

Learn From the Best: 5 Ways To Create a Corporate Wellness Program That Engages All Employees

By BurnAlong



| OVERVIEW

Nod your head yes if this sounds familiar: You offer some sort of fitness activity as part of your wellness program. Perhaps it's a morning bootcamp or a mid-day yoga class or a walking club. The attendance isn't terrible, but it could be better.

There's a lot of pressure to drive up engagement because despite the so-so attendance rates, your wellness program isn't taking off the way your leadership team hoped (or frankly needs, with an eye to healthcare costs and sick days). A 2016 SVB Digital Health Report found that, ***"Unhealthy workforce impacts productivity and bottom line,"*** finding that **absences cost an average of 15.4% of payroll!**¹

So, you take a step back and look at the numbers and find yourself confiding to a colleague, saying, **"Have you noticed the same people are showing up week after week? There's rarely anyone new."**

"Yeah, what's up with that?" they counter.

We're willing to bet many of your loyal corporate fitness program fan base consists of your company's most active team members: The people who go out of their way to break a sweat, hit their daily steps, and find time to move throughout the day.

Which is amazing and something to be celebrated, but...

The people you're trying to reach – the ones who would really, really, benefit from these programs the most – aren't there.

People living unhealthy, inactive lifestyles are at risk – or already suffering from – chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart disease, pulmonary conditions, stress, depression, insomnia, and obesity, to name a few.

This is not mind-blowing, earth-shattering news. It's a problem we know all too well.

¹ "SVB Digital Health Report," 2016

THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAMS TODAY



Stress (75%), obesity (70%), sedentary lifestyles (61%), and poor nutrition (50%) are major workforce issues driving up healthcare costs and slowing down productivity.²

The burden of illness-related loss of productivity because of absenteeism (absence at work) and presenteeism (reduced performance at work) is a major reason why corporate wellness programs have become a top priority for business leaders.

It's why **85% of U.S. companies employing 1,000 people or more offer some sort of workplace wellness program.**³

Which is a step in the right direction. But, let's call a spade a spade: Corporate wellness programs aren't working like they should.

85%

Of large employers offer a wellness program

60%

Of U.S. employees are aware that their company offers a wellness program

40%

Of those who are aware of the programs say they actually participate in it

Gallup Research

MEANING, ONLY 24% OF ALL EMPLOYEES ARE PARTICIPATING.

²"2015/2016 Staying@Work -- United States Research Findings," Willis Towers Watson, 2016

³"Why Your Workplace Wellness Program Isn't Working," Gallup, 2014

THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAMS TODAY

Hold up: Let's break that down that word *participating* a little further because it's not the full story...

Twenty four percent of employees are participating at some capacity in some sort of wellness-related program. This could be anything from yearly flu shots and biometric screenings to organized fitness classes to nutrition, personal finance, weight loss prevention, and smoking cessation seminars.

