

# Delivering the essentials of workplace health

As a very diverse company, Essendant was challenged to identify a common theme – the essentials – that would help improve the long-term health and well-being of its 6,400 employees.



*“It was critical for us to work with a wellness partner who could help us build a healthy culture driven by grassroots support,” said Marcela Sztainberg, Director of Essendant Compensation and Benefits. “We don’t want to force our associates to participate; we want them to adopt healthier behaviors because they see the value of living and being healthier.”*

Essendant Inc. is a leading supplier of workplace essentials, with 2015 net sales of \$5.4 billion.

The company stocks a broad assortment of over 180,000 items, including technology products, traditional office products, janitorial and breakroom supplies, office furniture, industrial supplies, and automotive aftermarket tools. The company’s network of 70 distribution centers enables Essendant to ship most products overnight to more than 90 percent of the United States.

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## The Goal:

Improve long-term health and well-being of

**6,400**

employees



Quarterly Calls | Monthly Email | Two Webinars

## Grassroots program ramps up

StayWell was up for the challenge, and was selected as Essendant's wellness partner in 2015. One of the first steps was to bring Amy Hoffberg on to the StayWell team as the onsite program resource. Hoffberg had worked with Essendant in her role with the previous wellness provider, and her knowledge and insights into the company's variety of cultures have been invaluable as the revitalized program was rolled out.

Recruiting and supporting a group of wellness champions was one of the StayWell strategies that Hoffberg used to build employee support for the new wellness program. The company now has 53 wellness champions at facilities across the country.

Wellness champions are often operations managers or shift managers or other types of Essendant front line workers. They attend monthly webinars, communicate details about the incentive program, and implement the activities requested by associates and Hoffberg. Champions add location-specific activities to the wellness calendar based on input from fellow associates and wellness council members. For example, champions in upstate New York and Salt Lake City organize hiking trips, while those at the Tulsa facility recently completed an indoor stair climbing challenge.

53 Wellness champions at facilities across the country

## Essendant wellness champions are supported in several ways, including:

Quarterly 1:1 calls give champions the opportunity for a personal conversation.

Monthly email to champions with rundown of new communications materials.

Two webinars they can dial into each month (two optional times)  
Attendance: 25 in 2015 and 41 in 2016.  
Attribute much of the increase to the 1:1 calls and increased support from the human resource managers.

Hoffberg presented to the human resource managers earlier this year and since then, managers are getting more involved by supporting onsite wellness activities and even becoming wellness champions themselves.

Essendant "wellness council members" help the champions with communications; become a voice of the associates and attend wellness champion meetings. The number of champions per location varies depending on size of that facility.



*“Wellness champions feel like they’re making a positive difference,” said Hoffberg. “Associates are becoming more engaged with the wellness program and the different activities they’re promoting, and the champions are excited to see momentum and interest building. We’ve started sharing stories about ‘Healthy Heroes’ – associates who have made successful lifestyle changes.”*

At distribution centers where most associates don't have access to company email, communications are mostly word of mouth through Take 5 meetings, or posters and flyers in common areas. In the company's corporate location, the main source of communication is email. Most locations have a monthly wellness meeting, where health is a regular topic.

Champions receive a budget each year (from \$1 thousand to \$5 thousand) to use for wellness activities, and are eligible for quarterly rewards based on targets. For example, if 25 percent of the associates at their location completed their health assessment in the first quarter of 2016, they were entered into a raffle to receive extra budget dollars.



**\$1k-5k**

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**In 2016, Essendant purchased stretch bands for all associates. They are used for stretch breaks or a mini workout at the corporate office and call centers, or used during start up meetings for preshift stretching at distribution centers.**

## Combining essentials with incentives

An incentive plan helped motivate associates to complete the health assessment and participate in a variety of other activities and campaigns. Associates can earn up to \$900 that goes toward their medical premium.

During the first half of 2016, 36.54% of eligible associates earned the full \$900 incentive. All but 4 percent earned some level of the incentive. Other incentives results include:

**76%**

Tobacco-free pledge: This had the highest completion rate of 76 percent – a simple step that associates complete when they make their benefit selection.

**44%**

Health assessment: 44 percent of associates and spouses have completed the assessment so far in 2016 – which is higher than StayWell's book-of-business average of 42 percent – and an eight percent improvement over 2015.

**39%**

Biometric screenings: 39 percent of associates completed an onsite screening, and are highly satisfied with the experience.



Health coaching: Outcomes for mail and phone coaching are improving. Those who participated saw a 4.4 percent decrease in the average number of health risks, which is better than the population-wide average. They have also started to roll out self-directed coaching to associates.



Incentives are also awarded for completing activities related to cholesterol, glucose, weight, blood pressure, dental exams, eye exams, and completing online quizzes. Associates can also participate in digital workshops on topics such as carpal tunnel, back health, cholesterol, and Type 2 diabetes.

As a result of the assessment and screenings, weight – and its biological consequences (high cholesterol and blood pressure) was identified as the top risk at Essendant. The good news is, 62 percent of those who were identified at risk for weight indicated they were ready for change.

To address this, StayWell and Essendant launched a variety of activities to help employees learn to manage their weight, including the **Right This Weigh** challenge, and **10K A Day** – one of StayWell’s most popular workplace campaigns that encourages people to be more physically active. The 10K A Day challenge is off to a strong start, with 21 teams recording more than 360 million company steps, thus far. An impressive 65 percent of people who registered for the challenge completed the goal of 400,000 steps. Of those who participated, 20 percent connected their Fitbit device and 27 percent downloaded the mobile app.

## About StayWell

StayWell is a health empowerment company that enables populations to improve health outcomes through the science of behavior change. For more than 40 years, the company has been a pioneer in employer well-being and patient education solutions that lower risks and reduce costs. StayWell has earned numerous top industry honors for its population health programs, including the C. Everett Koop National Health Award and the Web Health Award. The company has also received Utilization Review Accreditation Committee (URAC) and National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) accreditation for several of its programs. StayWell is majority-owned by Healthcare Services & Solutions, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Merck & Co., Inc. **To learn more, visit [staywell.com](http://staywell.com).**

The 10K A Day challenge is off to a strong start:

21  
Teams

360+  
Million company steps

65%  
of people who registered

400k  
Completed the steps goal of 400,000 steps



### For More Information

Contact your StayWell representative at **800-373-3577**.

Or email us at [engage@staywell.com](mailto:engage@staywell.com).