



The Healthy Worker

January 2014 Newsletter

The Healthy Worker would like to say thank you to all of our customers and those who follow and support us. We wish you a very Happy New Year and all the best for 2014.

Why is the Health and Wellbeing of your employees a priority for your Organisation?

This is an enlightening question which often arises during our discussions with both public and private sector organisations. The responses are varied as you may expect. Our top three answers are:

- As part of our engagement strategy
- We are always looking to reduce our sickness absence costs
- To improve our clients experience, happy staff makes for happy customers

The answers all demonstrate the value that your employees provide to your organisation, and the impact which happens when they are off sick. It's not just the sick pay costs but also the reduced productivity, business continuity and customer satisfaction which are at risk. We also hear of difficulties with team morale and if left unaddressed sickness absence patterns can become a more widespread cultural issue.

Evaluated and effective Health and Wellbeing programs provide a significant return on investment and the financial savings which arise from good quality programs make it a '**win-win**' option for both employers and employees.

This year the CIPD are looking at 'Talent Analytics'. Improving the skills of employees to take control and improve their health and wellbeing, to enable them to attend work and be productive on a regular basis, is an area we believe is key to organisational health now, and for the coming years.

This Edition's Health and Wellbeing Tip

Do some voluntary work – the benefits for us all are fabulous. Don't have time? –at least hold the door open for a colleague or let someone out in a traffic queue. Then notice how *you* feel.

JOYOUS JANUARY OFFER

Buy two Healthy Worker courses and get one free, when booked before 10th February 2014

'Help for Heroes'

We are delighted to have 'Help for Heroes' as our chosen Charity for 2014.

Nearly 650,000 UK workers call in sick each week.

At a cost to the UK economy of £100bn per year, these findings by the British Heart Foundation alert us to the huge financial burden of sickness absence.

It also informs us how there are variances between the public sector and private sector. Have you wondered why this is? There are indeed differences in the types of work undertaken but it by no means accounts for the differences which are consistently found.



There needs to be much greater recognition of the drivers and influencers behind sickness absence as these help us to understand why this situation exists. The sick note does an injustice to the complexity of the situation and if we do not fully understand the drivers and influencers how can we best manage absence within our organisations?

What do you think are the key drivers / influencers for individuals in your organisation? E-mail us and let us know: info@thehealthyworker.co.uk. If you wish training for your Managers on this issue, the joyous January offer applies.

Thought for the day:

Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future. Concentrate the mind on the present moment. (Buddha)

Did you know a healthy lifestyle may help protect your DNA?

Diet, exercise, and stress management may help to protect and strengthen DNA and resist the effects of aging, according to a



new study.

Telomeres are protective assemblages of DNA and protein at the ends of chromosomes. They guard the chromosomes from disintegration, and shorten with age. Thus Telomere length can be considered a marker of cellular health.

Dean Ornish of the University of California details how things that are bad for us accelerate the shortening of telomeres.

"Smoking, emotional stress and lack of exercise all make your telomeres shorter," Ornish says. "We know that shorter telomeres are associated with an increased risk of many chronic diseases and a shorter lifespan."

We all need to prevent health problems wherever possible. We are each responsible for our health but some of us will need more support than others to be able to do this.

About 'The Healthy Worker Ltd'

We support UK organisations to reduce sickness absence. We provide Consultancy Services and Training courses, including our National Award winning Health Worker Course, which provides a significant return on investment for employers.

Liz Preece, the Founder, has extensive experience and an MSc in Occupational Health.