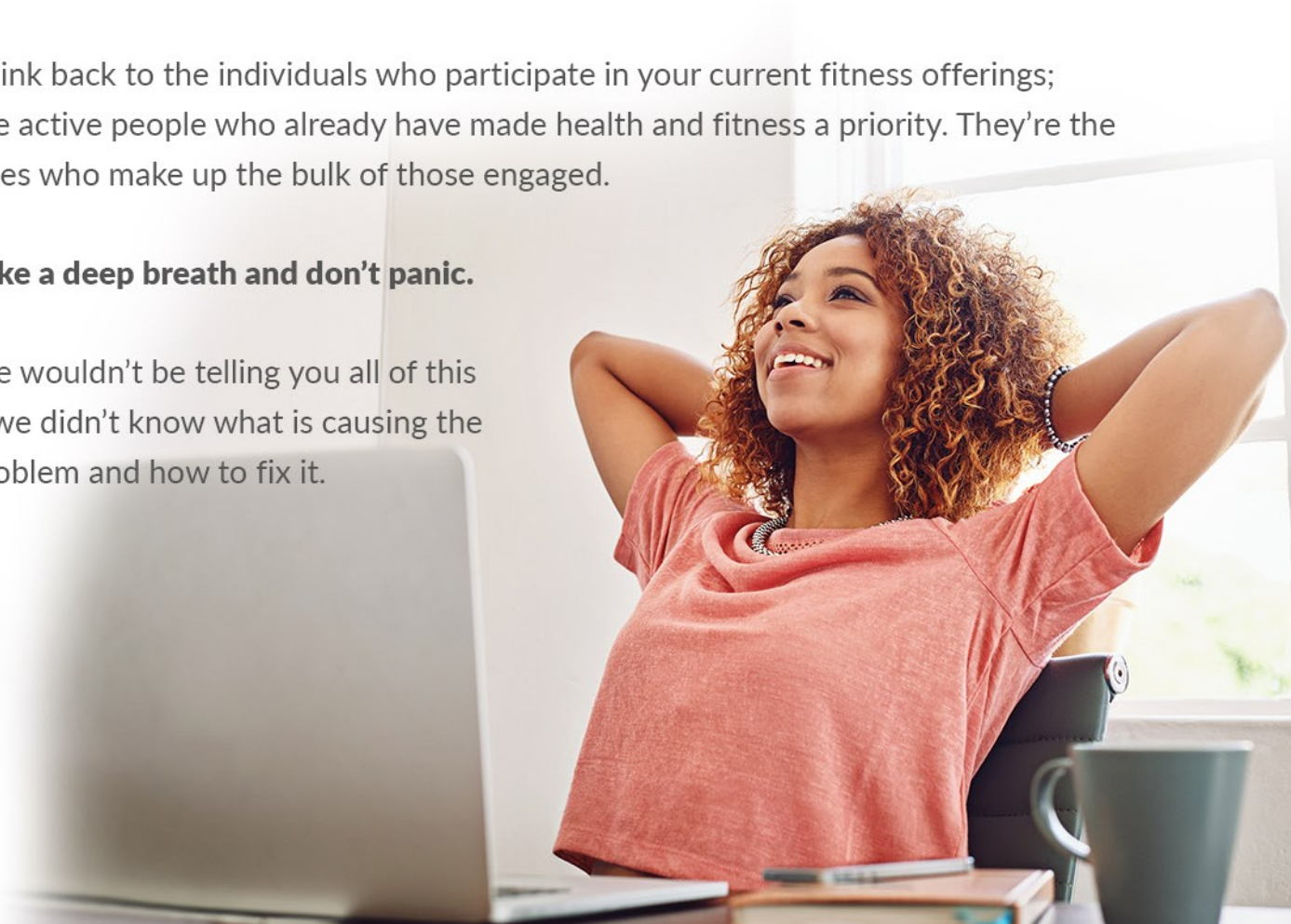
It's not reflective of ongoing participation in fitness and wellness focused health and activities.

And it's not what's going to help lower sick days and healthcare costs.

Think back to the individuals who participate in your current fitness offerings; the active people who already have made health and fitness a priority. They're the ones who make up the bulk of those engaged.

Take a deep breath and don't panic.

We wouldn't be telling you all of this if we didn't know what is causing the problem and how to fix it.



WHY THE PEOPLE YOU WANT TO REACH AREN'T SHOWING UP... AND HOW YOU CAN GET THEM THERE



THE HARD TRUTH ABOUT CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAMS TODAY

Many people aren't showing up because they don't feel comfortable. Exercising in front of colleagues in tight fitting spandex isn't for everyone, especially those just getting started or looking to lose weight.

Others aren't showing up because they have young children at home and they don't want to miss dinner time and the little time they have to spend with them during the work-week. It's hard to find balance.

Some would come more if they weren't on the road so often. Busy travel schedules make finding time to exercise a headache.

Or, maybe they'd show up if the programs offered were actually something they're interested in participating in. Today in fitness and wellness choice is king. Look at the boutiques on every corner of city centers.



There are very legitimate reasons why so many employees are not showing up and engaging with your corporate wellness programs. To fix it, you need to recognize that.

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

1 OFFER VARIETY... AND A LOT OF IT

People want variety – and don't just take our word for it. Dr. Jeff Levin-Scherz and Dr. Steve Nyce write, **“Members as consumers need a wide choice of programs. Offer a variety of choices, as each members needs are different. Some members may want a nutrition or weight-loss program; others value a program aimed at prediabetes or insomnia.”**⁴

Health, wellness, and fitness programming shouldn't be a one-sized-fits-all experience. People's interests and needs vary based on their own personal challenges and goals, which change over time.

Some might want cardio-blasting workouts. Others might want classes they can take with their families. Some might need stretches to combat aches and pains. They might even want all of the above depending on how they feel at any given moment in time.

Personality matters too. Some may want someone who is serious and to the point. Others want to be entertained. Building a connection with an instructor – and others in the room – is so important.

The only way you will know what your people want is if you ask them.

Here's a quick tip to get you started: Survey your entire workforce.

