Explain the impact of organisational wellness on a business environment and indicate a strategy for a business unit

114212

This unit standard focuses on wellness of an organisation and the effect of organisational wellness on employees and productivity. It will be useful for middle and senior management, Human Resource Managers, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) personnel, Industrial Relations personnel and people who make financial decisions relating to EAP programmes. It is envisaged that this Unit Standard will be used as part of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP).

The qualifying learner is capable of:

* Explaining the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment
* Researching the corporate culture in a specific business unit or small organisation
* Explaining the benefits of wellness on an organisation
* Developing a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation

**Index**

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| **Competence Requirements** |  |
| **Unit Standard 114212 alignment index**Here you will find the different outcomes explained which you need to be proved competent in, in order to complete the Unit Standard 114212.  |  |
| **Unit Standard 114212** |  |
| Explain the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment |  |
| Research corporate culture in a business and explain its benefits |  |
| Develop a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation |  |
| **Self-assessment**Once you have completed all the questions after being facilitated, you need to check the progress you have made. If you feel that you are competent in the areas mentioned, you may tick the blocks, if however you feel that you require additional knowledge, you need to indicate so in the block below. Show this to your facilitator and make the necessary arrangements to assist you to become competent.  |  |

**Unit Standard 114212 – Alignment Index**

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| **SPECIFIC OUTCOMES AND RELATED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA** |
| **SO 1** | Explain the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment.  |
| **AC 1** | The factors that can impact on wellness in a business environment are named and an indication is given of how at least five of the factors impact positively or negatively on an organisation.  |
| **AC 2** | The contribution of norms and values to the wellness of an organisation are discussed with examples from a selected organisation.  |
| **AC 3** | The contribution of organisational support to the wellness of an organisation is discussed with reference to resources, conflict resolution, communication systems in an organisation, rewards and recognition and training.  |
| **AC 4** | The impact of a lack of peer support on organisational wellness is explained with examples.  |
| **AC 5** | The concept of company climate is explained with reference to sense of community, positive outlook and shared vision.  |
| **SO 2** |  Research the corporate culture in a specific business unit or small organisation.  |
| **AC 1** | The factors to be included in a corporate wellness culture survey are identified to determine the impact of organisational wellness on a business unit.  |
| **AC 2** | A questionnaire is designed or adapted to measure the wellness culture in a specific organisation.  |
| **AC 3** | Information relating to corporate wellness is analysed and interpreted and a written report is produced with reference to values and norms, organisational support, peer support and climate. |
| **AC 4** | Recommendations are made to improve organisational wellness in a specific organisation.  |
| **SO 3** | Explain the benefits of wellness on an organisation.  |
| **AC 1** |  Direct benefits of improved organisational wellness are explained with examples.  |
| **AC 2** |  Indirect benefits of organisational wellness are explained with examples.  |
| **AC 3** | The risks to an organisation that is not committed to organisational wellness are discussed with examples.  |
| **AC 4** | The consequences of not implementing wellness interventions are indicated with examples. |
| **SO 4** | Develop a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation.  |
| **AC 1** | The key issues to be addressed in a wellness strategy are identified and substantiated based on research.  |
| **AC 2** | One issue is selected and a strategy is developed to implement change in the business unit with reference to communication, implementation, reward and evaluation.  |

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|  **CRITICAL CROSS FIELD OUTCOMES** |
|  UNIT STANDARD CCFO IDENTIFYING The learner is able to identify and solve problems by assessing a situation, and developing a plan to improve organisational wellness in a business unit. UNIT STANDARD CCFO COLLECTING The learner is able to collect, organise and evaluate information in researching the corporate wellness culture of a business unit. UNIT STANDARD CCFO COMMUNICATING A learner is able to communicate effectively in discussing factors that impact on corporate wellness and the benefits of a wellness programme. UNIT STANDARD CCFO SCIENCE A learner is able to act as a responsible citizen in the organisation by creating a culture of corporate wellness in a business unit. UNIT STANDARD CCFO DEMONSTRATING A learner is able to demonstrate cultural sensitivity in identifying wellness issues in an organisation. UNIT STANDARD CCFO CONTRIBUTING The learner is able to see the world as a set of related systems in explaining the impact of peer support and organisational support on the wellness of an organisation.  |

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| **SOUTH AFRICAN QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**  |

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| **REGISTERED UNIT STANDARD:**  |

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| **Explain the impact of organisational wellness on a business environment and indicate a strategy for a business unit**  |

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| **SAQA US ID** | **UNIT STANDARD TITLE** |
| 114212  | Explain the impact of organisational wellness on a business environment and indicate a strategy for a business unit  |
| **ORIGINATOR** | **ORIGINATING PROVIDER** |
| SGB Insurance and Investment  |   |
| **QUALITY ASSURING BODY** |
| -   |
| **FIELD** | **SUBFIELD** |
| Field 03 - Business, Commerce and Management Studies | Finance, Economics and Accounting  |
| **ABET BAND** | **UNIT STANDARD TYPE** | **OLD NQF LEVEL** | **NEW NQF LEVEL** | **CREDITS** |
| Undefined  | Regular  | Level 4  | NQF Level 04  | 3  |
| **REGISTRATION STATUS** | **REGISTRATION START DATE** | **REGISTRATION END DATE** | **SAQA DECISION NUMBER** |
| Reregistered  | 2010-05-15  | 2012-06-30  | SAQA 0480/09  |
| **LAST DATE FOR ENROLMENT** | **LAST DATE FOR ACHIEVEMENT** |
| 2013-06-30    | 2016-06-30    |

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| In all of the tables in this document, both the old and the new NQF Levels are shown. In the text (purpose statements, qualification rules, etc), any reference to NQF Levels are to the old levels unless specifically stated otherwise.  |

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| This unit standard does not replace any other unit standard and is not replaced by any other unit standard.  |

