Time for a brand check-up: How corporate wellbeing strategies benefit your brand

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How healthy is your business?

Corporate wellbeing is a phrase that's being thrown around a lot right now.

As organisations from almost every industry discover that attracting and retain the right talent requires more than just an excellent salary, corporate wellbeing programs are quickly emerging as the ultimate employer differentiator.

Investing in a workplace wellbeing program might seem like something that's reserved for bigger, multi-national companies, or forward-thinking tech brands like Google. However, the truth is that corporate wellbeing strategies provide wide-reaching benefits for any organisation (no matter how small).

Not only does wellness help you to hold on to a team of happier, healthier staff members for longer, but it also improves your brand reputation too. While deflated and overworked people deliver low-quality work and poor customer experiences, healthy teams commit to going above and beyond for your company. They can even improve your marketing campaigns with employee advocacy.

On top of that, devotion to corporate health and wellbeing also enhances your reputation by showing that you genuinely care about your people. As customers continue to search for companies that share their values, a wellness project could be the thing that helps you to resonate with your audience.

Today, we're going to get the full scoop on corporate wellbeing, and how it can help get your brand into tip-top shape.

The basics: What is corporate health and wellbeing?

Before you can start exploring possible corporate wellbeing programs for your business, you need to know what these campaigns are all about.

In simple terms, corporate wellbeing is an employer-sponsored program designed to promote long-term health among employees and reduce the amount of money you spend on things like insurance, turnover, and paid vacation days.

No matter how fantastic your business might be, it's worth noting that the workplace can be a very stressful environment for many employees. In fact, a study by a company called "CareerBuilder" found that around a third of employees think their workplace causes high, or extremely high levels of stress, with common side effects like fatigue, anxiety, and even weight gain.

When you're trying to build an influential brand, the last thing you want is a team full of people that are overwhelmed by nerves, and unable to interact positively with your target audience. That's one of the reasons why in the last five years, two-thirds of HR managers have developed stronger corporate health and wellbeing programs.

So, why do you need corporate wellbeing?

The simple answer is that when your employees feel great, their performance levels increase too. Ongoing support helps your staff to maintain high levels of productivity in a healthy way. Additionally, fit and lively team members also have more energy to contribute to achieving your business and

brand goals. Other benefits include:

- **Better staff retention:** It's difficult to build a great brand without the help of a supportive team of employees. Workers who feel supported by their employers want to stick around for longer, which means you develop a great community full of devoted employees.
- **Reduced sickness, absence, and presenteeism:** Healthy staff members are less likely to take time off work, leaving you with productivity problems to tackle. At the same time, a corporate wellbeing program also helps you to avoid "presenteeism" – when your staff come to work even though they can't perform to the best standard. Countless people turn up to work each day and just 'get by' until they can go home. Unfortunately, this isn't the kind of thing that has a positive impact on your brand.
- **Reduced costs:** Throughout 2016 and 2017, Britain lost around £14.9 billion caused by work-related injuries, ill-health, and other wellness problems. On top of that, mental health issues cost us about £26 billion in a single year. Yet, spending as little as 80p on a health promotion strategy could save you up to £4 on absenteeism and presenteeism costs.
- **Happier, more satisfied employees:** Staff who feel supported and cared for at work, also want to give more back to the people who hire them. According to one workplace survey, around 80% of today's employees would feel more positive towards their employer if they could get their hands on better corporate wellbeing programs.



How corporate wellbeing can cure brand problems

Healthy employees = a healthy company.

The more you prioritise corporate health and wellbeing, the more benefits you'll see, from motivated and engaged staff members to reduced staff turnover. However, you're probably wondering by now what corporate wellbeing strategies have to do with your brand, and the image you present to the world around you.

Simply put, today's customers want to connect with businesses that 'care'.

There are many ways to show that your company is more than just another soulless corporation. CSR strategies, partnerships with charities, and even emotional marketing all have an impact. However, corporate wellbeing has a direct effect on branding that many companies forget about. Let's

look at just some of the ways that corporate wellbeing programs can give your image the boost it needs.

1. Corporate wellbeing develops your employer brand

Just like corporate health and wellbeing, the term "employer brand" has emerged as a common buzzword in recent years. However, there's more to this concept than just hype.

According to a survey conducted by LinkedIn in 2015, 49% of employees struggle to make job decisions because they're unsure what it will be like to work for a particular company. In an environment where it's becoming just as hard to attract great talent as it is to engage your customers, employer branding shows candidates that you have something valuable to offer.

