
OD IN PRACTICE LIVE FOR LIFE⁴⁵

Johnson & Johnson's "Live for Life" (LIF) program is a pioneer in health promotion. It is a "total immersion" approach including fitness, smoking cessation, moderation of drinking, nutrition, weight control, blood pressure control, and stress management. J&J also has altered the work environment by establishing a smoke-free corporate headquarters and regional offices, improving nutritional value in company cafeterias, and providing messages about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The goals of the program are basic: stop smoking, eat more fruit and fewer fatty foods, exercise regularly, and buckle your seat belt.

THE LIF PROGRAM

The LIF program includes several levels of services. The first level is a confidential health-screening program consisting of a 19-page questionnaire that becomes part of a health-risk profile. A nurse practitioner goes over the results with the employees, takes their blood pressure, and tests their pulse while they exercise. The second level of the program, if an employee decides to continue with the program, consists of exercise, diet and weight control, and smoking cessation.

J&J headquarters has a gym on-site. At other company locations, facilities are provided on-site or at a local organization such as the YMCA.

THE RESULTS

J&J has kept comprehensive records of the costs and benefits of the LIF program. In one year the program cost \$200 per employee and saved \$378 per employee by lowering absenteeism and by slowing the rise in health care expenses.

In a study that lasted 3 years and involved 8,000 employees, J&J carefully tracked the program from its introduction. In the first year, the program cost more than it saved. In the second year, it broke even. In the third year, it saved enough to pay back losses incurred in the first year. The LIF program has been so successful that J&J sells the program to other companies.

THE CREDO

The LIF program at J&J is compatible with their corporate credo and culture. The credo, written in 1943 by Robert Johnson, son of the founder, stresses honesty, integrity, and putting people before profits. The credo

beings, "We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses and patients, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services. In meeting their needs, everything we do must be of high quality." By today's standards it may sound simplistic, but in 1943 it received wide attention because it put customers first, followed by employees, with stockholders being last.

As a consequence, *Fortune* has consistently named J&J as the most community and environmentally responsible company. J&J's current CEO, Ralph Larsen,

says, "The Credo shouldn't be viewed as some kind of social welfare program. It's just plain good business."

QUESTIONS

1. What additions could be made to the J&J LIF program?
2. Must a company's culture be similar to J&J to implement a successful wellness program?
3. How can a company's culture help it to set up a wellness program?