

Workplace Wellness: The Value of Organizational Wellness

Terri Hay, Policy Research Associates, Inc.

Crystal L. Brandow, Policy Research Associates, Inc.

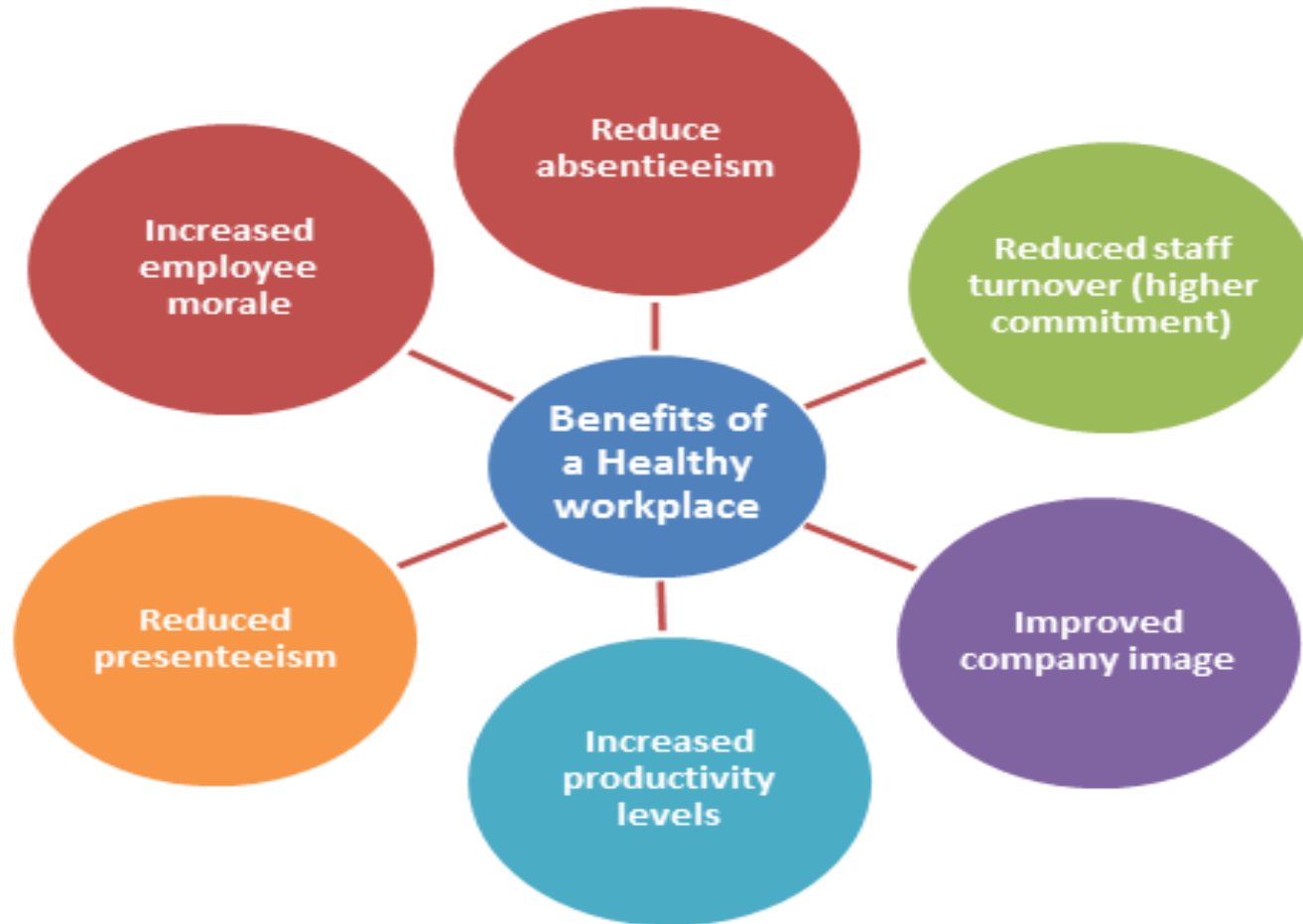
Cathy Cave, Inspired Vision, LLC

Why Workplace Wellness Matters?