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| **PURPOSE OF THE UNIT STANDARD**  |

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| This unit standard focuses on wellness of an organisation and the effect of organisational wellness on employees and productivity. It will be useful for middle and senior management, Human Resource Managers, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) personnel, Industrial Relations personnel and people who make financial decisions relating to EAP programmes. It is envisaged that this Unit Standard will be used as part of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP). The qualifying learner is capable of:  Explaining the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment.  Researching the corporate culture in a specific business unit or small organisation.  Explaining the benefits of wellness on an organisation.  Developing a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation.  |

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| **LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE AND RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**  |

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| There is open access to this unit standard. Learners should be competent in Communication and Mathematical Literacy at NQF Level 3.  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD RANGE**  |

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| The typical scope of this unit standard is:  Values include, but are not limited to, the full potential of the individual, self responsibility, mutual respect and balanced lifestyle.  Norms include, but are not limited to, management style, expected behaviour and accepted behaviour.  Factors in a wellness culture survey include, but are not limited to, wellness balance, cultural wellness, cultural gap, work and lifestyle analysis.  |

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| **Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria:**  |

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| **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 1**  |

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| Explain the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 1**  |

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| 1. The factors that can impact on wellness in a business environment are named and an indication is given of how at least five of the factors impact positively or negatively on an organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 2**  |

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| 2. The contribution of norms and values to the wellness of an organisation are discussed with examples from a selected organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 3**  |

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| 3. The contribution of organisational support to the wellness of an organisation is discussed with reference to resources, conflict resolution, communication systems in an organisation, rewards and recognition and training.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 4**  |

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| 4. The impact of a lack of peer support on organisational wellness is explained with examples.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 5**  |

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| 5. The concept of company climate is explained with reference to sense of community, positive outlook and shared vision.  |

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| **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 2**  |

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| Research the corporate culture in a specific business unit or small organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 1**  |

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| 1. The factors to be included in a corporate wellness culture survey are identified to determine the impact of organisational wellness on a business unit.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 2**  |

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| 2. A questionnaire is designed or adapted to measure the wellness culture in a specific organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 3**  |

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| 3. Information relating to corporate wellness is analysed and interpreted and a written report is produced with reference to values and norms, organisational support, peer support and climate.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 4**  |

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| 4. Recommendations are made to improve organisational wellness in a specific organisation.  |

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| **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 3**  |

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| Explain the benefits of wellness on an organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 1**  |

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| 1. Direct benefits of improved organisational wellness are explained with examples.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 2**  |

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| 2. Indirect benefits of organisational wellness are explained with examples.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 3**  |

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| 3. The risks to an organisation that is not committed to organisational wellness are discussed with examples.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 4**  |

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| 4. The consequences of not implementing wellness interventions are indicated with examples.  |

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| **SPECIFIC OUTCOME 4**  |

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| Develop a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 1**  |

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| 1. The key issues to be addressed in a wellness strategy are identified and substantiated based on research.  |

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| **ASSESSMENT CRITERION 2**  |

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| 2. One issue is selected and a strategy is developed to implement change in the business unit with reference to communication, implementation, reward and evaluation.  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD ACCREDITATION AND MODERATION OPTIONS**  |

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|  Anyone assessing a learner against this Unit Standard must be registered as an assessor with the relevant ETQA or with an ETQA that has a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant ETQA.  Any institution offering learning that will enable achievement of this Unit Standard or assessing this Unit Standard must be accredited as a provider with the relevant ETQA , or with an ETQA that has a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant ETQA.  Moderation of assessment will be overseen by the relevant ETQA or by an ETQA that has a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant ETQA, according to the moderation guidelines in the relevant qualification and the agreed ETQA procedures. Therefore, anyone wishing to be assessed against this Unit Standard may apply to be assessed by any assessment agency, assessor or provider institution, which is accredited by the relevant ETQA.  |

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| **Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFO):**  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD CCFO IDENTIFYING**  |

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| The learner is able to identify and solve problems by assessing a situation, and developing a plan to improve organisational wellness in a business unit.  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD CCFO COLLECTING**  |

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| The learner is able to collect, organise and evaluate information in researching the corporate wellness culture of a business unit.  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD CCFO COMMUNICATING**  |

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| A learner is able to communicate effectively in discussing factors that impact on corporate wellness and the benefits of a wellness programme.  |

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| **UNIT STANDARD CCFO SCIENCE**  |

***W***

***hat influences businesses?***

Business, now-a-days is vitally affected by the economic, social, legal, technological and political factors. These factors collectively form business environment. Business environment, as such, is the total of all external forces, which affect the organisation and operations of business. The environment of an organisation has got internal, operational and general lives managers must be aware of these three environmental levels and their relationship and importance.

The term 'business environment implies those external forces, factors and institutions that are beyond the control of individual business organisations and their management and affect the business enterprise. It implies all external forces within which a business enterprise operates. Business environment influence the functioning of the business system.

Thus, business environment may be defined as all those conditions and forces which are external to the business and are beyond the individual business unit, but it operates within it. These forces are customer, creditors, competitors, government, socio-cultural organisations, political parties national and international organisations etc. some of those forces affect the business directly which some others have indirect effect on the business.

Business environment as such are classified into the following three major categories, they are:

* Internal environment
* Operational environment
* General/external environment

Both internal and operational environment are the creation of the enterprise itself. The factors of external or general environment are broad in scope and least controlled and influenced by the management of the enterprises. Now we discuss those factors in details as below:

***Economic dimensions of environment***

Economic environment refers to the aggregate of the nature of economic system of the country, the structural anatomy of the economy to economic policies of the government the organisation of the capital market, the nature of factor endowment, business cycles, the socio-economic infrastructure etc.

The successful businessman visualizes the external factors affecting the business, anticipating the prospective market situations and makes suitable to get the maximum with minimize cost.

