SmartHealth Messages for Supervisors and Managers

Supervisors and managers play a crucial role in the health, well-being, and productivity of their employees, which is key to being an employer of choice. However, they might not be aware of how to support and promote well-being at work.

To help organization leaders support their supervisors and managers, we created these 12 messages.

# **How do I use these messages?**

1. Recruit an organization leader to send these messages.
2. Replace the highlighted blue sections within each message (name and logo).
3. Copy the entire table (one message per page).
4. Paste into an email by selecting “keep source formatting.”
5. Use the email subject line: Important Message from NAME OF LEADER SENDING THE MESSAGE
6. Send email to supervisors and managers.

## Message 1

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| As a supervisor, you play a vital role in the success of our organization. You provide daily direction and guidance to employees in your actions and in your expectations. As leaders, we must support employees so that they can best contribute to our organization’s performance.  We know that healthy employees are more engaged at work. And, we know that engaged employees support our organization best. But, as leaders, how can we support healthy employees?  [SmartHealth](http://www.smarthealth.hca.wa.gov/) is a great tool for us all to be our best. See below for wellness tips that I want you to use to maximize our success.  [Add name] | | |
| ***Leading by example*** is a particularly powerful way to encourage employees to participate in wellness programs. Consider serving as a wellness role model by doing the following: | | |
| * + Visibly participate in agency wellness programs   + Sign up for SmartHealth and participate in a variety of activities   + Let employees know that you intend to participate in any given wellness activity; whenever possible, communicate to them how you plan to accommodate this activity into your workflow   + Take stretch breaks, and encourage employees to join you if they wish, during long meetings   + Where appropriate, bring up wellness topics during meetings or other employee gatherings   + Where appropriate, talk about your own wellness goals | | |
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## Message 2

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| *Remember these tips* ***for talking with employees*** *about wellness:* | | |
| * + Recognize that wellness means different things to different people; not every wellness practice is right for everyone   + Emphasize to employees that their privacy is of utmost importance and will never be intentionally violated   + Communicate to employees that their participation in a wellness activity during work hours will never be viewed by you as “not working hard” or “having too much time on their hands”   + Reinforce that participation in wellness activities is always voluntary   + Remember to always be sensitive to different cultures’ norms and standards for diet, physical activity, and other wellness activities   + Take any concerns about wellness activities or the wellness program seriously – work with employee(s) and the Wellness Coordinator to address concerns as quickly as possible | | |
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## Message 3

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| *Look for appropriate opportunities to talk with employees about the* ***6 dimensions of wellness.*** *Emphasize that all 6 are important for optimal well-being, and that you’re always interested to hear about what you can do to support them in any of these areas:* | | |
| * + Optimal physical health   + Understanding health risks   + Finding meaning in one’s work   + Emotional well-being   + Thinking carefully about where changes need to be made   + Achieving one’s potential through a greater purpose | | |
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## Message 4

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| *When employees ask* ***why they should participate*** *in a wellness program, remind them that evidence shows that engaging in wellness activities can lead to the following:* | | |
| * + Less of a need to take sick leave   + Lower health care costs   + Reduced chance of the need to go on disability   + Greater job satisfaction   + Improved morale at work   + Higher energy during the day | | |
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## Message 5

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| ***Boost participation*** *in agency wellness activities through the following:* | | |
| * + Prominently display any posters or flyers about agency wellness programs at or around your work area   + Where appropriate, communicate flexibility of work duties so that employees may participate in wellness activities   + Show visible enthusiasm for agency wellness activities   + “Talk the talk” around fostering a Culture of Wellness at your agency – for example, emphasize that participating in wellness activities is not only “allowed,” it’s encouraged | | |
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## Message 6

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| *Create an* ***environment of openness*** *around wellness topics:* | | |
| * + Openly discuss your own wellness challenges and how you’ve addressed them   + Give yourself a pat on the back for small lifestyle changes (i.e., “I’m trying to cut down on soda, so my goal today is to drink only water.”)   + Indicate, where appropriate, that you are open to hearing about your employees’ wellness goals and challenges | | |
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## Message 7

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| *Find opportunities to increase the visibility of* ***SmartHealth*** *among employees:* | | |
| * + Communicate and (whenever possible) demonstrate your own participation in SmartHealth   + Post information about SmartHealth at or around your work area   + Encourage employees to watch the “How to use SmartHealth” video on work time (and send them the link)   + Discuss with employees what aspects of SmartHealth have worked best for you   + Remind employees that they will receive an incentive for reaching a certain level of participation in SmartHealth | | |
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## Message 8

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| *Make sure your employees know who their agency’s* ***Wellness Coordinator*** *is, and how to reach him or her****:*** | | |
| * + Post this information at your work area   + Where appropriate, refer to the Wellness Coordinator in discussions with employees   + Make a point of meeting regularly with the Wellness Coordinator to ask questions or get ideas for how best to engage your particular employees (for example, “Many of my employees have erratic work schedules. What activities do you recommend for them?”) The more familiar the Wellness Coordinator is with your employees, and they with him/her, the more likely employees are to feel comfortable to ask for advice and suggestions, and possibly, to participate   + Introduce your employees to the Wellness Coordinator, especially new employees | | |
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## Message 9

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| *Respect your employees’ need for* ***work/life balance****:* | | |
| * + Whenever possible, practice work/life balance yourself   + Ask employees about whether their current workload is manageable, and offer to review and adjust if necessary   + When employees bring up challenges they’re encountering outside of work, follow up with them and show your concern for how they’re doing   + Regularly review your expectations for employees to ensure they are reasonable | | |
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## Message 10

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| *Emphasize the importance of reducing undue* ***stress*** *in your work environment:* | | |
| * + Communicate to employees that excessive stress is not compatible with a “Culture of Health,” and thus is something you take very seriously   + Ask your employees if they are encountering any work-related stresses that you can help with   + Talk openly about the importance of managing stress, including how you personally manage stress   + Encourage walking breaks and/or other “time-outs” to rejuvenate during the workday   + Where appropriate, ask employees to recommend stress-reduction techniques that have worked for them | | |
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## Message 11

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| *Support your employees in keeping* ***healthy habits*** *at work:* | | |
| * + Provide healthy food and beverage options at meetings or events where food and beverages are served   + Post DOH Healthy Eating Guidelines at or near your work area   + If employees bring it up, ask them how you can best support them in eating healthfully, per their own cultural/dietary needs and preferences   + Encourage employees to eat lunch away from their desks   + Consider holding a periodic “lunch gathering” that brings your team together to eat and chat together   + Make sure all employees are aware of your agency’s Tobacco Policy, but do not single anyone out based on what you may think or know about their use of tobacco products   + If standing desks are available, encourage employees to use them   + Hold walking meetings when appropriate | | |
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## Message 12

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| *Visibly and consistently support interest and participation in your agency’s* ***Wellness Committee****:* | | |
| * + Remind employees that you support their participation if they choose to volunteer   + Invite the Wellness Coordinator to attend a team meeting to discuss what the Wellness Committee does and what is involved in participating   + Make sure employees know what days the Wellness Committee meets and for how long   + Consider telling employees that if they want to participate on the Wellness Committee, you can work with them to make sure their schedule allows it   + For employees who choose to participate on the Wellness Committee, consider bringing up and praising this participation at the time of the employee’s performance review | | |
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