Employer brands are built just like consumer brands – through consistent and soulful experiences with your team members. Corporate wellbeing programs help you to define your employer brand and demonstrate that you genuinely care about giving your people the support they need. When you implement corporate wellbeing strategies, you energise existing employees by helping them to maintain and improve their health. However, you also simultaneously attract new talent to your door, by reminding them that there's more to you than a consistent salary.



2. Corporate wellbeing encourages employee advocacy

Corporate wellbeing programs don't just make you more attractive to employees; it can make your company more compelling in the eyes of customers too. When your staff members are happy, healthy, and dedicated to your company, they're more likely to go above and beyond to help you achieve your goals. In some cases, this could mean taking part in employee advocacy projects.

With employee advocacy, you give depth to the claims that your company makes, by supporting them with real, authentic messages from your employees. The statistics on employee advocacy speak for themselves. Content shared by your staff gets up to 8 times more engagement than content shared by your brand channels. That's because your customers know that the best way to get a genuine insight into a business, is to look towards your employees.

Corporate wellbeing programs not only inspire your employees

to advocate for your brand, but they also give them something great to talk about when they're looking for ways to provide you with a 'shout out' in their social media posts.

3. Happier teams make for happier customers

Today, the biggest differentiator for any brand is experience. When companies want to build loyalty with their target audience, they can't rely exclusively on the price of their products or the features they can offer. Today's consumers want a consistent experience that they can depend on time and time again. Studies find that 86% of customers who receive great customer experiences are likely to purchase again from the same company.

So, how do you deliver an unforgettable experience? Simple, start with your employees.

Look at it this way, would you be more likely to remember a shopping session with a customer representative who looks miserable and exhausted or one that's happy, engaged and brimming with energy? Corporate wellbeing programs help to give your employees the support they need to be more productive and profitable at work.

4. Corporate wellbeing makes your brand more credible

How your brand operates on the inside should always link to how you want to be perceived on the outside. Great branding is all about building a lasting reputation for your company in the eyes of your target audience. The only way to do this successfully is to be as transparent and authentic as possible with your customers.

If you want your customers to believe that you're a friendly brand that cares about other people, then you need to back

that idea up by showing them that you're willing to put the needs of your employees first. A corporate health and wellbeing strategy shows your audience that you're more than just 'all talk'. It gives depth to your brand identity and provides you with yet another way to stand out in an increasingly competitive marketplace.



Tips for creating corporate wellbeing programs

Corporate wellbeing strategies can be complicated to implement.

After all, one team's idea of the perfect wellness strategy won't be the same as another's. While a technology company offering software solutions to customers over the web can provide their staff remote working opportunities and flexible schedules, the same efforts just aren't possible for a construction company.

Fortunately, there's no ultimate checklist that you need to complete to be classed as a brand with a corporate wellbeing program. As long as you're encouraging healthy habits, your team appreciates your effort, and your brand is growing. As a result, you're on the right track.

Here are a few things you'll need to do to get started.

1. Talk to your staff

It's tough to create perfect corporate wellbeing strategies without the input of your staff. After all, the only way you can find out what your people need most from you is to talk to them. Reaching out to your employees and finding out how you can help them accomplish their best work is a great way to launch a successful wellbeing program. To gain input you can:

- **Bring everyone together for a team meeting and brainstorm ideas:** Make sure everyone feels comfortable sharing their thoughts, no matter how out-of-the-box they are.
- **Send out surveys:** Give people a chance to speak to you anonymously with staff surveys that ask for input from different groups around your organisation. Try to get as many different opinions as possible.
- **Launch a vote:** Check out what some of the competing companies in your space are doing to support corporate health and wellbeing and ask your staff to vote on the ideas they'd like to see in your company.

2. Align corporate wellbeing with brand purpose

For corporate health and wellbeing strategies to be successful, they need to become an essential component of your company culture. The only way to make that happen is to align

your wellbeing programs with the vision and purpose of your brand. Think about what you stand for as a business, and how you can align that idea with supporting the wellness of your employees.

For instance, the insurance brand 'Vitality' believes in helping people to live healthier lives. They support this idea in their corporate wellness program by giving employees access to a tool called 'Vitality Age', a calculator that helps people understand how each lifestyle choice they make affects their health.

Vitality also gives staff access to counselling around the clock, and support from specialist debt counsellors too.