***Social dimensions or environment***

The social dimension or environment of a nation determines the value system of the society which, in turn affects the functioning of the business. Sociological factors such as costs structure, customs and conventions, cultural heritage, view toward wealth and income and scientific methods, respect for seniority, mobility of labour etc. have far-reaching impact on the business.

These factors determine the work culture and mobility of labour, work groups etc. For instance, the nature of goods and services to be produced depends upon the demand of the people which in turn is affected by their attitudes, customs, so as cultural values fashion etc. Socio-cultural environment determines the code of conduct the business should follow.

The social groups such as trade unions or consumer forum will intervene if the business follows the unethical practices. For instance, if the firm is not paying fair wages to its business in indulging in black marketing or adulteration as well as consumers forums and various government agencies will take action against the business.

***Political environment***

The political environment of a country is influenced by the political organisations such as philosophy of political parties, ideology of government or party in power, nature and extent of bureaucracy influence of primary groups etc. political stability in the country, foreign policy, Defence and military policy, image of the country and its leaders in and outside the country.

The political environment of the country influences the business to a great extent. For instance, the Government of India, bottling and sale of Coca-Cola was discontinued in India in the late seventies following policy of restricting the growth of multinationals in Indian markets.

But, its entry was allowed under the New Industrial policy of 1991. Under this new policy, government allowed liberalized licensing, imports and exports, inflow of foreign capital and technology on more liberal terms.

***Legal regulatory environment***

Legal environment includes flexibility and adaptability of law and other legal rules governing the business. It may include the exact rulings and decision of the courts. These affect the business and its managers to a great extent.

***Technical environment***

The business in a country is greatly influenced by the technological development. The technology adopted by the industries determines the type and quality of goods and services to be produced and the type and quality of plant and equipment to be used. Technological environment influences the business in terms of investment in technology, consistent application of technology and the effects of technology on markets.

***A***

***ctivity – In your groups***

Using the five examples listed above which influence businesses, (or if you want to add your own, you are welcome to) you need to brainstorm and identify one good influence and one bad influence which a business may experience, due to the particular factor. Make use of the table below to record your findings:

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| **Factor** | **Good influence** | **Bad influence** |
| Economic dimensions of environment |  |  |
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| Social dimensions or environment |  |  |
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| Political environment |  |  |
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| Legal regulatory environment |  |  |
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| Technical environment |  |  |
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***dding value and norms to the business***

Added value = the difference between the price of the finished product/service and the cost of the inputs involved in making it. So added value can be described as “the increase in value that a business creates by undertaking the production process.” It is quite easy to think of some examples of how a production process can add value:

Consider the examples of new cars rolling down the production line being assembled by robots. The final, completed and shiny new car that comes off the production line has a value (price) that is more than the cost of the sum of the parts. Value has been added. Exactly how much value was added is determined by the price that a customer pays.

Alternatively, imagine a celebrity chef preparing a meal at his luxury restaurant. Once the cooking is complete, the meal is being served and sold for a high price, substantially more than the cost of buying the ingredients. Value has been added. You don’t have to use robots or have the culinary skills of Gordon Ramsay to “add value”. For example, businesses can add value and norms to its products or services by:

* **Building a brand**

A reputation for quality, value etc. that customers are prepared to pay for. Nike trainers sell for much more than Hi-Tec, even though the production costs per pair are probably pretty similar!

* **Delivering excellent service**

High quality, attentive personal service can make the difference between achieving a high price or a medium one

* **Product features and benefits**

For example, additional functionality in different versions of software can enable a software seller to charge higher prices; different models of motor vehicles are designed to achieve the same effect.

* **Offering convenience**

Customers will often pay a little more for a product that they can have straightaway, or which saves them time.

A business that successfully adds value should find that it is able to operate profitably. Why? Remember the definition of adding value: where the selling price is greater than the costs of making the product. By definition, a business that is adding substantial value must also be operating profitably.

Finding ways to add value is a really important activity for a start-up or small business. Quite simply, it can make the difference between survival and failure; between profit and loss. The key benefits to a business of adding value include:

* Charging a higher price
* Creating a point of difference from the competition
* Protecting from competitors trying to steal customers by charging lower prices
* Focusing a business more closely on its target market segment

***A***

***ctivity – In your groups***

While every business claims to be adding value to its products or services, these may not always be as apparent to their consumers. In this exercise we going to attempt to identify the norms and values which you, as a consumer can identify for a product, and then give you the opportunity to identify added norms or values which feel can contribute to the organisation and their products/services by making recommendations for improvements.

Start by identifying three products which you use and then attempt to identify a norm or value which the company claims, lastly, recommend a norm or value which you feel the company should add to the product (an example has been provided for you):

|  |  |  |
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| **Product & Company** | **Claimed value/norm** | **Suggested value/norm** |
| ***Skoda car parts***  | ***3 month warrantee on their car parts*** | ***1 year warrantee on their car parts*** |
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***H***

***ow do organisational support measures assist the organisation?***

Any company, just like an individual, requires assistance from the resources around it, in order to increase its’ performance. The performance gaining of a company is a very important aspect of the business. Once this process starts gathering momentum, the organisation can, in turn, assist its’ resources in gaining forward momentum as well. Let’s take a look at some examples of how the organisation can be assisted:

* Resources

One of the most important aspects of any organisation is the resources within it. The better the resources, the better they will be able to perform, which in turn, enables the organisations’ image to grow under its’ customers. This in turn generates more business, and increased revenues. Using the resources of an organisation to their maximum, will ensure maximum output for the organisation.

* Conflict resolution

When the organisations’ resources are working in harmony with one another and the conflict resolution is done quickly and efficiently, then the organisation is able to deliver on the products and services it requires to meet the demands of the customers. When there is conflict, in any way whatsoever, the production/service time will be influenced, delaying the organisations’ ability to deliver on its promises.

