



# Tourism Industry HR Newsletter

## December 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

## Workplaces that Work

by hrcouncil.ca

A healthy workplace means more than just warding off colds and the flu. It is more holistic and takes into consideration the physical, spiritual, environmental, intellectual, emotional, occupational and mental health of employees. Wellness promotion doesn't just benefit the employee because an organization filled with healthy and fulfilled employees is a productive workplace that retains its employees. More and more organizations are creating Health and Welfare Committees who are responsible for recognizing health and safety concerns and identifying solutions.

According to the Government of Canada's *Work-Life Balance in Canadian Workplaces*:

**Work-life balance is a self-defined, self-determined state of wellbeing that a person can reach, or can set as a goal, that allows them to manage effectively multiple responsibilities at work, at home, and in their community; it supports physical, emotional, family, and community health, and does so without grief, stress or negative impact.**

Studies demonstrate that investing in work-life balance initiatives:

- Reduces absenteeism
- Increases productivity
- Improves morale and working relationships
- Decreases stress
- Attracts new employees
- Helps retain current employees

That makes sense. In today's hectic pace of life, employees are drawn to - and stay with - organizations that help them find balance and personal satisfaction.

### Wellness program options

There are many ways that you can support work-life balance in your workplace - even with a limited budget. Start by finding out from your employees what wellness program options would support their work-life balance. Then back up your wellness program with policies, encourage employees to make use of your workplace wellness options and affirm that tapping into these options will not negatively affect their employment with you.

Continued on page 2...



How organizations can reduce workplace stress Page 2



The Cult of Overwork (Again) by Alexander Kjerulf aka "The Chief Happiness Officer Blog" Page 3



Christmas Staff Party Planning Tips Page 3

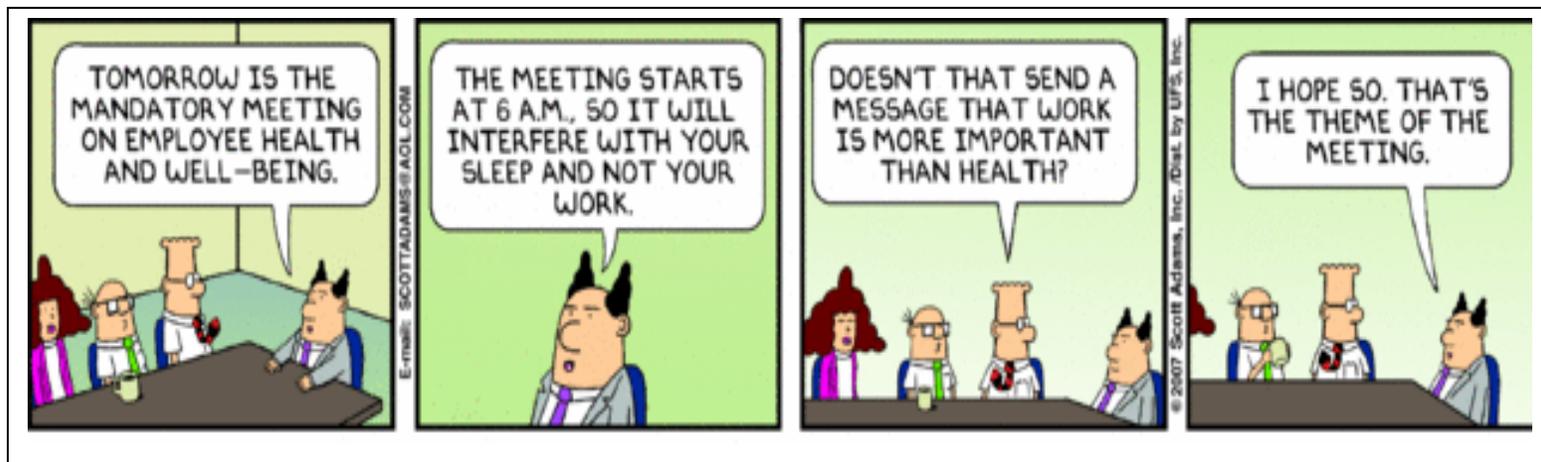
# How Organizations Can Help Reduce Workplace Stress

by hrcouncil.ca

There are a number of strategies to help minimize stress in the workplace, including (but not limited to):



- Provide a safe and comfortable physical working environment (e.g. noise, air quality, hazards, quality of lighting, ergonomics)
- Provide tasks that are reasonably demanding but not over-demanding
- Give employees a variety of tasks to do
- Let employees make their own decisions when possible
- Provide opportunities for people to enhance their skills
- Encourage social support in the workplace
- Implement a meaningful employee recognition program
- During recruitment, give the applicant as much information about the position as possible so that there is the best chance for a good fit with the person and the task
- Clearly define employees' roles and responsibilities
- Ensure workloads are reasonable
- Provide flexible work arrangements
- Provide opportunities for leaves of absence
- Implement a workplace wellness program
- Communicate organizational changes to staff and allow time for employees to adjust
- Ensure after work activities are not mandatory
- Provide intentional social opportunities in the workplace
- Conduct thorough orientation and training so staff feel confident and set up for success.



## The Cult of Overwork (Again)

by Alexander Kjerulf aka “The Chief Happiness Officer Blog”

Alex is the founder of Woohoo inc and one of the world's leading experts on happiness at work. He has done keynotes and workshops in over 30 countries for clients like IBM, LEGO, IKEA, Microsoft and many others. Alex is also the author of 4 books including the international bestseller Happy Hour is 9 to 5.



[The cult of overwork](#) is the prevailing belief that the more hours people work, the better for the company. That notion is not only harmful, it is dead wrong, as this story from Arlie Hochschild's book *The Time Bind* demonstrates.

One executive, Doug Strain, the vice chairman of ESI, a computer company in Portland Oregon, saw the link between reduced hours for some and more jobs for others. At a 1990 focus group for CEOs and managers, he volunteered the following story:

When demand for a product is down, normally a company fires some people and makes the rest work twice as hard. So we put it to a vote of everyone in the plant. We asked them what they wanted to do: layoffs for some workers or thirty-two-hour workweeks for everyone. They thought about it and decided they'd rather hold the team together. So we went down to a thirty-two-hour-a-week schedule for everyone during a down time. We took everybody's hours and salary down – executives too.

But Strain discovered two surprises. First, productivity did not decline. I swear to God we get as much out of them at thirty-two hours as we did at forty. So it's not a bad business decision. But second, when economic conditions improved, we offered them one hundred percent time again. No one wanted to go back!

Never in our wildest dreams would our managers have designed a four-day week. But it's endured at the insistence of our employees. Interesting, huh? They cut back work-hours but production remains the same.

## Christmas Staff Party Planning Tips

The holidays are fast approaching- and so are the Christmas staff parties. If there will be alcoholic beverages at the party please take precaution and make sure your party guests don't drink and drive.

Some suggestions to limit any liability that may arise from a holiday party are:

- Provide taxi cabs, at the employer's expense, to and from the party. Before the party, communicate to all employees that they should use taxis if they will be drinking at the party. Make a similar announcement during the party;
- If an open bar is provided, limit the time the bar is “open.” This discourages overindulgence and makes it easier to manage alcohol intake; and
- Appoint managers to casually monitor guests' alcohol intake



### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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