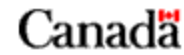




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Airport Health & Wellness Program Flies High

Vancouver International Airport Authority Vancouver, British Columbia

Vancouver International Airport Authority is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that operates Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

The YVR has been recognized by the International Air Transport Association as being the number one airport in North America for overall passenger satisfaction and number eight in the world.

But all the high praise isn't just for what the public sees on the outside, as the company flies high with its employees on the inside too. In fact, the Airport Authority's health and wellness program has recently been recognized by the Canadian Labour and Business Centre as one of the top 10 in Canada.

With approximately 300 employees, the Airport Authority recognizes that having a diverse and innovative workforce contributes to its global reputation for excellence.

Realizing that employees are a company's biggest asset, the Airport Authority has a commitment to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of its workforce.

The Airport Authority developed eight strategic objectives to ensure continued fulfillment of its corporate mission of *"serving our community by building outstanding airports."*

Two of those corporate objectives serve as guiding statements for the Airport Authority's leadership in workplace health and wellness:

- Keep excellence in safety, security and environmental performance as our first priority; and
- Maintain a strong, flexible and capable team of employees.

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The Bigger Picture

Employee wellness at the Airport Authority is part of an overall human resources and health and safety strategy. Prevention, wellness, attendance, rehabilitation and culture all contribute to a healthier organization.

The Airport Authority takes the stance that if all of these areas are being addressed, health and wellness programs have a solid foundation to build upon.

Investing in employees is fundamental to the Airport Authority's success and a key driver in continuing to be an employer of choice.

In order to attract and retain high performing employees, employee programs -- such as the wellness program -- add to employee commitment, decrease lost-time accidents and create a more positive work environment.

Work/life balance has become a corporate priority because it's important to Airport Authority employees and it also makes good business sense.

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Development

The employee wellness program at Vancouver International Airport Authority started in 2001 with an inter-departmental committee made up of both union and management employees, sponsored by the company's Executive Team.

The program is incentive-based, with employees being rewarded for making healthy and balanced life choices. It's an honour-based system, and participation in the program is voluntary.

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Fitness and Balance

In order to achieve success as a 'balanced' organization, the Airport Authority takes a multi-faceted approach to employee wellness.

The program, named *Fitness and Balance* to reflect its holistic nature, focuses on balance - with physical fitness being but one component.

The *Fitness and Balance* program has the mission of encouraging employees to make healthy lifestyle choices that are right for them - whether it's going for a run, meditating, getting involved in their community, being environmentally conscious or participating in committees at work.

It's an inclusive program that rewards the process, not just the end result.

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Implementation

The *Fitness and Balance* program has many components open to all staff, including:

- Monthly seminars and workshops;

- 'Lunch & Learn' sessions, such as stress management, smoking cessation, stability ball class, bike maintenance, etc.;
- Health-related newsletters on employee pay stubs;
- Continual programs, such as running clinics;
- Discounts at local fitness facilities;
- An annual wellness fair; and
- 'Outdoor Activity' days for employees and their families - such as local hikes, in-line skating, walks, etc.

Rewards and incentives for maintaining a balanced lifestyle are only for those employees formally registered in the program.

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Results

The results of the Airport Authority's employee health and safety program are, in many ways, difficult to measure.

There are, however, some strong indicators that show that both the company and its employees are seeing the benefits, including:

- Currently, more than one-third of employees are registered in the program for 2003;
- Total absenteeism dropped from 4.07% in 1999 to 2.56% in 2002;
- Workers Compensation Board (WCB) injuries dropped from 22 in 1999 to 6 in 2002; and
- WCB 'days lost' dropped from 223 in 1999 to 24 in 2002.

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Successes

The employee wellness program at Vancouver International Airport Authority has many tangible and intangible positive results.

Along with reducing total absenteeism and decreasing WCB 'days lost', *Fitness and Balance* helps to create a healthier and more satisfied group of employees with a high level of commitment to the Airport Authority.

In a recent employee survey, the top positive results reiterated this level of commitment. In fact, three statements that received a particularly high number of 'agree' or 'strongly agree' responses were:

- *"I would recommend the Airport Authority to others as a good place to work"*
- *"The Airport Authority is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment; and, most importantly*
- *"I am proud to be an employee of the Airport Authority."*

For more information on the Vancouver International Airport Authority, please visit www.yvr.ca.

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Vancouver International Airport Authority sponsors a running clinic for employees



An introduction to yoga class was offered to Airport Authority employees as one of many 'Lunch & Learn' sessions



For the past three years, Airport Authority employees have entered a rowing team into the annual Vancouver Community Corporate Rowing Challenge



Sushi making was a popular 'Lunch & Learn' for Airport Authority employees



The Fitness and Balance Committee has a booth every year at the annual Wellness Fair at Vancouver International Airport

[Click here](#) to see the full archive of case studies and to access information on the seven principles of highly successful physical activity in the workplace programs.

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Date Modified: 2005-03-08

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