* Communication systems in an organisation

Clear and open communication channels ensure a free flowing of information between various departments, individuals and facilities within the organisation, this is necessary to ensure that the resources within the organisation can be efficiently mobilised and prepared for the requirements of the customers of the organisation, thus ensuring a speedy transaction and delivery time for the customers of the organisation.

* Rewards

Rewards for both the staff and customers of the organisation go a long way towards improving their relationships with the organisation. Customers can be rewarded discounts for goods on large orders and staff can be rewarded either financially or in time off for their extra input into the organisation. Although this may cost the organisation in either employees’ time off which means a slight reduction in production, it motivates other employees to reap the same rewards by giving the extra input. Similarly with customers; should customers get discounted prices for bulk buying or continuous orders, they may decide to make use of the company as their sole supplier. In both ways, although it may cost the organisation a little extra, it improves income and business for the organisation.

* Recognition

By giving the employees and the customers recognition for their input into the business, the feel their input is being rewarded. Although this may not necessarily be in financial form, formal recognition proves that the organisation identifies, values and rewards those who are constantly assisting the organisation, be it by supporting it financially or by working the additional hours.

* Training

Training is a multi-purpose reward which the organisation can use. It can identify individuals who are showing their potential within the organisation and reward them by sending them on training so that they can further and improve themselves. At the same time, the company also reaps rewards by having the employee as part of its resource who forms part of the team assisting the company in performing its duties to its customers.

***P***

***eer support***

Independent business owners need the opportunity to discuss their business problems with others who share the same concerns. At the same time, the entrepreneur must be free to go into some detail without a competitor using the information to their advantage. In the past, most business owners were left to their own devices and to bottle up their worries inside. They were unable to talk over daily and long range business difficulties with understanding peers who faced most of the same issues. The internet in general and blogs in particular, have created that much needed virtual support group.

Business owners have a built in support group whether they realize it or not. Other business people are reaching out through their writings; actively seeking peer support and guidance. As other business owners read the postings in the media and on the internet, the realization appears that other people share the most of the same business challenges. At the same time, the owners aren’t business competitors, but more likely, potential business partners or resources. The seeds of a business support network are planted.

As the business owners become more familiar with one another through comment, e-mail, Skype, telephone, and live in person discussions, the support network is born. Already, several groups of business owners are meeting via Skype conference on a regular basis.

The chat isn’t always about business related issues either. Often, it’s simply enough to know that others out their can understand and relate to what an entrepreneur confronts on a daily basis. The sharing together is what really matters.

If you are a business owner who feels alone and isolated; If you believe that there is no one who understands your daily trials and rewards, it’s comforting to know that other entrepreneurs feel the same way. Find a group of business owners with whom you have developed a trusting relationship and form a business peer discussion group.

Talk about those pressing issues that your employees and family don’t seem to grasp. Share the joys and pleasure of owning your own business with other owners who enjoy that same sense of achievement and independence.

Set up a regular meeting time, and chat together as a group on Skype, or some other conference call medium. If you find another trusted entrepreneur in the same city, you can meet in person over coffee or lunch. Two person discussions are also valuable stress relievers, as well as idea generators. You may find yourself providing as much or more peer advice to others as is returned to you. Business people helping business people are a reward in itself.

When business owners keep to themselves and they do not reach out to others, they have much less chance of understanding the phases which their businesses are going through and have even less chance of understanding what actions to take or initiate to assist their businesses. Developing the leadership skills of managers across your organization creates a wealth of new opportunities and a common language of leadership. No single program experience builds strong leaders better than peer support groups.

Peer support groups can help managers succeed more and work less. Most managers have few resources and few places to turn to get advice on marketing, strategic planning, how to hire the best people, how to lead an organizational change and team building, etc.

One of the most powerful steps a leader can take – at any stage in his or her development – is to find a group of peers. Creating an enterprise can be a lonely task. If you are alone in creating your business (and having a partner or partners doesn’t mean you’re not alone), opportunities for learning and teaching are lost. With a peer support group, you can accelerate your growth and eventually give back your wisdom and experience to those coming after you.

Having an extra set of eyes and ears to look at the performance and goals of your business makes a world of difference. Working with your peers means you don’t have to go it alone. It also holds you accountable to someone outside of your business.

***Who Are They and What Do They Do***

Peer support groups are gatherings of peers attracted to each other by a common set of experiences and capabilities. Normally the group is a maximum of 10 people. They have the opportunity to share knowledge and different perspectives as well as providing accountability and developing their own network.

Peer support groups help managers to:

* Talk about issues you cannot address with your staff
* Learn about successful practices and new resources
* Network with other business leaders
* Focus on key goals to achieve business objectives
* Increase productivity while decreasing work time
* Widen profit margins
* Realize your dreams through accountability

***What They Are***

Peer support groups come in many shapes and sizes. Some are geographically based, by locale or region of the country. Still others are linked to a particular frame of reference, such as the farming or service industries. Experienced small group facilitators run peer support groups.

Look for someone who has built his or her own business, is a trained feedback coach and who has expertise in more than one area of running a business. We are starting to see the signs of an improving marketplace – start to invest in yourself and your organization by joining a peer support group. It will give you the greatest chance of achieving the success you deserve and have worked so hard for.

You've heard the expression "no one is an island unto himself." We all need help and support through life. In today's business climate, this statement has never been more accurate. Companies are requiring more work from fewer staff and have higher performance requirements, while resources that help maintain high morale have been trimmed or eliminated.

Under these conditions, business professionals are experiencing higher levels of job stress and many companies are finding it difficult to maintain high morale. There's an essential team skill companies can apply that can help. It's called peer support.

Peer support is simply an aspect of a company culture which requires that all individuals help, support and reaffirm each other, work together to solve problems, and ultimately, maintain high performance. Territorialism, pettiness, gossip, passing the buck, and competitiveness does not exist. Neither does the phrase, "It's not my job."

