



Spotlight on Antea Group

International engineering and environmental consulting firm wins at wellness

Antea Group employees are winning at wellness. Aggregate reporting shows improvements in blood pressure and cholesterol across the population. Their achievements have not gone unnoticed. Antea Group recently won the Healthiest Employer Award in several of the states in which they do business, and placed 84th in the 2015 100 Healthiest Employers in America as a firm.

Vitality spoke with Rosanna Ouellette-Pesicka, Vice President of Employee Systems and Services at Antea Group, about their best wellness practices and plans to win future awards.

What was your health culture before initiating a wellness program?

We've always had a strong safety culture because of the nature of our work. We can win or lose client contracts based on our safety performance. In general, our people understood the importance of good health, but we didn't have any formal programs or tools in place that really supported wellness.

The consulting industry is really fast-paced. You're basically "on" all of the time. We wanted something that would help our employees be more mindful of their health. We wanted to create the understanding that taking care of your physical self can help you be a happier,

more safe and more effective worker. The Vitality Program allowed us to do just that.

Do you integrate your safety awareness measures with the Vitality program?

We do. When we first introduced wellness, it was through Vitality. We are now in the process of expanding our wellness program by incorporating different dimensions of wellness to establish a comprehensive, mind-body-life foundation. By developing this approach to wellness, we recognize and support employees in all aspects of their lives. We hope it encourages and strengthens employee efforts to achieve and maintain physical wellness, emotional wellness and financial wellness. Like any company, we want employees to work well, but more importantly, at Antea Group, we also want them to live well.

How did you win the healthiest employer award in Iowa?

Our benefits broker brought up the opportunity to apply based on all of the clients their firm works with as they felt we had a rock-solid program that would be recognized. We talked to our Wellness Strategy Manager (WSM) at Vitality and he agreed. So we decided it was time to see how we measure



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up. And the results are proving that we are one of the healthiest employers in the nation. Not only have we been recognized with a Healthiest Employer award in Iowa, we've recently received notification that we've also been named a Healthiest Employer in Missouri and Wisconsin.

How has Vitality taken your program to the next level?

Vitality really raised wellness awareness among our employees and their families. It got them thinking about cholesterol levels, blood pressure, BMI, nutrition, etc. Our employees wanted to know their health scores and find real ways to improve them. Our WSM has been instrumental in our strategy sessions to assist with planning ahead and offering ways that Vitality can continue to support us. It's been helpful to see how we compare to other companies and what we can do to improve our participation even more.

What are some of your wellness best practices?

One thing that's really worked well for us is having Vitality wellness champs at the local office level. We feel it's important that our wellness program is employee-driven, not corporate-driven. Our wellness champs are employees who are passionate about wellness and who volunteer their time to come up with fun activities and creative ideas on how to increase participation in wellness. Additionally, we've encouraged increased physical activity through providing Fitbits to every employee. We've

also taken a healthier approach to the food options provided during company meetings and events.

We have had some difficulties with participation, but we've been able to improve matters by developing an employee challenge or more targeted communications. We also have strong support from our CEO, Gary Wisniewski, who oftentimes "ups the stakes" on our challenges by offering incentives.

What would you say are the results that you're most proud of?

I am most proud of the actual shifts in behaviors I've seen – people not only making healthier choices, but encouraging others to participate in different challenges. We've worked together as a team to really stand together for healthy things. It has quickly become a part of our culture now versus before when wellness wasn't top of mind. I now hear employees talking about wellness related topics on a daily basis.

Do you have plans for future award nominations?

We want to continue to move up on the top 100 list for healthiest employers in the nation. We feel we have a good shot at this as our wellness strategy fits perfectly with our organizational strategy to grow the business and create amazing customer experiences. Healthy employees are happy employees, and happy employees do excellent work for our clients.



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