the primary measuring gauge of program impact and effectiveness.

How do you choose an HRA?

- Set the goals and objectives of using the HRA (i.e. identify high-risk individuals and strategies to help them, improve the health of high-risk individuals, monitor health changes over time, evaluate the effectiveness of strategies over time).
- Decide the specific follow-up actions to be taken (i.e. programming).
- Determine whether or not you would like to process your own HRA.
- Create a short list of possible vendors and select a vendor.

What are the different types of HRAs?

- **Self-reported - Individual focused.** Only self-reported lifestyle information is collected. This type of HRA generates a computer printout to an individual and is only as reliable as the information reported.
- **Self-reported and medical data – Individual and aggregate focused.** Self-reported lifestyle information and medical data are collected. This "comprehensive" HRA outputs individual health scores, aggregate data for employers, and educational support materials. It allows individuals to see the cumulative effects of certain lifestyle risk factors. Biometric data included are the following: cholesterol, blood pressure, percent body fat, BMI, blood sugar, resting heart rate, frame size, height and weight, carbon monoxide testing, prostate specific antigen.

How does an HRA work?

HRAs calculate the probability that a person with certain risk factors will acquire various chronic diseases or die in a given time period. This probability is calculated by comparing your lifestyle information, medical data, and health and family history to people with similar demographics.

As an organization, you can decide what factors you want to assess and how often you want to do assessments. Your ultimate goal is to reduce individual risk factors and the number of employees that have multiple risk factors, since "high-risk" employees will generally result in higher healthcare costs. As an example, here are some key health risk factors and the criteria for classifying someone as having that risk factor:

Key Risk Factors

HEALTH RISK MEASURE	HEALTH RISK CRITERIA	YES	NO
Alcohol	More than 14 drinks/week		
Blood Pressure	Systolic >139 or Diastolic >89 mmHg		
Body Weight	BMI ≥ 27.5		
Cholesterol	Greater than 239 mg/dl		
HDL	Less than 35 mg/dl		
Existing Medical Problem	Heart, Cancer, Diabetes, Stroke		
Illness Days	>5 days last year		
Life Satisfaction	Partly or not satisfied		
Perception of Health	Fair or poor		
Physical Activity	Less than one time/week		
Safety Belt Usage	Using safety belt < 100% of time		
Smoking	Current smoker		
Stress	High		
	Total Number of Yes Answers		

One use of the risk factor analysis would be to see what percent of your employees have multiple risk factors and then try to decrease the number that fall into the medium and high-risk groups over time.

An analysis in one report showed the following distribution:

RISK LEVEL	# OF RISKS	AVERAGE COST/EMPLOYEE	AVERAGE WORK SITE	EMPLOYEE % GOALS
Low Risk	0 to 2 risks	\$2,199	55%*	70%
Medium Risk	3 to 4 risks	\$3,460	28%	
High Risk	5 or more risks	\$5,520	17%	

* Average number with zero risk factors = 14%

Edington: From the UM-HMRC Medical Economics Report

Estimates based on the age-gender distribution of a specific corporate employee population

There are lots of HRA examples and vendors available. One free option that can serve as an individual self-directed assessment and provide anonymous feedback to employees can be found at [Realage.com](https://www.Realage.com).

Other Available Data

PART 4: USING OTHER AVAILABLE DATA

You may be able to access other key data that already exists for your worksite. If your company is large enough to have human resources and/or information technology staff, check with them to see what information they may already have available. Your health insurer is also a good source for utilization data based on health claims and pharmacy purchases. Viewing this data as an aggregate for your company's employees will also help focus your efforts. Examples of existing data might include:

Demographic data about your employees:

- Absentee rate
- Workers Compensation claims
- Health claims data
- Pharmaceutical use data

Identifying this data will serve two purposes:

1. It will help you decide what the big health issues are for your employees and it will allow you to better target those issues.
2. It will serve as "baseline" data to compare against later to see if your programming has made a difference. Building this evaluation measure in at the beginning will help you prove the value of your wellness program.