***How does a company instil peer support and how do people practice it?***

To provide an internal boost to morale, peer support must be promoted and demonstrated by management and practiced by all. It goes without saying that it must be genuine. The best way to start is to use your eyes and ears, and rely on your EARS as your guide:

* **Encourage**

It is a basic human need for people to feel a sense of approval, accomplishment and fulfilment in their work. When you see someone who is working hard and doing their best, give them all the positive reinforcement you can. It doesn't have to be formal, it can simply be a compliment such as, "Joe, you've been working so diligently on that project, but if there's anyone who can get the job done, it's you." (Of course, use your own style.) Regardless of your job position or status, make it a habit to communicate this way often. Here's why: When you make positive comments it brings out the best in others and yourself. And, each time you say something encouraging, you are putting a small surge of positive energy into that person and into your company.

* **Appreciate**

It's always gratifying to hear positive reinforcement such as, "I admire the way you handled that issue at the meeting." Make it a habit to show others that you value and appreciate them. Let them know that you appreciate not only what they do for you, but also for your department and your company. And don't forget, your boss needs your support and to be appreciated, too.

* **Respond**

If you see someone who appears to be under stress, don't ignore it. It shows you care about the well-being of those around you. Sometimes just talking about an issue or concern helps. Encourage the person to talk without focusing on "Isn’t it tough?" Provide appropriate support such as, "You always come through, Steve."

* **Support**

Help to rekindle the "spirit of your workplace" and focus on making a difference in your company by encouraging and supporting those around you. If you make it an all-company effort to practice peer support, you may find something magical in it.

***"In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame***

***by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful***

***for those people who rekindle the inner spirit."***

***Albert Schweitzer***

***W***

***hat is Corporate Culture?***

Corporate culture is one of those focus areas that are not always fully understood.

A basic definition of organizational culture is the collective way we do things around here. It involves a learned set of behaviours that is common knowledge to all the participants. These behaviours are based on a shared system of meanings which guide our perceptions, understanding of events, and what we pay attention to.

As Sun Tzu, a Chinese military general from 3000 BC, indicated in his explanation of strategy, culture forms an integral part of any organizational strategy. It consists of Tao - the created and shared beliefs, values, and glue that holds an organization together, and it also involves the very nature of the organization.

Culture is about individuals in a group sharing patterns of behaviour. There is no cultural absolute. Because culture is relative, we have the power to create a culture that is the best fit for an organization’s future direction.

***Observing Culture***

Culture plays out in a variety of ways. We can identify the specifics of it from how information is communicated, feedback is given, performance is managed, and projects are co-coordinated within the organization. It is reflected in the way the corporation or institution is structured; whether work is conducted cross-functionally or within silos, how the hierarchical levels are set up, and the types of job titles used. Culture is often defined by the systems that are used, the processes that are followed, and the rituals, symbols, and stories that abound in the organization. It is even reflected in how meetings are held in an organization.

***Corporate Culture as an Obstacle***

When working towards company goals or when trying to effect change in the organization, your organizational culture can be the very thing that trips you up. If insufficient effort is put towards identifying aspects of the culture that may impact on what you are trying to achieve, then insufficient actions will be taken to circumvent obstacles in a timely manner or harness the way things are done in an opportune direction. This is best explained through an example.

An organization espouses that “people are our most important asset” as part of its new philosophy. However, employees witness a senior executive being escorted off site with his belongings by security guards after being laid off. They receive an e-mail explaining where they will be sitting and who they will be reporting to in the future restructure - with no fore-warning or personal contact.

Training and development opportunities for employees are stopped in order to cut costs. Actions that consistently reflect a certain core culture will more effectively emphasize to employees what the leadership’s true values are than any widely publicized statement. If a direction is truly desired, then all actions that will reflect the required culture need to be considered and instituted accordingly.

***Aligning Culture for Success***

Once a strategy is set for the organization, the way deliverables are produced in the organization needs to be examined and challenged. This is to ensure that every process is geared towards achieving the strategy. Every component of the corporate culture needs to underpin what is required from all stakeholders in order to realize the strategic goals. There must be a reinforcing stream of communications. All the actions in the organization need to translate into the cultural realities. A culture can be created or reinforced through the use of socialization. Avenues for socialization abound in functions like selection, placement on the job, job mastery, the measurement and rewarding of performance, and recognition and promotion. Reinforcing a culture can emerge through the stories told and the folklore propagated and, most importantly, through the adherence to chosen important values.

The key to the success of the above is to ensure that the culture you wish to socialize others into is an ideal one, necessary for breakthrough performance in your work area or organization. If it is not, then you need to involve everyone in the evaluation and creation of a more suitable culture.

***Strong Leadership is required***

One of the surest ways to align the culture to the organization’s strategy is to apply leadership practices that are also aligned. The leaders, at all levels, need to know what the required culture is and then determine ways of establishing practices and procedures in all operations that will closely reflect the desired culture.

They also need to role model the very behaviours they wish exhibited by everyone in the organization and provide the necessary support to others that will enable them to function accordingly as well. Particular attention also needs to be given to all communications.

Corporate Culture is an observable, powerful force in any organisation. It is made up of its members' shared values, beliefs, symbols and behaviours. The organisations culture guides individual decisions and actions at the unconscious level. As a result, this culture within an organisation can have a potent effect on a company's well-being and success.

Some consider company culture to be the glue that holds everyone together while others compare it to a compass providing direction. Operating largely outside our awareness, corporate culture creates a common ground for team work and reduces uncertainty by offering a language for interpreting events and issues. Company culture, effectively provides a sense of order and contributes to a sense of continuity and unity.

