

Group Is *A.I.M.ing* to Do a Lot With a Little

Initiative in Brief

Allied Group Insurance Services (AGIS) employees are A.I.M.ing for wellness. In spring 2005, employees began participating in *AGIS in Motion* or A.I.M. Bridget Norris, wellness coordinator, credits her education at Wayne State University as motivating her to implement a wellness program at AGIS.

The program was an instant hit. Changes have been made to accommodate for weather and workload, but the program and employees are still going strong. Depending on the program, Norris sees anywhere from a 30-80% participation rate.

The program kicked-off by giving wellness giveaways to each participant: pedometer, water bottle, and tape measure. AGIS also enlisted the services of a fitness counselor to provide one-on-one counseling related to physical activity and nutrition. All participants were given 30 minutes per day to workout—during working hours—so they were able to fit physical activity into their days.

In addition to keeping employees healthy, A.I.M programs have added benefits. The “Big Fat Loser” contest not only supported employees that wanted to lose weight, but also helped build camaraderie. The contest also created a lot of opportunities for employees to mingle with people outside their departments and regular social circles.

The program has executive support, which is a crucial element to a successful worksite wellness program. Executives pledged 50 cents for every mile walked in a six-week period during the Walking Campaign. Their pledges yielded several hundred dollars for local charities chosen by each office.

“Healthy people are happier people,” Norris commented. “I think we all want to be healthy, but it’s a challenge getting there. I thought working out at work would make the initiative a bit easier.”

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Benefits

Noted benefits of the program are:

- 30 minutes to workout during working hours.
- Builds camaraderie and increases interaction with employee outside normal social circles and departments.
- When you feel healthy, you feel good about yourself.



Lessons Learned

- Employees view program as an additional benefit offered by the company. It’s a healthy perk!
- It doesn’t take a lot of money to get a great return. A little investment of time and money goes a long way.
- When beginning a wellness program, start small and build from there.

Cost: \$5 - \$10, depending upon program
Risk Factor: physical inactivity
Impact/Reach: 30-80%, depending upon program
Business/Sector: Group insurance