Ask questions about what classes they want to take, what time of the day, what level, and what they want to achieve. That way you can understand the full story of

⁴“Health Outcomes: Employers Should Re-Evaluate Their Wellness and Incentive Programs,” Willis Towers Watson, 2017

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

of their health and wellness goals. And don't just survey them once. Make this an ongoing, active dialogue.

We put together this simple – and very effective – survey our corporate partners use to get their finger on the pulse their workforces needs. Take a look and feel free to use it!

You'll likely be pleasantly surprised by the feedback you receive and what you learn about your team members.

FREE DOWNLOAD (!)

THE ULTIMATE CORPORATE WELLNESS SURVEY

2 MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE 24/7

Real talk: Many people aren't showing up because...

53%

Lack time⁵

53%

Believe they are already healthy⁵

40%

Felt the program wasn't conveniently located⁵

And, participants from a focus group at some of the best-performing corporate wellness programs cited **they chose not to participate in wellness benefits because of wait times and rigid work schedules.**⁶

⁵Findings from the 2013 EBRI/Greenwald & Associates Consumer Engagement in Health Care Survey." Employee Benefit Research Institute, 2013

⁶"Workplace Wellness Programs Study." RAND Corporation, 2013

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

Rather than throw yourself into a scheduling nightmare trying to coordinate group fitness classes based on availability of the masses, why not offer in-person and online options?

By offering the virtual and in-person fitness experience, you'll reach your team members where they are; driving deeper engagement, and, ultimately healthier habits and better lifestyles.

Online wellness and fitness platforms allow individuals to exercise and take classes whenever they want, anywhere in the world. Just think about the possibilities if you give your team 24/7, unlimited access to fitness and wellness classes they can take from their phones, tablets, computers or TVs.

THEY'D BE ABLE TO...



Exercise in the comfort of their own home where they feel confident and empowered



Workout on-the-road from hotel rooms and airports



Take a sleep yoga or insomnia class before bed to get a better night's sleep



Find time to chill out in the middle of the day with a quick guided-meditation



Stretch at their desks when feeling stiff and in need of a quick energy boost

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT



Hit their weight loss goals despite busy schedules



Watch nutrition, wellness, and personal health videos whenever they want



Launch an impromptu workout class in the middle of the day – check out this snap from Ulman Cancer Fund doing just that!⁸



3 GET THE ENTIRE FAMILY INVOLVED

Employee wellbeing isn't confined to the time your employees are on-the-clock. If you want your employees to bring their whole, happiest, healthiest selves to work you need to involve their families.

Ninety four percent of employers want to develop a workplace culture that supports and enables employees in their pursuit of well-being while holding employees accountable for their own health.

⁷"Improving Workforce Health and Productivity: Connecting the elements of workplace culture," Willis Towers Watson, 2016

⁸Source: Ulman Cancer Fund exercising to a BurnAlong Class led by Monte Sanders from MBS Fitness Lab

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

What better way to get employees engaged and hold them accountable than involving their partners, children, and loved ones?

Think about your own personal home life. How much more willing are you to exercise or eat healthier if it's a family-driven activity? Would you be more likely to workout if you could involve your children? If your partner is going for a walk or run, are you more likely to join?

So, pick a wellness solution provider that offers family-oriented classes like children's yoga, workouts for teens, partner exercises, parenting classes, and more.



There's a big added benefit to involving the family: Often a majority of healthcare costs comes not from employees but their dependents.

If you're having trouble finding a provider that offers such an extensive variety of classes, check out BurnAlong. We have more than 1,000 classes covering 30+ categories, with new content added every day. And some of our most popular classes are for children and families.



5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

4 GIVE PEOPLE GUIDANCE, MOTIVATION, AND SUPPORT

Studies show that one of the **biggest drivers of both initiating and (critically) sustaining behavior change is social support – real or virtual.**⁹ It's hard to regularly exercise with others in person. The good news is that virtually makes a big difference too.

This is where bridging the online experience with the in-person experience is a total game changer. And, in order to do this effectively, you need the right technology solutions in place.

There are **three vital elements** to a successful wellness program technology that will drive deeper engagement and better results.

1. Easily connects people to those who motivate them

Maybe individuals are motivated by a specific instructor or class, or perhaps they enjoy exercising with colleagues, friends, and family members that encourage them to keep going. Whatever the case may be, **it's so important that you leverage fitness and wellness technology that connects individuals to the people who motivate them.**

We're big believers in this at BurnAlong.

Our classes are filmed in real gyms and studios, with real people of all ages and levels. We don't believe there are 10 top instructors who can motivate people. We believe there are thousands. Our partners have authentic connections

⁹Patient Engagement Insights Report: What Creates Behavior Change May Not Sustain It," NEJM Catalyst, 2018

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

to our members – whether they are down the street or across the country – because they can connect with them online.

