



Job Ready Services

Job Ready Services, LLC

October 2008

Wellness Begins at the Time of Hire

More and more employers are instituting wellness programs these days in an effort to reduce their healthcare costs and workplace absences. Wellness can include a wide range of programs for employees, including health fairs, diabetes management, weight loss, smoking cessation and exercise programs. Unfortunately, according to an article in U.S. News and World Report, July 10, 2008, wellness programs are not very popular with employees. Reasons seem to range from feeling like their employer is “big brother” to not having any follow up or incentives to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, employers are not seeing their healthcare costs reduced, nor do they see an improvement in their employees’ performance. Yet, many companies are going forward with a wellness program next year and some are even expanding the wellness programs they have.



According to a survey, less than 30% of employees participated in a wellness program, but when financial incentives were offered, the participation level jumped to 48%.

If employees are tested, they are accountable for their wellness and have more confidence that their co-workers are as safe & fit as they are.

Wellness programs can be quite effective with the necessary follow-through in offering these programs to employees. As the above-referenced article points out, getting and staying healthy needs to be part of the culture for that workplace. For example, offering incentives to join a weight management program, but offering only unhealthy snacks in the vending machines, is a culture of mixed messages at best and a culture that promotes unhealthy practices at worst.

How Testing Your Employees Can Enhance Wellness Programs

Wellness programs can be significantly more successful if employees are tested at the post-offer stage. Identifying those persons who have pre-existing conditions that put them at risk of imminent harm on the job or cannot perform their job tasks safely, will prevent injuries and absences by as much as 50%-80%. That’s a great start for a wellness program (and the cost savings are much more than the cost savings realized by wellness programs alone). Identifying what health conditions exist before placing employees on the job will also provide employers a way to more effectively focus their wellness programs on what their employees need most. Why focus on diabetes management programs if high blood pressure is the condition most often identified in the workforce?

Overall fitness can be tested at the time of hire, which will allow employers to customize exercise programs for their employees. Fit for Duty testing, exercises to prevent on-the-job musculoskeletal injuries in conjunction with wellness exercise programs will assist in helping the aging workforce to maintain their jobs safely.

Promoting wellness in the workforce is the responsible thing to do for employers, but adding a testing component at the time of hire is critical in the enhancement and success of wellness programs. Baseline data, safety training, ergonomic assessments and fit for duty testing are all beneficial elements of any wellness program. Making sure that employees are fit and safe to perform their job functions at the time of hire will go a long way in maintaining the wellness of the workforce in the future.

News and Upcoming Events

Next Lunch & Learn

Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2008
Dr. Robert Jones
12:00-1:00pm
Job Ready office
“Knee Injuries”
CCM & CRC credits pending approval

NEWEST MEMBER OF JOB READY:
Janaye Bryant is a part-time technician and is going to be graduating from NCCU in December. She is planning to enter P.T. school next year. She also has an 8 yr old daughter (she’s busy!) - Welcome Janaye!

Annual Seminar

Mark your calendars for our annual seminar on February 26, 2009!!

Job Ready Services:

- Employment testing
- Ergonomic Assessments by a Certified Ergo Assessment Specialist
- Work conditioning
- Functional Capacity Evals
- Workplace training
- Fit for Duty Testing

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For more information on any of these events or services, please contact **Michelle Morgan:**
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