No corporate culture type is better than another. The value is in understanding an organisation or team culture and how this culture can support the business strategy and goals. Organisations can harness the strengths of their company culture to promote continued drive towards business success and review elements of culture they believe necessary to adapt should the organisation be going through change strategies or into a different phase of the organisational cycle.

A company usually contains a number of subcultures and you may find that one area or department of the business is different to another. While this is so, there is usually a dominant culture that forms the basis for the overall corporate culture. Subcultures or even differing cultures to the dominant company culture is not a negative aspect. It allows organisations to perform effectively in different environments based on function, product, market, location etc.

***So why do employers look at culture fit?***

If Corporate Culture drives perceptions, attitudes and behaviours, it stands to reason that this culture also drives business results. Organisations look for prospective employees who will fit into the dominant culture and who may add to the subculture and therefore add to the business results and bottom line.

In this way they are more assured of the 'match'. Skills can be acquired, but changing someone's perceptions attitudes and behaviours is not that easy. Consequently the culture fit becomes the more significant issue during the selection process.

Many people can attest to the importance of company culture fit. Someone can fulfil exactly the same job or function within two different organisations. While on the one hand, really enjoy the job content and experience in one organisation and yet on the other, feel unfulfilled and de-motivated in another organisation.

We have described some of the more dominant and subculture types so that you may assess where you think you would fit in best and make the most of your skills while being satisfied with your working environment.

***Dominant cultures may include:***

* Clan culture; an open and friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves. It is like an extended family. Leaders are considered to be mentors or even parental figures. Group loyalty and a sense of tradition are strong. There is an emphasis on long term benefits of development and great importance is given to group cohesion. There is a strong concern for people and the organization places a premium on teamwork, participation and consensus
* Adhocracy culture; a dynamic, entrepreneurial and creative place to work. Innovation and risk-taking are embraced. A commitment to experimentation and thinking differently are what unify the organization. They strive to be on the leading edge. Long term emphasis is on growth and acquiring new resources. Success means gaining unique and new products or services. Being an industry leader is important. Individual initiatives and freedom are encouraged.
* Hierarchy culture; a highly structured and formal place to work. Rules and procedures govern behaviour. Leaders strive to be good coordinators and organizers who are efficiency minded. Running a smooth operation is critical and formal policy is what holds the group together. Stability, performance and efficient operations are the long term goals. Success means dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low cost. Management wants predictability.
* Market culture; a results-driven organization focused on job completion. People are competent and goal orientated. Leaders are demanding, hard-driving and productive. The emphasis is on winning which unites the group. Reputation and success are common concerns. Long-term focus is on competitive action and achievement of measurable goals and targets. Success means market share and penetration. Competitive pricing and market leadership are important.

***Sub cultures within these may include:***

* Power culture - emanates from centralized power. Power cultures are demanding of people. Generally motivation is not a problem as expectations are clear and loyalty is recognized and rewarded. Politics may come into play they may move slowly given the central decision-making.
* Role culture - this is a highly structured environment where clear objectives, goals and procedures exist. Employees are judged almost solely on how well they meet these objectives and goals. The culture rewards dependability and consistency. Change may come very slowly.
* Achievement culture - people work hard to achieve goals and better the group as a whole. The culture consists of highly motivated people who need little supervision. Rules and procedures are limited and the best procedure is used. The environment is highly adaptive.
* Support culture - this act like a tiny community where people support and trust each other. Members of this culture will cooperate, make sure everyone is together on an idea and they will do all they can to resolve conflict. This culture supports good communication and excellent service both internally and externally. It is a nurturing environment where people like to spend time together, both professionally and personally.

As with many types of cultures, corporate culture usually involves the inclusions of some rites or rituals. This can be something as simple as the annual holiday bonus, a week in the summer when the entire company shuts down, or even the naming of an employee of the month. These rites help to bond people together and provide some sense of collective identity, which is very important to the creation of a positive corporate culture.

It is important to note that a particular corporate culture may be positive or negative. Businesses where the rules constantly change, employee input is not encouraged, and rites tend to change constantly could be said to have a negative or counter-effective corporate culture. Since most companies cannot survive without the support of all employees and a dedication to core values, any business that develops negative corporate attitudes and culture is likely to be extremely limited in growth, or will fail to survive.

***C***

***orporate Wellness***

There are many varieties of corporate wellness programs. Essentially, corporate wellness programs encourage people to take measures to prevent the onset or worsening of a disease or illness and to adopt lifestyles that are healthier. Corporations may utilize a wide range of corporate wellness programs, from onsite gyms to simple corporate wellness newsletters.

While some corporations have started very expansive corporate wellness programs, others have attained savings or increased productivity with just a few simple initiatives that promote healthier lifestyles. Getting started is what matters the most. Having a plan, along with an idea or two about corporate wellness programs, can serve as a starting point for creating a more expansive program at a future time.

***Why Corporate Wellness?***

Corporate wellness programs are an investment in your corporation's most valuable asset, your workers. Studies have shown that workers are more likely to be on the job and performing well when they are in optimal physical and psychological health. Employees are also more likely to be attracted to, remain with, and value an employer that appreciates them.

Corporate wellness programs improve company productivity by:

* Attracting superior quality employees
* Reducing absenteeism and time lost
* Enhancing on-the-job performance and decision making
* Improving worker morale, resulting in lower turnover

In addition to enhanced productivity, corporate wellness programs have been shown to be effective tools in slowing the growth of health care costs. Selecting healthier alternatives may reduce an employee’s chances of suffering from illness. Less illness means corporations can reduce medical plan utilization, thereby reducing medical benefit costs, and in turn increasing earnings.

While medical cost savings from corporate wellness programs may be less evident than productivity gains, research shows that medically high-risk workers are medically high-cost workers as they use more medical care and generate higher claims costs.

***B***

***est practices when creating corporate wellness programs***

Below are the seven best practices (“The Seven C’s”) for corporations to follow when building a expansive, effective employee health promotion programs within their business.

