



Assessment Module 2.1: Transcript

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Welcome to the first Module of the Assessment Development Cycle Step.

Assessment helps identify where to focus your wellness initiative by collecting data on employee wellness interests, identifying prevalent population health risks and gathering information on the worksite environment.

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Effective wellness initiatives influence the health of the workforce by addressing the wellness interests and common health risks of the employees. Assessment is typically done by gathering data from employees, assessing population health risks and analyzing the worksite environment. The data collected identifies existing policies, programs, resources, as well as opportunities for improvement. This information is used to develop the wellness initiative strategic plan.

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In this module, you will learn how to gather data from employees and analyze the worksite environment.

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Articulate the role of assessment and how the data gathered are used
- State the purpose of an Employee Wellness Interest Survey.
- State the purpose of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Worksite Health Scorecard
- Use the state health data to identify risks prevalent in your employee population
- Understand how the data sources will be important tools in planning the wellness initiative
- Identify the steps the Wellness Champion and Committee will take in implementing the assessment tools
- and Identify how the Assessment step links to the strategic planning step

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Let's begin to explore the role of assessment in detail.

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What is Assessment? Assessment helps the wellness champion and committee

understand which worksite health strategies will be most valuable to implement. Identifying employee wellness interests and prevalent population health risks as well as examining the current worksite environment is a research and discovery process. In order to identify need, the assessment step gathers information about the factors that support or hinder the health of employees, and identifies potential opportunities to improve or address them.

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Assessment is important because it helps you to

- Tailor your initiative to the health and safety needs and interests of your employees
- Understand the factors at the worksite that influence employee health
- Provide a starting point to document progress
- Inform management and
- Keep the Wellness Committee accountable.

Once you have a snapshot of your organization's health, you'll have a baseline from which you can build an impactful, sustainable wellness initiative. Data collection and assessment may be the most significant and indispensable benchmark that enables an organization to develop and offer high-quality employee wellness initiatives.

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In building a sustainable, results-oriented Workplace Wellness initiative, it is important to collect information to better understand the specific interests and health risks of employees. By using a Wellness Interest Survey and state health risk data, you will ensure that the policies, programs and activities you implement meet the interests and needs of your target audience, your employees. This is the market research phase for a worksite health promotion initiative.

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The Wellness Interest Survey will uncover the wellness interests of your employees. It is important to involve employees in all activities related to designing the wellness initiative, and assessment is a great place to begin that process. The Employee Wellness Interest Survey collects health interests, readiness to change and participation data. Readiness to change data indicates how likely employees are to make improvements to their health. Participation data reveals how likely employees are to participate in programming and environmental supports. It also provides information on when and how employees would participate.

Working on Wellness provides an Employee Interest Survey Template and an instruction document to help you administer the survey.

Slide 9 State health data will help you identify health risks prevalent in your

employee population. State health data includes information about population health status and risk patterns in Massachusetts. Examples of the statistics include the percentage of adults who are obese, have high blood pressure, or are diabetic. Use this data to identify the primary health risks of your employees.

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Collecting employee wellness interests and identifying health risks is a major part of effectively planning your wellness initiative. It will be used to select the health priorities for your wellness initiative in the planning process. Be sure to share what you discovered and how it will drive your planning process with your employees. This will help to create buy-in and support for the worksite health initiative by allowing employees to share their feedback and to help design solutions to address the top health and safety issues.

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Let's look at an example: If the state health risk data indicates a high percentage of adults are obese and your employees have high interest in weight loss, healthy eating and physical activity you have an optimal environment for success! Focus on those strategies that enable employees to increase physical activity, lose weight, and increase access to fruits and vegetables. As a rule of thumb, high need paired with high interests will result in success!

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The next topic will review the importance of assessing the work environment to see to what extent it supports healthy behaviors.

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The data gathered from your Employee Interest Survey will tell you what your employees want. But is that realistic given your worksite culture? It is unreasonable for employees to change their behavior if the workplace conspires against such change. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Health ScoreCard (HSC) is a tool designed to help employers assess whether they have implemented **evidence-based health promotion interventions and strategies** in their worksites to prevent chronic disease and support healthy behaviors. ^{SEP}It will help you understand to what extent you have a "culture of health" within your organization. A culture of health exists when individuals can make healthy life choices within a larger social environment that values, provides, and promotes options that are capable of producing health and well-being for all employees. The goal is to create a worksite environment where the healthy choice becomes the valued and easy choice.

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But what if your worksite looks like this? We hope it doesn't, but there might be a few aspects of your workplace that prevent employees from engaging in healthy behaviors at work. Lets take a few minutes to think about this. How might this environment promote or prevent health and well-being?

Let's highlight a few of the worksite hazards visible in this picture:

1. Here you can see that there are unhealthy food options in these photos; a hamburger, soda, and who knows what else. While this could be a food choice of an individual, take a moment and think - what kind of foods are offered in your worksite vending machines? What do you offer at meetings and events?
2. How about preventing injuries? You can tell people to be careful on the job, but if your workplace has exposed wiring, deteriorating infrastructure, and tripping, tipping, and slipping hazards, it can be difficult to expect people to avoid injuries.
3. And of course, here is a guy who is smoking. Hopefully you don't have anyone smoking inside your worksite, but if you have people smoking around or outside your worksite, it can expose other employees to second-hand smoke, and also make it harder for smokers who are trying to quit.

