



## Industry Currents

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### Health-E-tips helps employers encourage employees to lead healthier lifestyles

By Kevin Sweeney

Imagine having an exercise and nutrition tool at your fingertips daily leading your employees to healthier lifestyles. Not only would such a resource boost employee productivity and morale, it also can positively impact an organization's bottom line.

Health-E-tips, Inc. of Calabasas, Calif. is just such a resource. The firm specializes in consolidating complex information into concise, easy-to-adopt nutrition and fitness tips that are conveniently delivered via e-mail. The tips emphasize simplicity as the key to making good eating and exercising choices and motivate employees to make a few small changes to realize significant results.

This service is appropriate for any size organization. Bridge Strategy, a consulting firm with 40 employees in Chicago, has found Health-E-tips a perfect fit in its total rewards program.

"We're constantly looking for things we can offer beyond the compensation package," says Bridge Strategy partner Scott Hudson. "Ours is a pretty intense business in terms of demands on people's lives, so this program was a great fit. It's a piece of a broader puzzle in terms of compensation, wellness and culture building."

Executives at Ascend One, a Columbia, Md.-based debt management firm, discovered Health-E-tips at a conference.

"It sounded like a really good wellness effort to offer to employees," notes Linda Reese, director of employee benefits and work/life programs at Ascend One. "We are really focusing on work-life benefits, and part of that is wellness and trying to keep employees happy."

#### Little things add up

Though many people equate healthier lifestyles with grueling workouts and intensive diets, Health-E-tips stays clear of advocating drastic measures. It emphasizes a healthful way of living that can be sustained for life.

"We educate people about how simple little things add up to great results," observes Kathy Kaehler, Health E-tips co-owner, *Self Magazine* columnist and *NBC Today's Show* on-air fitness expert. "For busy people with busy lives, we show them how throughout the course of the day to get some great exercise, reduce stress and avoid workplace injuries. A more active person is a better and more productive employee."

"We believe in balance and moderation - not diets," says Patti Howell, Health-E-tips co-owner and a health advocate based in Los Angeles. "We help employees make informed meal and snack choices, control their serving portions and learn about disease prevention measures. This is a simple way to learn how to live a healthy lifestyle."

A couple favorite tips are: 1) By giving up one full-calorie soda a day for a year, Health-E-tips claims the typical person

can lose over 15 pounds. 2) Strengthen the lower body by putting your back against a wall, sliding down a little and holding that position for a while. Howell says Health-E-tips provides the tools to help people make these changes.

### **Quality and convenience**

Health-E-tips sends an e-mail to a key contact and that person is responsible for passing the health information along within their organization. This is typically done via office e-mail, posting on an intranet site or in a company newsletter.

E-mail distribution has been particularly helpful to the consulting staff at Bridge Strategy. "Our workers are mobile, so this is conducive to our environment," Hudson explains. "The tips we find most intriguing are the ones that relate to the workplace and are easily actionable."

Reese says Health-E-tips even responded to her customer service representatives' request for more suggestions on how they could strengthen their back and shoulder muscles to better handle long hours on the telephone.

"At a minute a day our employees have the benefit of about four hours of wellness training, regardless of where in the country they are working," Hudson says. "It's a good reminder for us all to think about our health. I've just renewed my annual subscription again."

"There is no question that there is a direct correlation between healthier employees and more productive employees," Howell notes. "Healthier employees mean fewer sick days and doctor visits. Education is the key to avoid illness and disease."

Health-E-tips' readership is over four million and growing. The cost for an annual subscription is based on the size of the workforce and whether information is delivered daily, weekly or monthly. With all the cutbacks in employee benefits, this might be a cost easily worked into budgets.

For Reese and her 700 employees, the return is worth the investment. "The cost has been very, very reasonable," Reese says. "The quality of the e-mails is excellent, and our employees look forward to reading them, so it has been very positive."

While organizations should see gains in productivity and drops in health care costs, Health-E-tips can ultimately pay off in terms of employee loyalty.

"Even though it seems so simple, the simplicity leads to effectiveness," Kaehler says. "By providing this information, employers are showing their workers that they do care about their health."

[Click image to learn more about Health-E-tips.](#)

*For more information on how Health-E-tips can assist your company, contact:*

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