- The workplace is a stakeholder in recovery, and should reflect wellness and recovery principles for all levels of staff
- The workplace is a space that can, and should, offer supports and services for individuals managing mental health challenges



Benefits of Workplace Wellness Initiatives



Mental Health in the Workplace

- A 2015 study found anxiety and depression are also among the top ten health problems navigated in the workplace (ComPsych Corporation)
- About 40% of EAP cases of more than 100,000 employees, globally, were related to personal emotional health (Workplace Options, 2015)
- Depression is one of the most common mental health disorders in the United States, impacting more than 16.1 million adults in the U.S. (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d.)

Mental Health in the Workplace

- Depression costs employers an estimated \$23 billion in absenteeism (Witters, Liu, & Agrawal, 2013)
- Mental health challenges are among the most expensive employee conditions for employers, costing an estimated \$348 per employee per year (Nazario, 2004)

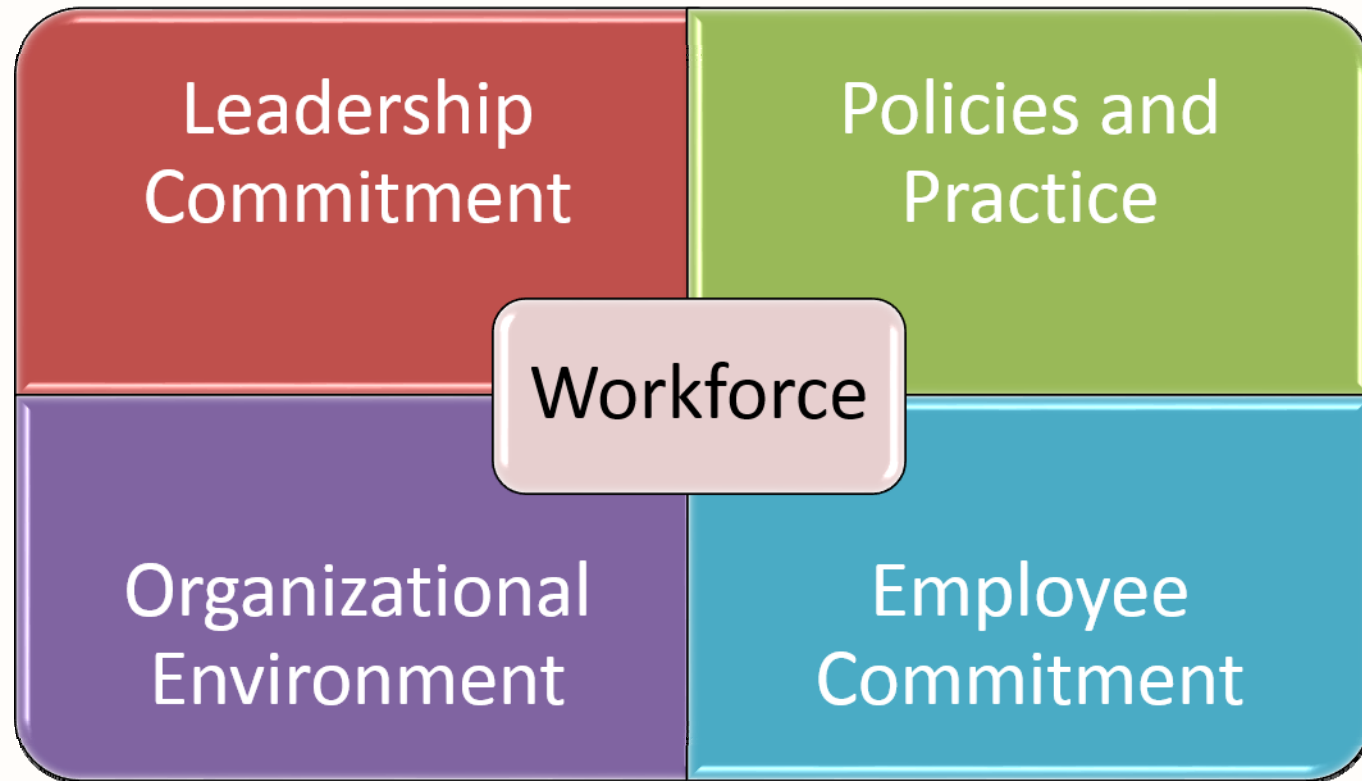
Sustaining the Canary in the Coal Mine

- An organization with a foundation built for wellness has:
 - a strong sense of community
 - shared values
 - a positive outlook

You can only make the canary so healthy to survive the coal mine; at some point, you need to improve the coal mine.