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Thinking beyond the walls of your worksite, how easy is it for employees to engage in physical activity? Imagine that your worksite was on the right side of the street, and your employees frequent the shopping center across the street on the left. Though the distance isn't far, they most likely will drive to their destination, given how hazardous it might be to cross this busy street.

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It's not enough to simply encourage your employees to eat healthy, exercise, stop smoking, sleep more or engage in other healthy behaviors. We need to make the healthy choice the easy choice by changing the environment in which we work. Providing healthier choices in the vending machine, providing a break room or dedicated lunch room for employees to eat and socialize, implementing a tobacco-free workplace policy and offering stress management programs are some of the ways that your workplace could begin or continue to create a culture of health that discourages the behaviors pictured in the previous slides.

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- So how can you assess your worksite culture? Let's explore the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard.

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The CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard is a tool that employers can use to assess the wellness culture and health environment of their worksite.

It includes questions on key evidence-based and best practice strategies and interventions that are part of a comprehensive worksite health approach that address the leading health conditions driving health care and productivity costs. It will help you identify ways to promote individual health and foster a healthy worksite environment.

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The ScoreCard contains 125 questions that assess how evidence-based health promotion strategies are implemented at a worksite. These strategies include health promoting counseling services, environmental supports, policies, health plan benefits, and other worksite programs shown to be effective in preventing heart disease, stroke, and related health conditions. Employers can use this tool to assess how a comprehensive health promotion and disease prevention program is offered to their employees, to help identify program gaps, and to prioritize across 16 health topics including

- Physical Activity
- Nutrition
- Stress Management
- Tobacco Control
- Weight Management
- High Blood Pressure
- Diabetes
- Occupational Health and Safety

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Remember that the goal is to create a worksite environment where the healthy choice becomes the valued and easy choice. The CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard will tell you about the factors that support or hinder the health and safety of employees. In addition, it can identify factors that impact employee productivity and the factors that might impact recruitment and retention. The CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard will help to identify potential opportunities to improve health or address health and safety risk factors.

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In our case study example, XYZ's Inc's Wellness Committee has been busy planning to complete their CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard. From the Resource tab, download XYZ Inc's CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard Plan and ScoreCard. In this plan, you will notice that Donna is working closely with John on the communication plan to managers. This will ensure that when the Wellness Committee is requesting data, they will be met with friendly support.

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To help you use the information from the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard we've developed the Workplace Environmental Support Guidance Document. This document provides sample policies, work environment supports and marketing approaches for common worksite wellness priority areas.

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From the Resources tab, download the Workplace Environmental Support Guidance Document. Use this with the results from your CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard to understand if your worksite enables healthy behaviors. Change will not happen overnight, so start small. As you think about the results from this

assessment step, think about how you can incorporate a few of the action items from the guidance document into your planning efforts.

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The data from the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard and the Workplace Environmental Support Guidance Document will provide you with a comprehensive understanding of your wellness culture and the factors at the worksite that influence health. This step is another major part of effectively planning your wellness initiative and will be used with the data from your Interest Survey and state health data to determine the program priority that your initiative will address. This will be done using a Prioritization Exercise, which will be introduced in the Planning modules.

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From the Resources tab, download the Employee Wellness Interest Survey Employer Instructions and the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard Manual.

These documents will provide you with all the details you need to implement an Employee Interest Survey and complete the CDC Worksite Health Scorecard including detailed timelines and sample communications.

We encourage you to meet with your Wellness Committee to review these instructions.

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- In this module you learned:
- What assessment is and why it is a necessary step in the development cycle.
- Top reasons why an organization should assess the interests of their employees and their worksite environment
- The key components of the Wellness Interest Survey and the CDC Worksite Health Scorecard
- How to identify top health risks in your employee population using state health risk data
- The steps the Wellness Champion and Committee will take in implementing the assessment tools
- How the Assessment step links to the strategic planning step

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Following this module you will review the instructions for administering the Employee Wellness Interest Survey and the CDC worksite Health ScoreCard with your Wellness Sponsor. Identify the steps you will need to take to prepare for the launches. Launch the Wellness Interest Survey and Complete the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard.

And finally, download the Key Takeaways and Action Item Checklist Document from the Resources tab.

The references for this module can also be found in the Resources tab.

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Congratulations! This concludes Module 1, the first module in Assessment. The purple icon with the green plus sign symbolizes the availability of additional resources. These additional resources are recommended to supplement what you've learned and are optional. They are not mandatory to complete the module. If interested, click on the Resources tab to access the supplemental Assessment tools. These tools can also be directly found in the Healthy Workplaces Toolbox.

To continue to the next module, click "Mark Complete" below.