



Do you employ staff?

Do you have difficulty understanding your legal and contractual responsibilities as an employer?

Do employment problems keep you awake at night?

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How to Encourage a Healthy Workforce

Why Should We Bother?

At first glance you might wonder why encouraging a healthy workforce should have anything to do with you, the employer, but there are reasons you should consider it. People in this country commonly work sat in a chair behind a desk living what is known as “sedentary lifestyles”. A sedentary lifestyle is one in which a person doesn’t partake in any form of regular exercise and generally fails to reach their recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. People who lead sedentary lifestyles are more likely to suffer from heart disease, type two diabetes, breast or bowel cancer, prolonged sleeping problems, and back pain. When we consider the fact that back pain is the most common cause of absence from work in the UK, affecting an estimated 16 million people each year and costing the country 5.7 billion pounds, it quickly becomes clear that encouraging a healthy workforce can be very beneficial to a company.

What is Workplace Health Promotion?

Workplace Health Promotion can be defined as the combined efforts of employers and employees to improve the health and well-being of people at work. This can be done in a number of ways, the simplest of which would be widespread communication covering the consequences of a sedentary lifestyle, and the benefits of an active one, possibly in the form of posters, pamphlets, and team meetings. Many companies who feel that they want to do more than communicate can introduce healthy schemes such as a Cycle to Work Scheme, where employees can rent discounted bikes, or a Smoking Cessation Scheme, which helps employees to quit smoking. Corporate gym memberships can also be purchased, which can be beneficial to employees as they are usually cheaper than individual memberships, reducing that “I can’t afford the gym” hurdle.

Or, if you want to take a more relaxed approach but still do something active, group activities are a successful way to increase activity. Entering the office into a local Fun Run can be a great way to motivate people to work together and be more active. Workplace activity challenges can also be a good way to make exercise seem more fun, and the employee who performs the most exercise in a month can be rewarded with a small gift. These tend to work because people focus on the competition rather than the exercise, and find themselves more willing to go that extra mile. Exercising as a workforce is often seen to do well because people are more likely to embrace a more active lifestyle if others around them are doing the same, the community feeling can spur people on, and a team mentality stops people from wanting to quit and let their team members down.

Is It Really Worth It?

Workplace Health Promotion can be very beneficial to both employer and employee. If employees are more healthy and active then they are less likely to be ill and absent from work. There has also been evidence that people who are regularly active have better cognitive functions, and are therefore more productive at work. When an employer shows that they value the health of their employees, they are also demonstrating that they care about their employees as people, which is something many employees will appreciate. Employers that are known to be caring and considerate tend to have a more positive employer brand, meaning that more

people want to work for and with them.

How Can We Help

If you have any queries relating to any of the subjects raised within this newsletter then please do not hesitate to contact us at hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk

For clarification of any of the above updates or for advice and guidance on any HR and/or Health and Safety Concerns contact us by emailing hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk or by calling 02476 664092.

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