

Wellness Program Communications

Your 3-step guide to getting the word out—and getting results



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It's simple:

Communication is the #1 way to increase wellness program engagement.

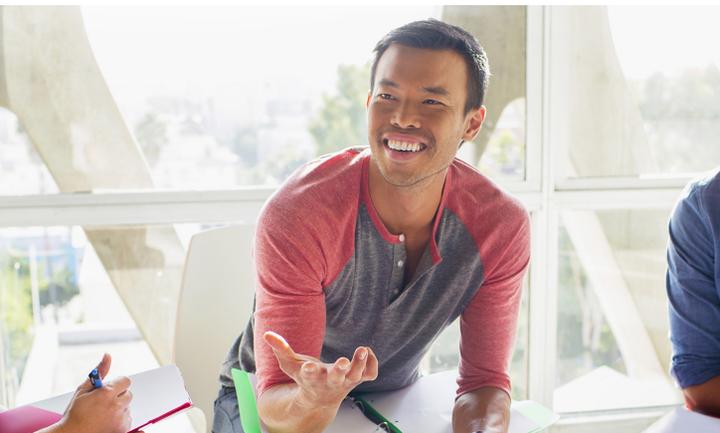
You've got a great wellness program in place. You've got goals you want to achieve. Now you need to engage your audience. But people can't use something if they don't know it exists. You need a communications plan.

Focused communications can stimulate engagement and cultivate the positive, measurable results you need.

Best Practices Tip:

Lack of awareness is the most common reason given for not using company's health and wellness offerings.

Source: 2014 Blue Research® End User Insights Panel



Your 3-Step Guide to Communication Success

Communicating doesn't need to be complicated or burdensome, but it does need to be done right. We've developed this guide to get you on the path to success in just three easy steps:

Step 1: Prepare

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Step 2: Plan

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Step 3: Communicate

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Are you ready? Let's get started.

Step 1: *Prepare*

Every message you send must support your organization's overall business objectives, as well as your specific wellness program goals. Take the first step toward creating your communications plan by outlining the four items on this and the following page.

YOUR OBJECTIVES

Identify the unique objectives for your business, for specific groups, and for your wellness program. Your objectives may include things like cost reduction or improved employee engagement.

YOUR AUDIENCES

Create personas to represent your audiences and build communications that target each one to improve the effectiveness of your messages. Consider things like demographic data and communication preferences in your personas.



Best Practices Tip:

By connecting wellness to corporate goals, you're more likely to gain executive support for your plan and budget.

Step 1 (Cont.): *Prepare*

YOUR COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

Use your personas to define the best ways to reach out to people. An ideal communications program will include a number of components, from posters around the office to emails and more. Also consider taking advantage of your company's internal communications infrastructure such as an intranet or newsletter.

YOUR CURRENT CULTURE OF WELLNESS

Determine the starting point for your communications. For example, you would communicate differently to people who are completely new to a wellness program than you would to those who have been actively involved in such a program for years.

*Understanding
your demographics
helps you zero in on
effective messaging.*



Step 2: Plan

Armed with your pre-planning information, you can now develop your communications plan—with a communications calendar at the heart of it. This calendar ensures that you are not working in a vacuum. Keeping communications balanced throughout the year will maximize the effectiveness of each one. The calendar should align with and help you build your annual wellness strategy.

Sample Communications Calendar



Download our communications calendar to see how you can roll out your communications all year long.

Step 2 (Cont.): Plan

Identify the following items and use them to build the foundation of your plan:

PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Create a list of the different activities and initiatives you will have through the year. These may include health assessments, biometric screenings or wellness challenges.

TIMELINES

Identify start and end dates for each initiative. Not only does this help you create your plan but it can also increase engagement when you tie date-driven incentives to rewards.

TARGETED EVENTS

Connect your initiatives to larger-scale events such as heart health month, summer safety or breast cancer awareness month. This increases interest and gives you added support and value in the promotion of your activities.



Best Practices Tip:

By setting an end date for each activity, you can activate and motivate your audience.

Step 3: *Communicate*

You've laid the groundwork for a great program—now it's time to start communicating! Follow these two simple tips and you'll be on your way:

DEVELOP A CAMPAIGN

Each area that you want to focus on will have its own campaign. For example, you can create a single campaign around health assessments, biometric screenings or health coaching. Each of these campaigns will require its own set of communications.

LOOK BEYOND EMAIL

Email is a great tool but avoid the temptation to rely on it as the sole channel through which you reach your audience. There are many other ways to get your message out. The more methods you utilize, the better your chances of success. Consider using postcards, posters and newsletters, too, for greater visibility.

Step 3 (Cont.): Communicate

TARGET AND MEASURE

Track the results of your campaigns and use that information when planning your future efforts. Learn from your metrics to make adjustments as you go and continually improve the effectiveness of your initiatives and overall wellness program.



Best Practices Tip:

Including testimonials from employees and members is a powerful way to spread the word. Get permission and add these testimonials to your communications.

Brought to You by the Experts at WebMD Health Services

We're proud to support every aspect of our clients' wellness programs, including communications. Our communication services team gets each client started with a communications plan and kickoff campaign. We also have ready-to-go materials for use anytime. Custom creative work and full analysis and reporting is also available for clients seeking more robust support.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact us at whsinfo@webmd.net or visit webmdhealthservices.com.



At WebMD we're here to make the process easier. If you have questions, let us know.



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