

How To Create a Communication Strategy for Your Well-Being Program

4 Steps To Get the Word Out
and Increase Participation





Every Well-Being Program Needs a Great Communication Plan To Be Successful

You've decided to offer a well-being program that gives your employees access to amazing resources to improve their health and well-being. Now you need to let them know about it!

This e-book walks you through a four-step communication approach to raise awareness of your program, motivate employees to engage with it, and achieve the results you want.



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Communication is Key

Without effective communication, even the best well-being programs can fall short.

You've invested a lot of time and money into your corporate well-being program. But it's not enough to launch a well-being program and hope that employees will use it.

People are busy and distracted. They need constant reminders, insights and tips for how to improve their health and take advantage of well-being program offerings. You're also competing for their attention with other initiatives and a daily onslaught of non-work information. And, as marketers know, human beings need to receive a message multiple times and via different channels to ultimately try a product or service.

Well-being is personal. Not everyone will be motivated to engage with the well-being program at the same time. An employee may receive an email one day and not be interested. However, months down the road they may have had a health scare and now want to improve their health.

A regular cadence of communications that keeps the well-being program front and center is critical for giving employees an easy way to take action when the time is right for them.



Well-being programs need the support of continuous, year-round communication to ensure employees understand:

- What the well-being program is;
- How to use it;
- How they can benefit from it; and
- How the well-being program fits into your overall culture of well-being.

Let's Get Started

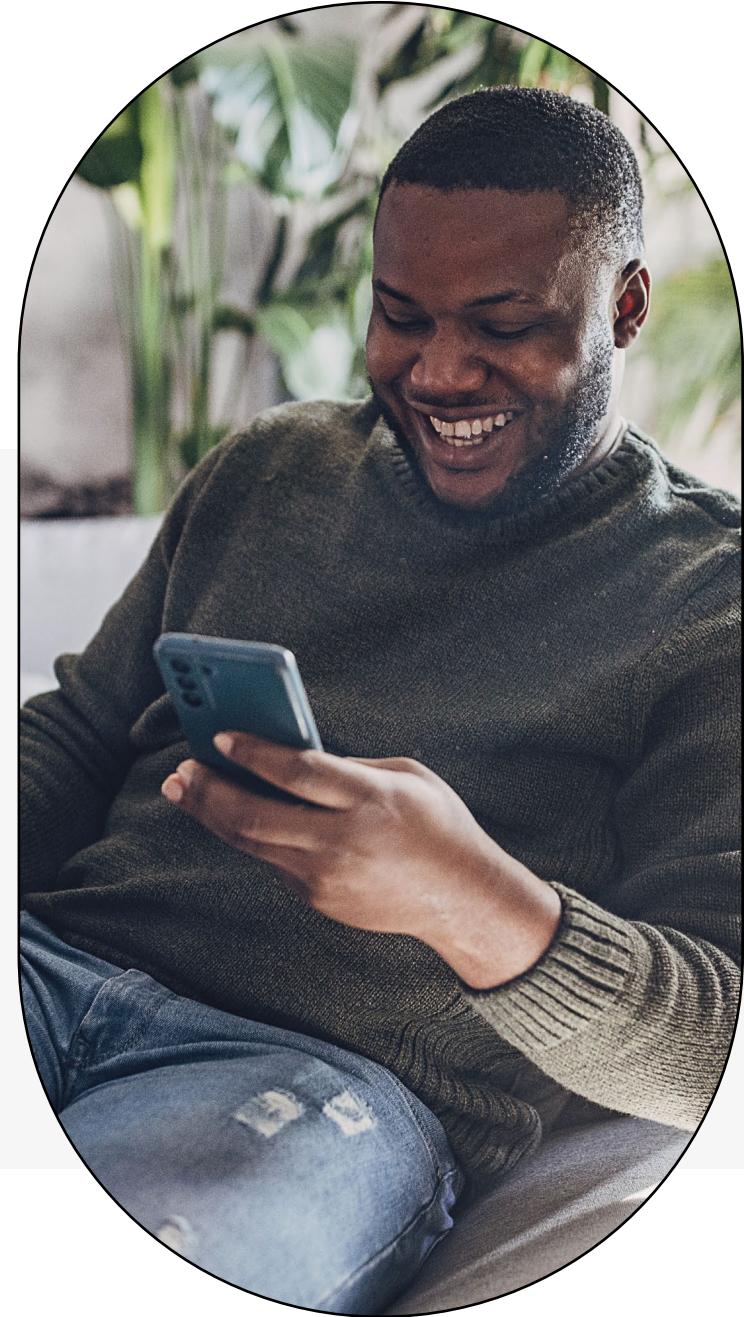
A step-by-step guide to creating a well-being communication plan that works.