***1. Capture senior-level support.***

Approval from senior management is crucial to the success of any health initiative. Senior staff has to understand the benefits of the initiative for both the staff and the business and be willing to put funds towards its design, implementation and evaluation. Descriptions of what other corporations are doing for their corporate wellness programs and linking corporate wellness to goals of the business, values and strategic priorities will enable you to gain senior management support. Managers who "practice what they preach" and take part in the program will go a long way to driving others to take part in as well.

***2. Establish a corporate wellness team.***

Corporate wellness teams should include a wide range of potential program participants including workers. Your team should include individuals who will be part of establishing the corporate wellness program, setting up the wellness program and evaluating the corporate wellness program. This establishes ownership of the corporate wellness program and more creative ideas. A corporate wellness team will help to get “buy in” from both management and the participants, develop a wellness initiative that is responsive to all potential participant needs, and will be accountable for managing all of the company’s health promotion efforts.

***3. Collect information that will drive your health initiatives.***

Once your corporate wellness team is in place and management is on board, it is time to collect baseline information to help assess worker wellness interests and health risks. The results of your data collection will guide you in what kind of corporate wellness initiatives to offer. This process may involve a questionnaire of worker interest in various corporate wellness initiatives, health risk assessments, and claims review to determine current employee risk of disease.

***4. Create a yearly operating program.***

For your corporate wellness program to succeed, you must have a goal. An annual operating plan should include a mission statement for the corporate wellness initiative along with specific, measurable short-and long-term goals. Your corporate wellness initiative is more likely to be successful when it is linked to one or more of the corporation's strategic plans, as it will have a better chance of retaining the support of the powers that be throughout the installation process. A written plan also provides continuity when members of the health promotion team change and is instrumental in holding the team accountable to the goals, objectives, and timeline agreed upon.

***5. Selecting the right corporate wellness initiatives.***

The corporate wellness initiatives that you select must flow naturally from your data (survey, Health Risk Assessment aggregate report, claims) to goals and objectives. They should address prevailing risk factors in your employee population and be in line with what both senior management and workers want from the corporate wellness program.

***6. Create a supportive atmosphere.***

A supportive atmosphere provides workers with praise, opportunity, and rewards. A culture of wellness that stands behind corporate wellness programs might have such options as healthy food choices in their vending machines, may not allow smoking or tobacco products and flexible work schedules that allow staff to workout. A worksite that values corporate wellness will celebrate and reward wellness achievements and have a management team that models healthy behaviour. Most importantly, an atmosphere of wellness involves workers in every aspect of the corporate wellness program from their creation and marketing to their implementation and evaluation.

***7. Consistently evaluate your results.***

Evaluation involves taking a close look at your goals and deciding if you achieved your desired result. The review process allows you celebrate goals that have been attained and to stop or alter ineffective corporate wellness initiatives.

***A***

***ctivity – In your groups***

We have covered a couple of ways in which corporate wellness can be explained and implemented in organisations. You, as a group are now required to develop a questionnaire which you will use to measure the corporate wellness within an organisation. Use the information you have been given above as a starting point to begin your questionnaire, but add your own ideas and additional aspects of the business which you deem necessary to its corporate wellness (examples include: values and norms, organisational support, peer support and climate.) Once your questionnaires are complete, you will table them to the rest of the class, who will act as employees of the organisation, and answer your questions. You will then be required to make an assessment of the corporate wellness of the particular organisation and provide them with feedback. Your feedback should include areas where you deem action is necessary and suggestions of such actions should be included in your feedback session. Complete your questionnaire on separate paper and attach it to this manual once completed.

***I***

***mproving the corporate wellness***

Let’s read the following article by Fleur Hanlon McGregor:

***Corporate Wellness: Culture and Leadership***

*“I left my job teaching dance at Memorial University in Newfoundland, Canada and travelled to the big city of Toronto to study dance with the dance artists I had watched on stage and read about. To support myself during my dance studies I took employment doing temporary office work.*

*I was a temp for several years on and off. I worked in major financial institutions, government buildings, hospitals, ad agencies, you name it. I often regarded myself as a traveller into new and different cultures. I quickly determined that no two offices were alike and in order to survive each day I needed to adapt to the specific customs of each new assignment very quickly.*

*In some offices you could sense the stress the moment you ‘set foot’ in the door. The air was electric with fear and a smile was greeted with nervousness and confusion – communicating the unspoken, “why are you being nice to me?”*

*It was during these ‘temp years’ that I learned how one person, strategically placed, can spread misery throughout an entire office. Higher-up, or switchboard operator. Mail-delivery person, or owner. It doesn’t seem to matter what the person’s role, if they are miserable and they are not dealing with it, then it can spread and affect the whole culture.*

*The management is often too busy with “real problems” to notice issues like these. Since they are almost always sensed intuitively, and are impossible to measure, these issues usually only come up during annual reviews as a general remark. This remark may only make the problem worse as the miserable person now feels singled out, attacked, and will often ramp up in their misery, their complaints, and their emanations of stress to those around them.*

*Unchecked the negativity spreads – sometimes rapidly – from person to person, sucking the whole company into a black hole. Bringing processes to their knees and affecting the bottom line at every turn. Mistrust soon pervades the air along with the nervous sweat that fills the nostrils down each grey corridor.*

*So what is the good news? Positive change can work in exactly the same way. Sometimes the messages can be small and subtle, but one person can become like a small sun, emanating positivity and reassurance to all they touch through unmistakable signals of nurture.*

*I worked for a few months at a large firm with many floors. Every floor had its own unique feel and I was the “floating” switchboard operator and receptionist. One floor was particularly joyous. I couldn’t put my finger on why. The usual receptionist came in one day and shooed me away because “the big boss” was coming.*

