

# SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

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## CREATE A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

The average American employee spends roughly 2,080 hours at work each year, adding up to more than 89,000 hours in a lifetime. So it's no wonder that the daily grind can take its toll on employees' health and well-being. But even in this age of rising health care costs, there are simple ways your business can help keep employees healthy and drive health care expenses down.

### Charting the Course

The first order of business is to decide what you want to happen to the business when you step down. Ask yourself:

**Keep employees safe from injury.** Make sure employees receive regular safety training and information, and check that workstations are ergonomically correct.

**Provide healthy lifestyle tips.** Give employees a print or electronic newsletter with helpful fitness, nutrition, smoking cessation and stress reduction tips, or post health information in the break room for all employees to read on a regular basis. Encourage exercise. Support a lunchtime walking group, provide a bike storage area and contract with health plans that offer discounts on gym memberships.

**Offer nutrition information.** Sponsor a lunchtime seminar with a local dietitian who can discuss healthy eating with employees. Have water and nutritious snacks available in the break room and at company events.

**Promote stress relief.** Provide spaces for employees to take breaks from work and relax. Encourage them to move about if they sit or stand all day. As a special treat, invite a massage therapist to your workplace for employees to get a discount on chair massages.

**Involve employees.** Make your ongoing commitment to workplace wellness official by letting employees offer their suggestions for healthy events and services.

Studies show happy, healthy employees are more productive, have fewer sick days, keep company morale up, improve employee recruitment and can make your business more appealing to customers.\* For more information about implementing a workplace wellness program, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and enter "Healthier Worksite Initiative" in the search box.

\* Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.