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## Gauging Organizational Health The Human Side Is The Business Side

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### The Business Case for Organizational Health

Organizational health is a continuous, dynamic process. Organizations that link support and wellness initiatives to the strategic goals of their business have the greatest chance of long-term success and sustainability because they are better able to engage and retain talented, resilient employees. People are a valuable asset in every organization. Distracted, disengaged, dis-empowered, stressed employees cannot easily provide creative, innovative business solutions that drive organizational success and competitive staying power.

Engagement and retention are not the only benefits of a healthy organization. The American Institute of Stress estimates that stress-related illness in the workplace costs American business firms about \$300 billion per year in lost productivity. Unhealthy workplaces create challenges such as: high absenteeism, high turnover, employee disengagement, poor morale, decreased productivity, and poor customer satisfaction.

Taking the time to focus on the health of your workforce should be a priority and a primary organizational imperative.

### What Is Organizational Health?

The definition of organizational health has expanded beyond healthy eating, stress management, and exercise practices to include the idea of linking management practices to overall organizational health and performance. A psychologically healthy workplace fosters employee health and well-being, which in turn, enhances organizational performance and productivity.

Healthy workplace practices can be grouped into the following categories:

- **Employee engagement:** Keeping employees involved and motivated
- **Work/life balance:** Helping employees to manage their personal responsibilities
- **Employee growth and development:** Providing opportunities for employees to learn and expand their skill base
- **Health and safety:** Ensuring a secure workplace and encouraging employee health
- **Employee recognition:** Acknowledging employees for their contributions

Offering a broader, more inclusive model for individual and organizational health encourages organizations to focus on strategic business initiatives that enhance profitability and human performance.

## What Can You Do to Build Organizational Health?

Measuring the health of your organization means understanding its business operations and its culture.

Evaluating the current state of health requires the identification of risk factors, gaps, and work-life issues challenging the organization. The following questions can serve as a guide:

- What is the cost of poor organizational health?
- Are you providing development opportunities for employees?
- Do your managers communicate effectively?
- Are employees treated fairly and equitably?
- Have you embedded measurable healthy workplace goals into your management practices?
- What training do you offer for developing wellness competencies such as self-control, optimism, emotional intelligence, openness to new experience, and self-direction?
- Do you empower employees to take responsibility for their individual health?
- Are you helping employees develop core competencies for success in a challenging, ever-changing, fast-paced business environment such as resilience, tolerance for ambiguity, hardiness, and mindfulness?
- What are you doing to make employees feel valued and recognized?
- Do you have a work-life balance strategy?
- Do you leverage the strength of outside expertise to achieve your organization's wellness goals? (For example, external consultants, EAP providers, behavioral health care, health care professionals, work/life program)?
- Do you view organizational health and wellness as a continuous process as opposed to an obtainable state?

## Steps to Organizational Health

The chart below outlines the steps to move toward your goals, as well as a sampling of tools and tactics you can use in the process:

Steps to Organizational Health	Tools
Identify risk factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customized organizational wellness scorecard</li><li>• Organizational surveys to promote change</li></ul>
Target desired health outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey of firms in your field and industry</li><li>• Best practices to enhance recruitment, retention, engagement</li></ul>
Build an organization health strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positioning Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)</li><li>• Work/life programs</li><li>• Stress management</li></ul>
Execute organizational action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coaching and feedback programs, mentoring, effective performance management, wellness programs, teach self-management, empowering employees to self-engage, increase commitment, diversity programs</li><li>• Continuous learning environment</li><li>• Career opportunities and professional development</li></ul>

It's important to recognize that there is no "cookie-cutter" approach when addressing an organization's health and well-being, and what may be successful in one organization may not be in another. Customized solutions and tailored programs and policies will be driven by the unique challenges and business goals of your organization. The route you take must add value to stated business objectives.

### Going Forward

Human resources professionals, organizational leadership, and senior management play an integral role in this effort. Although daunting at times, organizations should not feel isolated in their efforts to help foster healthy organization practices. Companies can go beyond their organization's borders to enlist help and expertise of external consultants, vendors, and EAP providers as part of their health and wellness strategy.

### To Learn More

To explore how CCA can help enhance your organization's health and well-being, visit our website ([www.ccainc.com](http://www.ccainc.com)), call us at 212.686.6827 or send an email to [inquiries@ccainc.com](mailto:inquiries@ccainc.com).