*In walked an elderly gentleman who reminded me of my grandfather. As she focussed on the importance of this individual he began cracking jokes with me about the heat wave and ice cream. He later returned with an ice cream for each of us. The receptionist appeared shocked and slowly began to melt as her perceptions shifted.*

*This sort of individual popped up here and there along my journeys in Temp Town. They proved to me over and over again that one does not have to behave as if they are going to eat everyone for breakfast in order to enjoy success.*

*Another example was an office that was simply abundant with generosity – the silence this time had an air of nurture as I walked into the lobby. There were flowers. There was fruit. But beyond these outward signs there was an ease about the place. The ambience was one of relaxed togetherness, and also one of connected focus. . This is one of the places I stopped much longer than a day or a week.*

*It came as no surprise that this company employed the services of a massage therapist one day per week who set up in the boardroom and the every member of the staff (regardless of “rank”) was invited to sign up for a 20 minute treatment. This office was a haven to this traveller – weary from many uncertain encounters in foreign cultures. It is a core belief of mine that we reap as we sow. I am determined to sow only seeds of happiness.*

*Sounds good, but how do we use this knowledge? Examine sources of negativity in yourself and in your team – and look for possibilities to create positivity instead. Even if you are not a “decision maker” this still applies. Examine your intentions – and how they are connected with your actions. Root out the practices, assumptions, and policies that keep you from a positive interaction with yourself and others.*

*If you are thinking this isn’t relevant to you because you are self-employed that isn’t so. I’m self-employed too. If we don’t have a vision, a cultural identity then – especially as a lone person working away in isolation it is easy to slip into work-a-holism, or visit Slacker Town. Vision is the key no matter what scale you are working at.*

*Small or large, determine if your business has a truly healthy spirit, or one that needs some minor-or major-sprucing up. What is your “vision of health?” Vision is such an important part of leadership and making positive, lasting changes. Express your intentions as they spring from your vision. Review the ways in which you attempt to live up to those intentions – that communication will help to keep any team, family, or relationship healthy and connected.*

*This is true even if it is only a relationship with yourself. Trust. You want your customers to trust you, be trustworthy to yourself. Be trustworthy and you (and your team) will naturally “buy in” every day – trusting each other and creating a healthy, productive environment.*

*Plant your garden and watch it grow.*

*If you want to have the trust of the people around you and you want to lead them to become a healthier team, a healthier them, and perhaps enjoy a healthier profit share…you don’t need to be a miracle worker. Just make a plan, implement it, and keep your vision always in your sights so that you can communicate it to your people.*

*It isn’t about thinking positive thoughts or platitudes, this is about putting care into a space that may have up until now been used as a dumping ground for negativity, but once some care starts going into this garden, the dumping may become less easy to justify. This may sound to you like a big responsibility, or perhaps a challenge, or perhaps merely a reminder about what you are already doing daily.*

*My point is that it starts with a little bit of tending and it grows and flowers into something beautiful. If you tend it, if you water it, it will grow. You don’t have to hold big rah rah meetings with lots of speeches. You just need to start. Just set an intention and follow through. You won’t crack the hard cases overnight, but your mini sun will begin a process that will slowly overtake the darkness that has spread throughout your land.”*

Before we continue, let’s concur on the following: Businesses’ well-being is heavily dependent on their resources. The better the resources and their abilities, the better the business will be able to perform. Business resource examples are:

* Staff
* Time
* Products
* Services
* Money
* Equipment

So if we are going to assist a business in establishing and increasing its’ well-being, we will need to break this task down and start by increasing the well-being of its resources. Increasing the resources’ ability to assist the business, the business will be enhanced. Now let’s continue to your activity…

***A***

***ctivity – in your groups - Project***

Before you start, let’s take a look at an example:

“**ABC Packers is a clothes packaging company whose core focus is on the packaging of clothes. They act as a middle man between the clothing manufacturers and the clothing retailers. Julia has been working for ABC Packers for fifteen years and has been promoted along the ranks accordingly.**

**She has been one of the most reliable members of staff in the business, not holding back in any way when it comes to working longer hours or to assist other members of staff.**

**Late last year Julia was diagnosed with cancer. Although her health remains a concern, her ability to perform her duties has not been tarnished at all. She is still as active as always and is able to complete her tasks diligently.**

**Her only added need is to go to the local hospital twice a month for chemotherapy. ABC Packers has realised the good in Julia and has arranged so that the delivery driver takes her to the hospital on the days when she needs to go for therapy and collects her once she is done. This enables Julia to catch her normal transport to and from work, not placing any additional strain on her financially.**

**In their willingness to assist Julia, they have observed a definite change in the other employees’ work-related matters. There has been a 75% drop of disciplinary action and the timekeeping of the employees increased 90%.**

**The cost to ABC Packers has been minimal, as the delivery vehicles’ only additional trip is to collect Julia form the hospital.**”

For this project you, as a group, will need to identify one business and discuss its core focus.

Once you all agree on the core focus (1), your next task will be to list the resources of the business (2) and then identify one of the resources which you feel requires assistance via a well-being program (3). Once the resource has been identified and agreed upon, you can start with your project where your focus will be on identifying such a program which can be implemented to assist the particular resource in developing or increasing its ability within the organisation (4).

You have now been given four steps to guide you in the completion of your task. Follow these steps and prepare a well-being program for your specified business. Your project must be completed in written format and must be presented to the rest of the class once completed.

**You are now ready to go through a check list. Be honest with yourself**

**Tick the box with either a √ or an X to indicate your response**

* **I am able to explain the factors that impact on wellness in a business environment.**
* **I am able to research the corporate culture in a specific business unit or small organisation.**
* **I am able to explain the benefits of wellness on an organisation.**
* **I am able to develop a strategy to improve organisational wellness in a business unit or small organisation.**

****

# You must think about any point you could not tick. Write this down as a goal.

# Decide on a plan of action to achieve these goals. Regularly review these goals.