

Case Study



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Kimberly-Clark

“Health and wellbeing is explicitly supported at a corporate level by the chairman and chief executive officer who annually produce a sustainability report - Sustaining our World: Health, Hygiene and Kimberly-Clark”.

Size: 150
Sector: Health and Hygiene
Location: South-East

The organisation

Kimberly-Clark has a global presence and is one of the world’s leading health and hygiene companies. They have over a billion consumers worldwide and as their chief executives says:

“Although diverse in culture and origin, these people are bound by a common thread. They rely on Kimberly-Clark brands to enhance their health, hygiene and well-being”.

Their last IIP review brought into scope part of that worldwide company that being the UK Consumer Division.



The health and well being challenges the organisation has faced over the years are:

Ownership of health and wellbeing issues being recognised as part of the line management function

Major organisational changes

Reported cases of stress increasing

Reported cases of absenteeism increasing

Providing responsive, flexible, innovative health solutions aligned to business objectives

What attracted them to the Pilot?

They said: “We saw it as an opportunity to undertake an audit of the Health and Wellbeing Service, and the possibility of benchmarking with other companies”.

The steps they have taken to address specific issues are:

The primary step taken by Kimberly-Clark to address health and well being issues is to get the subject explicitly written into the mission. This gives the subject visibility and credence.

The strategy for health and wellbeing in the company is explicitly linked to the companies’ business plan; it flows from and reflects the organisation’s mission:

Enhancing the health, hygiene and wellbeing of people every day, everywhere

Health and Wellbeing

To maintain and promote health and wellbeing, enhance employee and product performance and support business success

The text in relation to health and well being seen above is underpinned by “four pillars” which are health legislation compliance, litigation prevention, business led programmes, employee health and performance which incorporates health and hygiene solutions, these activities support the mission, business interests and employees.

The culture within the organisation is one of care and support to help a diverse workforce achieve their optimum and this is supported by a group of individuals who have a full time job role responsibility to help this happen. These individuals are then supported on a worldwide basis by a network of some 40 representatives appointed by the leadership group.

Kimberly-Clark was described by the health and wellbeing professionals interviewed as having a past history of looking after its workers in the mills in the USA. It was suggested by one of those interviewed that the high profile of occupational health in the company stems from “these roots”.

What do they do to address health and well being issues?

The senior team are able to make the link between health and wellbeing, good practice and profitability.

The Company believes in consultation and has a number of mechanisms to ensure that the consultation works. As an example a group with responsibility for reviewing how the organisation manages the diversity of its workforce exists.

They provide a 24 hour employee assistance programme for all employees.

What do they do to address health and well being issues? (Cont.)

They have developed and launched a Europe wide stress and change management strategy.

They support health and well being with representatives that are trained in the subject.

They have recently launched a branded health and wellbeing programme addressing all lifestyle risk factors

What obstacles do they needed to overcome to address good health and well being practice?

They said -

“The primary obstacle is ensuring that managers own and accept responsibility for health and well being issues. Whilst the Company has a culture, ethos and history of promoting health and wellbeing and whilst it has defined how a capable manager will perform there is little reference to how that manager may perform in relation to health and wellbeing”.

What results have they had through delivering good health and well being practice?

The stress strategy is an example used that had been found to be working, consequently consistently reducing the incidence of work related stress.

Another is the strategy in place to manage attendance; again it was reported that this is working and is having a positive effect on the bottom line.

What advice would they offer to other employers in relation to supporting the health and well being of their people?

If health and well being is to be part of the organisation it needs to come from the mission statement and be supported by the most senior managers in the organisation.

Line managers need to own health and wellbeing. Write it into their job descriptions and competency profiles, set performance objectives around health and wellbeing.

Pump prime the subject with people and high visibility initiatives.

Research what issues matter to you and your people.

Get some quick wins like tackling absenteeism and stress.

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