

Faygo Employees Are Winners in Challenge

Initiative in Brief

In 2005, Faygo's parent company launched the *Time to Revive in 05* program. As part of the *Revive* program, Faygo formed a wellness committee and developed a wellness mission statement. Interest in the wellness program has continued to grow; the wellness committee now has ten members who represent a wide cross section of the company.

Participation in the *Healthy Workplaces Project* helped to support initiatives that had already been started, such as an annual health screening, flu shot clinic, and the *Lunch and Learn* program. During the first health screening, a potential health emergency was averted. "One man who looked to be in perfect health had extremely high blood pressure, and he was rushed to the hospital. After his overnight stay, he came back the next day to thank us for saving his life. You can't put a price on wellness," said Janette Emerson, Human Resources Manager.

One of the favorite programs that Faygo offered was the *Biggest Loser Challenge*. Forty-nine employees were challenged to lose weight. This was a voluntary program with contest rules. All employees were advised to consult with their personal physician to determine which method of weight loss was best for them. Some employees modified their diets, some got on an exercise program, some worked with their physician, and others joined Weight Watchers (which was running concurrently and had 20 employees involved). In a matter of four months, 49 employees lost 543.2 pounds. Over two years the employees have lost 1,600 pounds and at least 80% have maintained their weight loss! To support the healthy eating habits of employees, 50 percent of the vending machines offerings are healthy, fresh foods such as salads, sandwiches and 100-calorie snacks.

Contact Info: Janette Emerson
Title: Human Resource Manager
Company: Faygo Beverages, Inc.
Phone: 313-925-1600 ext. 231
Email: jemerson@nationalbeverage.com

Benefits

Noted benefits of the program are:

- Invested in the greatest asset of the worksite—the employees.
- Maintained weight loss over two years in 80 percent of the participants.
- Encouraged lifestyle change. Employees chose healthier food options and achieved healthier weights.



"When an employer shows that they care about the personal, mental and physical health of their employees, [employees] become more engaged in their work, feel appreciated and form healthier habits." -- Janette Emerson, Human Resources Manager

Lessons Learned

- Success breeds imitation. The *Biggest Loser Challenge* has been implemented into all of Faygo's sister plants.
- Expand the wellness committee as the program grows; the program is able to continue more effectively.
- When employers show that they care about the health of their employees, employees become more engaged in their work.

Cost: Guest speakers were at no cost, \$4,000 to \$6,000 health screenings, and incentives
Risk Factor: Obesity, high blood pressure, physical inactivity, poor nutrition
Impact/Reach: At least 69
Business/Sector: Beverage/Distribution