Step One:
Develop a Roadmap

Step Two:
Define Key Messages and a Call-To-Action

Step Three:
Create a Timeline and Plan

Step Four:
Measure Communication Effectiveness



Step One: Develop a Roadmap

Find out how employees like to receive information.

Listening should be the first step in the development of any communication strategy. Use focus groups or pulse surveys to ask how people like to get information. Consider whether preferences have shifted as a result of a younger demographic and the increase of remote work.

Outline your objectives. What do you hope to achieve?

- Raise awareness for your well-being program launch;
- Increase overall engagement with an existing well-being program; or
- Boost engagement with a specific aspect of your program, like a Health Assessment or condition management program.

Identify your audiences.

For this task, it can be helpful to create employee “personas.” These are fictional representations of the different types of people who make up your workforce—for example, different age groups, job types, life stages, or work locations. Getting underneath each group’s motivations, likes/dislikes, and well-being needs can help you more effectively target messaging.



Enlist the support of key stakeholders.

Senior leaders. Brief senior leaders on your communication approach. Secure their buy-in by tying your well-being program's objectives to business goals. Enlist their support for communicating via CEO chats, town halls, and leader videos. Ask them to post about the well-being program on workplace social media and share information about their own health journeys.

Managers. A manager is often the most trusted source of information for employees. Make sure managers know about the well-being program so they can talk it up at team meetings and encourage employees to engage with it.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). These affinity groups can be excellent ambassadors for well-being program communications. Be sure to leverage their support and influence in your communication plan.

Wellness champions. Ask champions to post on workplace social media and talk about the well-being program and its activities at staff meetings and town halls.

The Power of Branding

If you want your communications to really stand out, consider branding the well-being program. A polished logo and tagline projects a level of professionalism that says to employees the organization takes well-being seriously and leads to greater trust. It also helps cut through the clutter by making the program instantly recognizable.



Step Two: Define Key Messages and a Call-To-Action

Key messages are the what and why of your campaign.

They should:

- Reflect how the well-being program is an extension of your company culture, values and mission.
- Make the connection for employees that their holistic well-being is tied to the success of the organization.
- Help employees understand how they'll personally benefit from engaging with the well-being program.
- Be tailored to specific audience groups where possible.
- Emphasize that personal data collected by the well-being program is protected, secure and not shared with you.

Articulate a call-to-action.

What do you want employees to get out of your well-being program? What actions do you want them to take? These could be completing a Health Assessment, engaging with a health app, making an appointment with a health coach, or participating in a wellness challenge. Ensure that each communication you send includes a specific action that employees can take to engage with the well-being program.

Well-being program communication do's and don'ts:

Do: Nix the jargon and corporate-speak.

Use clear language, avoid acronyms and break down technical jargon into everyday terms.

Do: Make communications easy to read.

Use white space, bullets, charts, infographics, and engaging images to get your message across.

Don't: Overload employees with too much at once.

Messages should be simple and to the point. Provide links so employees can dig in deeper if they want to.

Don't: Rely just on email.

A wide variety of communication channels will ensure that your message reaches the most people. We've got ideas in the next section!



Step Three: Create a Timeline and Plan

List the well-being events taking place over the next year.

- Include wellness challenges, biometric screenings, Health Assessment promotions, health fairs, and benefits enrollment.
- Factor in national and global observances (see box on [page 12](#)).
- Consider seasonal tie-ins, like New Year's resolutions, summer fun, or back-to-school.

Take a note from marketers and create an editorial calendar.

- Your calendar should lay out which messages you'll be sending, when, via what channels, and to which audiences.
- Ensure there are enough touchpoints throughout the year so the well-being program stays top-of-mind.
- Remember, it takes a lot of communication to inspire meaningful engagement with a well-being program, so it's ok to communicate more than you think you should.



Tip:

Check with corporate communications to ensure your efforts don't compete with other workplace events.



Determine communication channels.

