

BE ACTIVE

What you need to know

INTRODUCTION

Most people have a pretty clear idea of what's good for them and what's not.

We all want to eat healthily; get plenty of exercise and not give into bad habits.

But it's not always that easy, especially when at work.

You can probably remember a time when you grabbed a chocolate bar from the vending machine, even though you knew an apple was better for you...

Why do we so often make decisions that aren't really the best choices for us?

When we're busy at work, it can be easy to prioritise workload over wellbeing and you might feel like it's difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle when on the job.

But given most of our waking hours are spent in the workplace, what we do during those hours has a big impact on our overall health.

So let's focus on some of the daily choices you can make that can help your work life be happier, healthier and more productive.

BE ACTIVE

Imagine this...

You spend all your working day sitting at your desk, before jumping in the car for the commute home, collapse on the couch and relax for the rest of the evening...

Does this sound familiar?

If it does, you could be putting your health at risk.

Physical inactivity has long been linked to a range of health conditions and emerging research shows that sitting for long periods of time doesn't just lead to a bigger waistline, but can result in some really serious illnesses.

If you're thinking "that's ok - I go to the gym after work or on my lunch break", then you may be in for a surprise.

Research has shown that going to the gym after work or during your lunch does not completely counteract the effects of a sedentary work day.

But fear not - the good news is that movement throughout the day can help, even if the movements are minor.

You can squeeze in extra activity during your day, you just need to think about it differently.

Take the 'Be Active' challenge and become more active in work:

1. TAKE A WALK

Working intensely at a desk or in an office all day is not only bad for your physical and mental health, but actually has a negative effect on the work you're producing. It is impossible to concentrate all day long, and adding a short walk into your work day means you get your blood pumping back around your body, helping to lose some calories as well as give you the headspace to return to your desk ready to work more efficiently

2. START YOUR DAY RIGHT

So this one might not technically take place in the workplace, but simple things like parking your car further away from where you work, getting off the bus a couple of stops earlier or even cycling to work (if you can) gives you a fantastic, active start to the day without taking up too much of your time.

3. GO SEE YOUR COLLEAGUES

By the time you've read this sentence, 20 million e-mails were written. This typically means you spend 28% of your working week reading and responding to emails. So break free from the dreaded e-mail chain, get up and go and speak to your colleagues face to face. Not only is it a much more positive way to build relationships, it's a great way to interrupt your sitting behaviour.

FINAL SUMMARY

You now have the tools and information to make some simple adjustments that will help you break any bad work routines and start enjoying a healthy life at work.

However, we do recognise that sometimes factors specific to your workplace, or even outside work, that affect your ability to do your job well can lead to physical and mental health concerns.

The best thing you can do is talk to somebody early on, be it your manager, colleague or HR department, and get the support you need.

The Health and Wellbeing policy is in place to protect and support you whilst at work. So why not set some time aside to read and understand the policy.

Be active, be healthy and be happy at work.

DECLARATION

I have read and understood my employee responsibilities outlined in the Health and Wellbeing policy:

Name

Date