

NATALIE MARTIN,
PHD, RD

MAY 19, 2022

WCI Member Webinar: Using Compassion to Address Resistance



This discussion is based on research conducted in collaboration with the Wellness Council of Indiana.



All active 5-Star AchieveWELL organizations were asked to participate in this research.



The results reflect identified themes consistent throughout participating organizations.

Cultivating a Culture of Health: Lessons from 5-Star AchieveWELL Organizations

Who participated?

| | Frequency | % |
|--|-----------|------|
| Response | | |
| Participated | 19 | 63.3 |
| Declined | 4 | 13.3 |
| No response or no contact info available | 7 | 23.4 |
| Work classification | | |
| Construction | 1 | 5.3 |
| Finance | 2 | 10.5 |
| Healthcare | 5 | 26.3 |
| Higher Education | 2 | 10.5 |
| Insurance & Benefits | 4 | 21.0 |
| Manufacturing | 4 | 21.0 |
| Transportation | 1 | 5.3 |
| Employer size | | |
| Small (74 or fewer employees) | 2 | 10.5 |
| Medium (75-249 employees) | 3 | 15.8 |
| Large (250-999 employees) | 4 | 21 |
| Major (1,000 or more employees) | 10 | 52.6 |
| Wellness Program Duration | | |
| 4 – 9 years* | 5 | 26.3 |
| 10 – 14 years | 8 | 42.1 |
| 15 – 19 years | 1 | 5.6 |
| 20 + years | 5 | 26.3 |

Today's focus: Resistance

Resistance within the workplace has been defined as both active and inactive non-engagement.

Resistance to a culture of health may be demonstrated by the absence of 100% engagement and incentives left on the table.

Why is this important?

An organization with a culture of health can lead to improved health and well-being, enhanced quality of life and reduced costs.

To maintain a culture of health, existing and new employees must buy-in to the notion that health and wellness is important, leading to engagement.

As organizations employ strategies to promote engagement in the culture of health, resistance is likely to occur.





Non-participation



Criticism



Privacy concerns

In what ways do 5-Star AchieveWELL companies perceive employees as resisting a culture of health?

Non-participation

We have had employees that said, "You know what I'm not interested in participating."

Some people, you know, just flat aren't going to get involved.

Whatever the reason, you're always going to have, you know, a group of people that [don't participate]. I can't think of a time at least where I've had 100% participation in anything.

Criticism

So, we do tend to get pushback from those individuals [union employees], and those are specifically the [company] department.

When we first put in our walking offices, I had a manager say these are the stupidest things I've ever seen but if you want to do them, I guess that's fine. And then a year later he's walking on it.

Privacy concerns

I get it, people that have big brother mentality, "oh they're watching they're going to judge me because I'm diabetic."

I think you're always going to have some resistors, you know, somebody that says we don't want the company to know, you know, my health and where they think that I'm, you know, we might know their health information.



Showing compassion



Offering financial incentives

In what ways do 5-Star AchieveWELL companies address employee resistance?

Offering financial incentives

During my leadership messages I had like money flying like; pigs are flying and money banks flying in my video

We have the tobacco surcharge that has gone up this year. It'll go up again next year.

Some people will be like okay you got my attention that's expensive.



Showing compassion



Establish a good relationship



Meet employees where they are



Caring for the employees



Not requiring specific behaviors or participation



Communicating that the employer cares



Allow engagement based on interest and circumstances

Not necessarily forcing everybody to do everything but giving them the option of, “hey we’re gonna join the [local running event] run. If you and your family want to get in on it, we will pay for you.”

This isn’t big brother watching you; this is your employer caring about your health.

It's all about you know learning the person meeting them where they are.

We’ve worked really hard to establish trust, engage people, show them that this makes a difference. It’s not iust a hoop to iump through.

and names and we’ve done videos with people who share their story, so I think we’ve really come a long way in earning people’s trust.

So I would say that's part of the journey is just building that trust and building the relationship to be involved in someone's health journey

We figure it’s a choice and we’re not going to push, we’re going to make it available. But it’s not a requirement.”

The goal is to make sure you have a really good rapport with everyone. Because you know you get more flies with honey than vinegar... you have a really good rapport with people.

Let's review..

Frequent ways that resistance occurs are non-participation and criticism

Showing compassion towards can be an effective way to address resistance

Resistance does not lead to a significant change in strategy by 5-Star AchieveWELL organizations

Based on what you heard today, is “compassion” the best way to describe how 5-Star companies are approaching resistance?

Does your organization utilize any of the discussed strategies to address resistance?

Questions & Discussion

Many Thanks!

THANK YOU, ATTENDEES!

THANK YOU TO THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF INDIANA FOR SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING THIS PROJECT.

THANK YOU TO SUPPORTING FACULTY AT IUPUI:

MARIA BRANN, PHD –COMMUNICATION STUDIES

JENNIFER BUTE, PHD - COMMUNICATION STUDIES

ELIZABETH GOERING, PHD - COMMUNICATION STUDIES

LISA STATEN, PHD – SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Contact information:

Natalie Martin

Nrm1@iu.edu