Using the preference data you collected from employee focus groups or surveys, decide which communication vehicles you'll use. Use a variety of channels for greater visibility. Here are some popular channels to consider:

- CEO fireside chats
- E-newsletters
- Emails
- Employee portal (intranet)
- Flyers
- Instant messaging channels (Slack, Teams)
- Plasma screens in elevators and hallways
- Podcasts
- Postcards
- Posters
- Tent cards
- Text campaign
- Town hall meetings
- QR codes
- Workplace social media

As you create your communication plan, also think about:

Where and how people work. Is your culture office-based, fully remote, or hybrid? Do you have employees who don't sit at a desk? Employees in other countries? These will affect the channels you choose.

Data on existing communication channels. Email open rates and employee portal clicks can help you hone in on the most widely read channels to leverage.

Surround-sound messaging. Plasma screens in hallways and elevators, mirror clings in the bathroom, tent cards and posters in breakrooms are all great ways to "surround" employees with well-being program communication.

Storytelling. Humans are hard-wired to appreciate stories—and when they're told well, they tend to stick. Videos spotlighting well-being success stories from employees and senior leaders are powerful.

The strategic use of print and giveaways. A well-timed print piece mailed to homes has a chance to stand out amidst all the digital communication. Giveaways are always popular: branded water bottles, a healthy recipe book, a journal and pen, or calming teas.

Common Health Observances

FEBRUARY

Heart Health Month
World Cancer Day

MARCH

National Nutrition Month

APRIL

Stress Awareness Month

MAY

Mental Health Awareness
Women's Health Month

SEPTEMBER

Suicide Prevention Week

OCTOBER

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

NOVEMBER

Diabetes Awareness Month

Step Four: Measure Communication Effectiveness

It's an old saying, but you can't determine whether something is successful unless you measure it. Measuring communication impact isn't always easy, but it is possible to get a gauge for how employees feel about your efforts and whether they've sparked the right behavior changes. Plus, measurement will help you make the case to leadership for continued support of and resources for well-being program communication.

Measurement can help you assess:

- Communication frequency—too much, too little, or just right.
- General awareness of the well-being program.
- Employees' understanding of the program and how it works.
- Whether employees engaged with well-being offerings as a result of communication.



Common Measurement Tools

Pulse survey/poll:

Send a quick, anonymous pulse survey or poll both before you launch a campaign and after to measure awareness or behavior change.

Engagement surveys:

Ask whether you can include a few questions about well-being program communication in your company's already existing engagement survey.

Focus groups/interviews:

These are good, qualitative sources of information. Focus groups and interviews can be conducted in-person or virtually and allow employees to share candid information about your efforts. Include participants from different worksites or employee demographics to get the best representation.

Email open and click-through rates:

Track how many employees open emails and click on the links within, indicating the level of engagement with the content.

Testimonials:

Employees who have benefitted from the well-being program are usually willing to share their stories. These can be a powerful way to convince leadership of the impact of the well-being program as well as spur other employees to engage.

Employee portal (intranet) analytics:

Use analytics tools to measure how employees interact with well-being content on your intranet, including page views, time spent on pages, and interaction with posts or comments.

Engagement with workplace social media:

Track the number of posts, likes, shares, and hashtag usage.

Feedback loop:

A dedicated, monitored email address or an instant messaging channel are great ways to continuously solicit feedback from employees in real time.

Need Help Creating a Communication Program?

Call on the experts at WebMD Health Services.

Communication is our thing. We're proud to offer our clients access to a range of services to promote their well-being initiatives.



Our Creative Shop

We've created a variety of ready-to-go materials you can access via our easy-to-use portal, including:

Downloadable emails • Flyers • Monitor ads • Newsletter content • Posters • Postcards • Planners/journals • Social media posts • Videos

Organized by campaign type, it's easy to find the communication you need for initiatives like wellness challenges, Daily Habits promotions, Health Coaching programs and more. Plus, you can add your own logo, fill in the blanks to customize your event, and have print-ready files delivered to your inbox whenever you need them.

Custom Communications

Want custom communications or help developing your communication strategy? We do that, too. Led by a designated Communication Strategist, our award-winning Communication Services and Creative Team can work with you to develop a communication strategy and create custom communications with your organization's look and feel and the right messages tailored to different audience groups.

We also offer full reporting and analysis. We'll check what worked, what could be improved, and how to optimize your communication approach for your next initiative.

Maximize Your Well-Being Program Investment with Great Communication

A well-being program is like any product or service. Unless people know about it, they won't be motivated to try it or to continue to engage with it. Make the most of your well-being program investment with communications that let your employees know what's on offer, how to access these resources and how they can benefit from engaging with the well-being program all year long.





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