

A Guide to Promoting Physical Activity in the Workplace: Walking Club

Are you looking for an easy way to be active during the workday? Participating in a workplace walking club is a great way to accomplish this goal. This guide is designed to walk you through the steps to create a successful walking club at your workplace.

Steps to Establishing a Workplace Walking Club

Step 1: Organize Your Walking Club

Before starting a walking club, it is important to identify 3 to 5 people to help you start your club. These individuals will assist in promoting the walking club and encouraging employee participation. You may use members of your organization's workplace wellness committee or advisory group.

Step 2: Plan the Details of Your Walking Club

- Set a specific, standard time when most employees are able to attend (e.g., a time when no regularly scheduled meetings occur, such as during morning, lunch, or afternoon break periods).
- Ideally, participants should walk 2 to 3 days a week (e.g., Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday).

Step 3: Select a Walking Route

- Choose a route that starts and finishes in the same place– ideally the lobby or sidewalk in front of your workplace. This will allow people of different fitness levels to walk various distances and find their way back.
- Utilize online mapping websites to identify and/or measure the distance of a route chosen by you and/or the walking club.

Step 4: Promote Your Walking Club

Once the logistics are determined, begin recruitment efforts. Select a kickoff date and start promoting the walking club to your fellow employees. Invite someone from HR to assist in these efforts.

- Develop promotional materials such as posters and flyers, and advertise in workplace newsletters.
 - Announce date, time, and location of the walking club kickoff event.
 - List a contact person, their phone number and email address.
 - Mention the benefits of walking.
- Work with your HR/payroll department to get a free announcement sent out with monthly or bi-monthly pay checks.
- Make announcements through email distribution lists or by sending a voicemail to all employees.

Step 5: Stage a Kickoff Event

At the kickoff event, provide a brief introduction to the walking club.

- Use a sign-in sheet to get contact information for all interested participants (e.g., name, telephone number, email).
- Discuss and agree on the logistical arrangements of the group (i.e., when/where the walks will occur and how long each walk will last).
- Encourage all interested participants to walk as often as possible, with the understanding that if they miss a walk, they can rejoin the group at any time. Also, walkers should consult with their doctors before participating in the walking club.

Step 6: Keep Your Walking Club Going

Walking clubs are very dynamic. A group can start with 40 walkers and dwindle at any given time to 10 consistent walkers. At workplaces where this is the case, the activity of walking can still be promoted to employees. The resulting increase in employees' physical activity levels will benefit the individual employees and the workplace as a whole, just as a formal walking club would.

Step 7: Evaluate the Success of Your Walking Club

In order to sustain management support, it is a good idea to periodically share evaluation data confirming the benefits of the walking club to members and the organization.

- Keep records of attendance at each walking club event. Attendance counts will help determine if there has been an overall increase or decrease in walkers.
- Use satisfaction surveys to give members a chance to report positive feedback about the walking club, as well as feedback on what can be done to improve the club.
- Get testimonials! Testimonials can be shared with upper management or all staff through an email distribution list or in the workplace newsletter to highlight the benefits of walking and your walking club.

For more information about [Establishing Workplace Walking Clubs](http://NashVitality.org) visit NashVitality.org

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