



HEALTHIER VENDING:

For Businesses

Why Should Employers Promote Healthier Vending?

Full-time employees spend about 1/3 of their day at work, often eating at least one meal and snacking at work during that time. In 2008, medical costs associated with obesity were estimated at \$147 billion; the medical costs paid by third-party payors for people who are obese were \$1,429 higher than those of normal weight⁸.

Full-time workers in the U.S. who are overweight or obese and have other chronic health conditions miss an estimated 450 million additional days of work each year compared with healthy workers -- resulting in an estimated cost of more than \$153 billion in lost productivity annually. Individuals who reported being overweight or obese with one to two chronic conditions missed an average of 1.08 days per month due to poor health. Individuals who reported that they were overweight or obese with three or more chronic conditions recorded over 3 unhealthy days per month, averaging 42 days per year⁹.

A healthy workforce benefits a business in many ways. Some of these benefits include¹⁰:

- Reductions in overall health care costs and claims
- Increases productivity
- Reduces absenteeism
- Improves employee morale and recruitment/retention
- Improves customer experiences
- Improves the overall health of the community
- Allows the community to be competitive for recruiting both employers and workforce

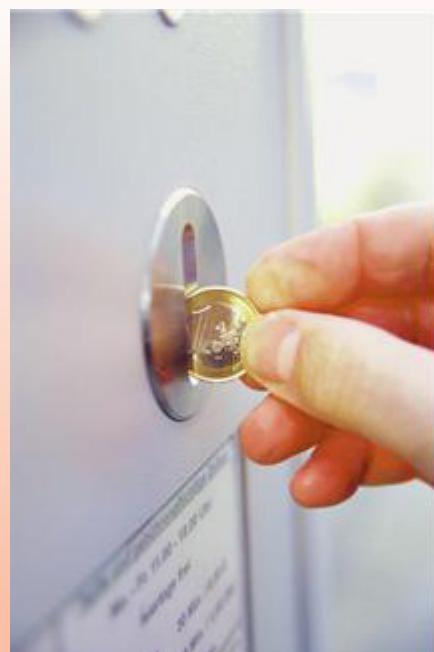
A healthy workforce also maximizes cost-savings. For every \$1 spent by the employer on wellness programs, the average return on investment is \$3.48. On average, \$2.73 less is spent on absenteeism costs, there is a 26% average reduction in health care costs, and \$3.27 less is spent on medical costs¹⁰.

Not only do the majority of work sites have vending machines, but recent studies have shown that full-time employees spend at least half their waking hours at work and consume a substantial proportion of daily calories in and around work settings. Food choices and eating behaviors are influenced by the physical availability of food in the workplace and surrounding neighborhood, workplace policies, organizational support for health programs, and social norms among coworkers.

Sources of food in the workplace environment include company cafeterias, vending machines, company-sponsored meetings and events, office fundraisers, and shared refrigerated or cupboard space. In addition, the neighborhood surrounding a workplace may have grocery stores, convenience stores, snack carts, and restaurants¹¹.

Individuals who are at a healthy weight are less likely to experience:

- Overweight and obesity
- Malnutrition
- Iron-deficiency anemia
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Dyslipidemia (poor lipid profiles)
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Oral disease
- Constipation
- Diverticular disease
- Some cancers
- Complications during pregnancy
- Death at an earlier age



*Mean Unhealthy Days per Month and Estimated Annual Loss as a Result of Absenteeism,
by Health Group Among U.S. Full-Time Workers*

Controlling for age, gender, income, education, race, marital status, and region

Group	Share of full-time U.S. working population	Mean unhealthy days per month	Estimated incremental missed work days for full-time workers*	Estimated annual cost of lost productivity as a result of absenteeism**
Normal weight and no chronic conditions	13.9%	.34	BASELINE	BASELINE
Overweight or obese and no chronic conditions	17.9%	.36	1,505,995	\$513,544,375
Overweight or obese and one to two chronic conditions	30.2%	1.08	94,301,528	\$32,156,821,142
Overweight or obese and three or more chronic conditions	17.8%	3.51	238,457,008	\$81,313,839,758
Normal weight and one to two chronic conditions	14.8%	1.07	45,639,781	\$15,563,165,458
Normal weight and three or more chronic conditions	5.3%	3.48	69,943,339	\$23,850,678,489
TOTAL		449,847,652		\$153,398,049,221

Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index

Jan. 2-Oct. 2, 2011

*Assumes 112,590,754 full-time workers; conversion from unhealthy days to missed work days is 0.312

**\$341 per missed work day is based on (inflation-adjusted) research published in Goetzel, et al. (2003).

The health and productivity cost burden of the "top 10" physical and mental health conditions affecting six large U.S. employers in 1999. The Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 45(1), 5-14.

GALLUP®

These are just a few reasons you need to be concerned with employee health...¹²



- 1. Employee health directly affects productivity.** Obviously, when employees have to take time off of work because they are sick, need to go to the doctor, or need to take time off to recover from hospital visits, productivity will suffer. Each employee has specific jobs to take care of, and when they are unable to be in the office working, these jobs will take longer, deadlines will be missed, and quality will be compromised because of a tendency to rush and finish things. In addition, when managers or other higher-ups within the company have poor health and are gone frequently, those who report to them may have to seek answers to their questions elsewhere, or put projects on hold until their manager gets back to work.
- 2. Employee health influences health insurance costs.** If you provide health insurance for your employees, you no doubt know that the costs of health insurance are rising steadily. One of the things that influences these costs is the health of employees within the organization. Frequent doctor visits or hospitalizations means higher costs for the insurance companies as well, so in turn, everyone is charged more for health insurance. And because the cost of health insurance is the same for individuals within the company, those who are healthy and maintain healthy lifestyles end up paying more for insurance because of the person who are at a higher risk within the organization.
- 3. Employee health affects quality of work.** Employees who are unhealthy or frequently not feeling well are more likely to be distracted or not up to working, even while at work. When machinery or other equipment is involved, this could be dangerous and even result in lawsuits. Employees working on long-term projects who are in the office intermittently may not provide work that is as high quality as someone who is there frequently.
- 4. Employee health can influence turnover rate.** Employees in poor health are more likely to quit (or die) than those who are healthy and have healthy lifestyle habits. As a result, the turnover rate will be higher than it would if your company's employees were healthy. In addition, a high turnover rate is more expensive for the company, as you have to pay to find, train, and hire new employees.