



# Corporate Wellness & Marathon Teams

## Introduction

How can American companies today keep employees healthy and morale high amid ever-climbing obesity rates and work hours that make it difficult to exercise? The costs of unhealthy employees adds up over time. Research shows that corporate wellness programs can give employees incentives to make healthier choices that benefit both them and their companies. Creating a company marathon team is one health initiative that can deliver long-lasting benefits to employees and their companies.

## Hazards of Unhealthy Employees

In the United States today:

- **1 in 3 adults** has high blood pressure [1]
- **2 in 3 adults** are overweight or obese [2]
- **8 in 10 adults** don't get enough exercise each week [3]

These numbers add up to more than just out-of-shape workers manning desks. They equate to higher health insurance costs, decreased workplace productivity, and increased turnover rates [4][5].

## Benefits of Corporate Wellness Programs

A well-designed corporate wellness program can increase productivity, boost morale, and reduce stress [5]. Corporate wellness programs are health initiatives and plans designed by companies to help their employees make healthier life choices that benefit a workplace and its employees. When you have healthy employees, your company also benefits.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, workplaces that have physical activity initiatives have:

- Reduced health care costs by **20-55%**
- Reduced short-term sick leave by **up to 32%**
- Increased productivity **by up to 52%** [5]

Not all corporate wellness programs are created equal. The ones that work best give their workers not only opportunities to manage their personal health but encourage wellness as a company-wide attitude—an essential part of the corporate culture [6].

## Marathon Teams for Corporate Wellness

An excellent way to motivate employees to get healthy while also reaping the rewards for your company is to create a company marathon team.

Running a marathon is not just a good way to get in shape, it also helps participants develop long-term habits of scheduling workouts and eating healthy. What's more, tackling such a major



personal challenge encourages employees to apply their newfound confidence to challenges at work.

Making a marathon a team effort brings added benefits:

- Increased workplace pride & camaraderie
- Great company team building
- Shows your company is committed to doing good

Happy employees are more likely to stay at a company and contribute to higher morale when they're there [7]. Having a reputation as a “company that does good” is more likely to bring in and keep inspired recruits who thrive when given a sense of purpose [8].

In addition, higher morale means fewer dollars spent on health care and sick leave and more spent on pursuing innovative ideas in the workplace.

## Joining the Mercy Home Heroes Marathon Team

We would love to have you join our Mercy Home Heroes team for the Bank of America Chicago Marathon.

Not only will you and your company be helping kids in crisis out of poverty, our marathon coordinator will work with you to customize your team's participation, so you can maximize the benefits to your employees and company while doing good.

Team member benefits include, but are not limited to:

- FREE access to Mercy Home's top-notch training partners (CARA, CES, Live Grit and Coach Mark)
- Customized race singlets with your corporate logo
- Access to our Hero HQ VIP area on race day with food before and after the race, postrace massages, gear check and real, indoor bathrooms.
- Pasta Dinner at Mercy Home w/Italian chefs for all Heroes before race weekend

*“Kellogg Company and the Mercy Home for Boys & Girls share many of the same values including actively engaging to provide the best start for our youth. Being a first-time marathoner, I can attest that the experience was personally challenging and fulfilling but more than that it provided an important opportunity for me to give back and to live our values. Words are important, but actions make all the difference!”*

—Wendy Davidson, President, Kellogg Company

## Conclusion

Mercy Home would love to work with you to organize a corporate marathon team that best suits your company. Contact Mercy Home's marathon team coordinator Jim Harding at (312) 738-9381 or jimhar@[mercyhome.org](mailto:mercyhome.org) to get started today.



## References

- [1] "High Blood Pressure Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. November 30, 2016. <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/faqs.htm>.
- [2] "Overweight & Obesity Statistics." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. August 1, 2017. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-statistics/overweight-obesity>.
- [3] "National Center for Health Statistics." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. January 20, 2017. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/exercise.htm>.
- [4] "5 hallmarks of successful corporate wellness programs." Fortune. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://fortune.com/2015/04/13/corporate-wellness/>.
- [5] "Benefits of Worksite Wellness Programs." Corporate Wellness Programs - Employee Wellness Programs. Accessed November 21, 2017. <http://wellnessproposals.com/guide-to-worksite-wellness-programs/benefits-of-worksite-wellness-programs/>.
- [6] Hector De La Torre Ron Goetzl, Ph.D. "How to Design a Corporate Wellness Plan That Actually Works." Harvard Business Review. March 31, 2016. <https://hbr.org/2016/03/how-to-design-a-corporate-wellness-plan-that-actually-works>.
- [7] Chamberlain, Andrew. "What Matters More to Your Workforce than Money." Harvard Business Review. January 17, 2017. <https://hbr.org/2017/01/what-matters-more-to-your-workforce-than-money>.
- [8] Rashid, Brian. "Why More And More Companies Are Doing Social Good." Forbes. April 25, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brianrashid/2017/04/25/why-more-and-more-companies-are-doing-social-good/#69d6c4bbdb07>.