And our private, group sessions make it easy for people to workout with friends, regardless of their physical location. Individuals can easily schedule online workouts with the people who motivate them the most, and join live sessions where they can see and hear each other.

This is the kind of motivation and support that drives far deeper engagement and far less excuses.

2. Offers fitness and wellness programs spanning a wide-variety of goals

People – **especially those just getting started or getting back into exercise** – love the convenience of programs because they take out the guesswork and easily keep them on track.

Plus, programs are a great way to get everyone active and engaged. But don't limit yourself to a single weight loss program.

Think bigger. Offer programs tailored to a wide-variety of needs, such as increasing flexibility, building strength, weight loss, and combating chronic pain.

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

3. Give people the content they want based on their individual behavior.

Static, impersonal, clunky experiences no longer cut it. Consumers expect dynamic, personalized user experiences – especially when they’re browsing for classes online.

Technology that learns from user behavior and suggests classes and content based on user profiles and activity takes engagement to an entirely new level.

Users see the classes they’re most interested in and discover new and different types of workouts, programs, and wellness classes based on their own behavior.

It’s a proven way to drive up engagement hand over foot.

5 MAKE IT PART OF YOUR CULTURE

You can’t talk the talk unless you walk the walk. Leadership buy-in, manager support, internal champions make all the difference in driving up adoption and engagement.

“Evidence from case studies suggest that for programs to be a success, senior managers need to consider wellness an organizational priority to shift the company culture. Buy-in from direct supervisors is crucial to generate excitement and connect employees to available resources.”⁴

This goes way beyond one executive sponsor and a wellness committee.

⁴“Health Outcomes: Employers Should Re-Evaluate Their Wellness and Incentive Programs,” Willis Towers Watson, 2017

5 THINGS YOUR CORPORATE WELLNESS PROGRAM NEEDS TO BE A HUGE HIT

We've spent a lot of time digging into what makes our most active and engaged corporate wellness members successful, and there's one thing in common: **They have internal champions committed to their success.**

CASE STUDY

Champions have helped one of BurnAlong's largest corporate clients **increase their engagement from 4% to 22%** (and climbing) in the **first four months of membership.**

Champions exist within your organization; a few probably come to mind right now. Others may surprise you when you ask for volunteers.

They have great relationships with your peers and understand the office culture. They are active, engaged, and social and have a great way of getting people on-board with new programs and events.

Identify those people and get them involved as soon as possible.

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

Reaching the individuals who would benefit from your corporate wellness programs the most is completely achievable with the right blend of communication, awareness, program offerings, feedback, and champions.

These are just a few tips we've learned along the way that have helped companies drive deeper engagement, participation, and success. And we look forward to sharing more with you!

ABOUT BURNALONG

HOW WE HELP COMPANIES

BurnAlong helps employees globally achieve their health and wellness goals — and employers lower healthcare costs and create happier and healthier workforces.

Our users range from professional athletes to pregnant women to those struggling with diabetes and back pain.

Partnering with BurnAlong makes it **easier than ever for employees to stay healthy and fit**, anytime, anywhere. **We out-perform traditional corporate wellness programming 5X** — there's a reason some of the world's most cutting-edge brands use BurnAlong.

Companies using BurnAlong **range from small businesses to global brands**. Let's talk about how we can help you achieve your goals. **Contact us at Info@BurnAlong.com or 1-855-494-6377 to learn more.**

WHAT COMPANIES AND MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY:



"BurnAlong has been a great addition to our benefits package for our employees. We expect a lot from our employees and we encourage them to take great care of themselves. We want healthy, happy, engaged employees. With BurnAlong, busy employees can work daily exercise into their schedules at times that fit their needs. The selection of classes and the quality of instructors are fantastic."

Elizabeth Jackson, VP of Human Resources — Baltimore Ravens



"About four years ago I was diagnosed with Hyperthyroidism. I had my thyroid gland destroyed by method of radioactive iodine, and I then became hypo and gained 72 lbs. I went from a size 10 all the way to a size 20, and lost every ounce of my self-esteem. My husband continued telling me that I was beautiful but I couldn't see it. After a few weeks of BurnAlong, I've lost 12 pounds and I'm now a size 16. My goal is to lose another 40 in the next few weeks. The amazing choice of instructors, with all the new classes every week, literally keep me on my toes and inspired. My co-workers are commenting how I look better every week! I'm telling them to join BurnAlong too!"

Maria — BurnAlong Corporate Wellness Member