3. Create a plan and measure your results

Proper planning for a corporate wellbeing program involves making sure you know exactly what you're going to do, and how you're going to measure your progress. Think about the kind of well-being programs you're going to use, and how they align

with your brand image. For instance, if you’re a company that’s all about joy and happiness, maybe you could implement 24/7 counselling for employees facing issues with stress and anxiety?

Once you’ve chosen a corporate health and wellbeing strategy that aligns with your the vision for your organisation, decide how you’re going to measure the success of your program. For instance:

- **Use your goals as a benchmark:** Decide what you want to accomplish with your programmes and use those goals to help you measure success as you go.
- **Gain feedback wherever you can:** Ongoing communication is crucial to corporate wellbeing strategies. Make sure you give your employees plenty of ways to share their thoughts with you about your new campaign.
- **Measure productivity levels, sickness, and other KPIs:** Keep an eye on any critical metrics that might link back to your corporate wellbeing strategy. For instance, if sickness and absence levels drop, then you’re probably moving in the right direction.



The best corporate wellbeing strategies: Examples to inspire you

Today, the industry for corporate wellbeing is booming.

As healthcare evolves, with new wearable technologies, digital health apps, and simple strategies for better self-care, companies around the world are always coming up with new and improved ways to differentiate their corporate wellbeing strategies.

Sometimes, the best way to get the inspiration you need for a new initiative is to look at successful examples from brands that came before you. That's why we've put together this quick list of corporate wellbeing providers to act as your muse.

1. Asana

Collaboration software company 'Asana' claims that their brand mission is to help humanity thrive by making sure teams can

work together effortlessly. Asana builds their brand credibility by not just delivering exceptional technology and collaboration features, but also giving their team access to the support they need to work better in groups too.

Asana created ‘nap rooms’ for their employees that allow them to take some time out, recharge, and de-stress. Additionally, Asana also offers their employees unlimited paid time off, so that every staff member can enjoy the perfect work/life balance. Other great benefits offered by Asana include an in-house culinary team responsible for whipping up delicious meals, and free executive coaching sessions.



2. Google

Google has long had a powerful reputation as one of the best employers in the world – and there’s a good reason for that. Google’s brand is built around the idea that the company is the best in the world, offering people what they need when they need it most. It only makes sense that the corporate wellbeing programs that Google has in place are just as

innovative and forward-thinking as the company itself.

The Google campus offers everything from on-site healthcare services, to physical therapy sessions, massage services, fitness classes, and more. Since Google is also branded as a global knowledge base, the company also offers plenty of ways for employees to learn too. You can take part in guitar lessons, coding classes, and even cooking sessions when you have some free time. All the while, the campus micro-kitchens and cafes are stocked full of nutritious meals for employees to enjoy each day.



3. Microsoft

Another company with a brand image based on innovation, Microsoft has one of the best corporate wellbeing strategies in the world. They even have their own wellbeing week, where they explore new ideas designed to help people in the workforce be more productive, happier, and successful at work.

Microsoft offers free education and resources for team members

who want to learn how to manage their weight, get fitter, or quit smoking. Additionally, the company also funds gym memberships and other fitness purchases for their staff, to prove that they're genuinely interested in helping their people become the best versions of themselves. As a business that's all about creativity and data, Microsoft also hosts a 'know your numbers' screening event each year, which provides staff members with useful information about their cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and more.

For those who need help beyond assistance with physical health, Microsoft also has an assistance program that offers family and personal counselling, and stress management sessions.



4. Rodale

Finally, Rodale is the publishing company responsible for well-known ezines like Men's Health and Women's Health. As you might imagine, a brand with a vision for a healthier world should also have a strong commitment to their corporate health

and wellbeing strategies. Fortunately, Rodale puts the needs of their staff first with an ‘Energy Centre’, an on-site gym where you can find free fitness classes, and a meditation room.

As well as giving employees plenty of opportunities to boost their health and fitness with training sessions and athletic opportunities in the office, Rodale also offers an organic cafeteria where people can sit down together for a delicious meal of locally-sourced, healthy food.



Time for a brand check-up?

Corporate wellbeing is more than just another trend in the business world.

Used correctly, your wellbeing strategy can deliver a host of benefits all the way from reduced expenses to happier, more productive employees.

However, since your employees are an important component of

what makes your brand so successful, your corporate wellbeing programs can also directly influence the growth and sustainability of your brand. The more you invest in the people that convey your brand message and values to the world, the more engaging and credible your company becomes.

Corporate wellbeing allows you to unlock all the advantages of everything from employee advocacy, to a stronger employer brand.

Is it time you give your organisation the check-up it needs?

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