– Member of SAMHSA’s Emotional Wellness and Mental Health in the Workplace Expert Panel

A Wellness Model for Organizations



Well Organizations

- “Well organizations” should be mindful to:
 - remember that wellness is for everyone
 - give everyone a role
 - pay attention to the little things, as well as the big things
 - support the individuals who make the organization and the system work
 - support and promote grassroots efforts

Leadership as One Piece of the Puzzle



Organizational Leadership

Leadership drives organizational culture

- Leadership buy-in, and participation, are essential to the success of workplace wellness initiatives, especially those focused on supporting the recovery of individuals with mental health challenges in the workplace

Lead by Example

- Leaders can:
 - Self-disclose their mental health challenges and personal wellness strategies
 - Engage with staff and participate in organizational workplace wellness activities
 - Shift organizational culture to reduce stigma of mental health and other challenges in the workplace



More than a Wellness Program

- A **Culture of Wellness** includes:
 - Wellness champions
 - Leaders who model wellness and self-care
 - An investment in both organizational and employee wellness
 - A perception of safety and non-judgment throughout all layers of the organization
 - Policies developed, implemented and promoted with a wellness perspective



Best Practices to Promote Work-Life Balance

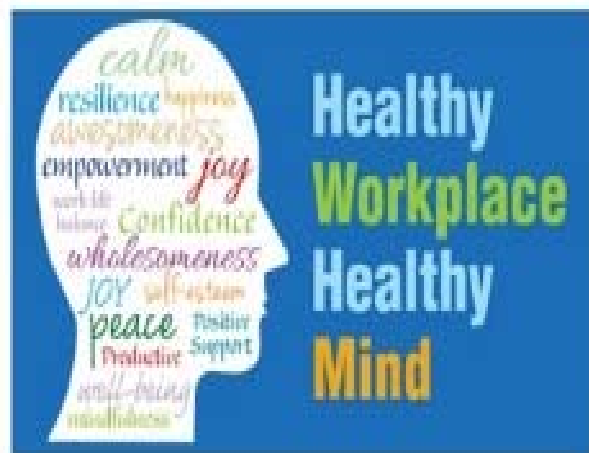
- Promote flexibility
- Create accountability measures
- Keep communication lines clear
- Model work-life balance at all levels of the organization
- Value and recognize individuals exceling at balance
- Incorporate reflection opportunities, i.e. regular supervision, performance reviews, etc.

Policies and Practices

- Organizational Policy
 - Convene cross-section team to review current policies from an employee wellness view
 - Review existing best and promising practices regularly
 - Consider wellness policies related to flexible scheduling, job sharing, personal work environments, reasonable accommodations, etc.

Policies and Practices

- Create Internal Workforce Supports
 - Bring EAP in-house, or integrate regular onsite hours
 - Establish a group for peer supporters
- Trauma-Informed and Culturally-Attuned Practices
 - Acknowledge the cultures and preferences of staff
 - Value the diversity of the workplace
 - Encourage use of culturally-relevant tools and supports



Employee Commitments to Wellness



Commitments to Yourself:

- Create work-life balance
- Set wellness goals
- Practice self-care

Employee Commitments to Wellness

Commitments to Leadership:

- Communicate with supervisors about wellness needs
- Take advantage of opportunities provided by the organization
- Participate in organizational wellness planning

Policy Research Associates, Inc.

345 Delaware Avenue

Delmar, NY 12054

<http://prainc.com/>

p. 518-439-7415 • e. pra@prainc.com

Inspired Vision, LLC

27 Burhans Place

Delmar, NY 12054

p. 518.461.6242 • e. cathycave55@gmail.com



Inspired Vision, LLC