

# RPAW Active Workplace News

---

## Need Ideas To Help Get Your Workplace Moving?

Outside of chocolates and lottery tickets, here are some ways to make your initiative more enticing:

1. Include “hooks”. Use humour, variety, and excitement to recruit participants and keep them involved. One company found a “Battle of Sexes” theme drew participation even from the hard-to-reach employees. If the participants are enjoying themselves, your program is a success.
2. Promote your incentive program. If employees do not know what wellness opportunities are available, how can they participate? Keep your programs highly visible, but avoid the hard sell. A catchy name also helps stir interest. STRIP (Spare Tire Removal in Progress) is one program title that attracts many participants, due in part to its entertaining name.
3. Keep the program short and convenient. Develop programs that employees can participate in during breaks in the workday. Brief games and contests are effective options for employees who hesitate joining more traditional programs because of the time involved. If the timeframe is manageable (4 weeks is realistic) employees are more likely to begin and to complete the program.
4. Keep it simple. Design an incentive program that requires a minimum of reading and paperwork for participants. If possible, allow employees to communicate electronically. Some of the most successful basic incentive programs include creativity and enthusiasm. For example, team – challenge “trips” are universally popular (as teams accumulate points for exercise and healthy activities, they travel across locations on a map).
5. Plan a half-time strategy. Provide encouragement, extra incentives, and reminders at the midway point. Employees often start off strong, but lose momentum halfway. This strategy can make a significant difference in the number of people who complete the program.
6. Offer opportunities for individual and universal success. Allow employees to choose their own goals and level of involvement. Remember, every participant can and should be a winner. Include early, easy-to-obtain incentives to reinforce continued involvement. Rewarding effort, regular participation, and lifestyle change is more crucial than giving prizes for the biggest, highest, or most.

- taken from “What’s the Incentive? *in On Site Fitness* by Judy Creiner.



## **Workplace Health Links**

[Great Place to Work Institute of Canada](#) – find out what makes a great place to work and see who's on Canada's Best Workplaces List.

[Work Smart Live Smart](#) – practical solutions to assist employees and decrease cost of stress in the workplace. Lots of great health and wellness articles you can include in your company newsletter!

[Healthy U @ Work](#) – educates employers on why they should encourage and support their employees in making healthy choices and how to get started.

## **YMCA and Wellness in the Workplace – Edmonton**



What they do to promote wellness

- Discourage meetings or organizational business over the lunch hour so that staff can exercise
- Provide financial support to staff to join health clubs and tie the support to their attendance
- Paid wellness days for certain levels of physical activity – 1 paid day off every 3 months for working out/exercising 3x/week.
- Encourage wellness breaks during meetings
- Provide educational materials on nutrition and exercise



## **Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2002 Physical Activity Monitor Results for the Yukon**

### **Beliefs about the benefits of lifestyle behaviours**

- 72% strongly agreed that a healthy lifestyle contributes to long-term health benefits.

### **Perceived control over choice to be active**

- 44% of adults stated that they have complete control over their decision to be active, 28% said they had a lot of control and another 18% reported moderate control.

### **Barriers to physical activity**

- 69% cite lack of time, 59% lack of energy, 30% lack of skill and 55% lack of interest or motivation.
- 38% report feeling ill at ease/uncomfortable, 47% illness and disability, 28% fear or injury and 36% due to cost.

### **Safe places to walk and bicycle**

- 78% report that there are many safe places to walk in their community, including sidewalks, paths and walking trails.
- 46% report many safe places to bicycle, such as bicycle paths or lanes.



**For more information on healthy lifestyles, visit [www.rpay.org](http://www.rpay.org) or call our Active Living Coordinator at 668-2328**