



Incentives and Rewards

Incentives and rewards motivate participants, provide purpose behind behaviour change and perhaps provide a little friendly competition between employees or teams. Research shows that successful programs offer incentives or rewards. Those programs had both stronger participant involvement and greater number of sustained health behaviour changes.¹

Incentives don't necessarily have to have a large financial value attached but should include recognition of participants' level of involvement and contributions and celebrate significant milestones.

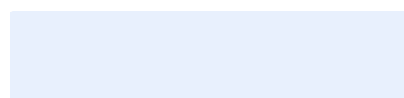
If considering financial reward, set incentives at a level desirable to the wider employee group. Rewards such as refunds or suitable cash incentives may be challenging to set to a potentially wide range of employees and income levels. Your incentive budget might therefore be better spent on activities, merchandise or something that benefits the worksite for all employees.

Consider your expectations of participants if they are to receive a reward or incentive. Do the employees have to attend 100% of sessions or is a 10% attendance rate acceptable? Are participants encouraged to submit feedback before they receive their incentive? Are your expectations clearly explained to participants?

Below are some suggestions that the Health and Wellbeing Committee and Coordinator might consider **during program planning**.

Incentives with low or no cost

- Public recognition of employees' participation – set up a noticeboard highlighting involvement, include efforts in newsletters and meetings and look for ways of announcing involvement throughout the sector
- Monthly lucky draw or lunchtime prizes (for participants in programs)
- Celebration event (formal or informal). Individual participation certificates could be printed and distributed



- Use resources readily available— does a staff member know a guest speaker who could come and talk to the workplace, for example a local sports person, motivated community or business leader?
- Invitation to industry specific forums or workshops that only a small number of staff can attend, for example, leaders breakfasts, conference workshops
- Merchandise – again look at the resources available to you – do you have access to freebies such as industry specific merchandise or regularly get invitations to industry/sporting/arts events that are highly regarded by employees? SA Health hosts social marketing campaigns that provide small amounts of merchandise for prizes, such as aprons, drink bottles, pens etc.
- Host an event that includes employees' families such as a sports day or a picnic – this might be to celebrate the end of a project milestone
- Management might be willing to provide a weekly or fortnightly fruit package to a winning team or, even better, to all staff based on achieving participation targets, alternatives include small value local grocer or butcher vouchers to put towards weekly food shopping
- If parts of your program include team challenges, consider offering the winning team some flexi time or reduced duties (check with management first!)
- Negotiate with local sporting clubs or community halls for sole use of the venue on a given day – run a fun exercise activity or host an engaging seminar. There's more to participation than prizes. Point out other benefits of involvement, by explaining:
- Intrinsic health changes – when planning your program, consider how the participant will be able to measure change in their health, for example, weight loss, number of steps achieved in a day, improvement to vegetable intake or reduction in daily cigarettes.
- By encouraging participants to keep records of pre- and post-program measures they are likely to see the reward in their efforts for themselves
- Inform staff that positive changes are being made to the workplace environment, as these changes occur.
- Opportunity to get to know fellow employees
- Chance to have fun and participate

Moderate Cost Incentives

- Subsidies for fixed incentives such as sporting equipment (e.g. bikes, running shoes), gym or club memberships, nutrition group memberships (such as Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig etc.)
- Tickets to events such as sporting, theatre or other
- Prizes such as sportswear vouchers, cooking courses, local fruit and vegetable store vouchers, local gardening store, health oriented magazine subscriptions or charity donations
- Discounted memberships to local clubs and gyms (employer to pay the difference and/or negotiate with local establishments) or offer to pay an individual's sporting club registration fee
- Gift certificates for large retailers, supermarkets, zoo visits, mini golf or bowling.

¹ Bellow B 2008. Primary prevention of chronic disease in Australia through interventions in the workplace setting: a rapid review. Sax Institute for the Chronic Disease Prevention Unit, Department of Human Services: Victoria.

Further information

To access the toolkit, all of the tools, and associated resources required to plan, implement and evaluate your own workplace health and wellbeing program head to *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures Initiative* at www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Contact information

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