

Ben Lavery IV from CSTC talks about Wellness and the benefits for the employee and the employer

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Posted by CSTC Staff

06 Feb 2019 09:00 AM

Ben Lavery IV talks about Wellness, and how that can help employees and employers, in regards to safety and productivity and efficiency in everything you do. Learn how CSTC is trying to focus on their employees wellness, and some of the less known benefits of wellness.

Transcript:

— Why is Wellness Important?

— I think that wellness is really important to workplace safety and I think that employers can really benefit their employees and their safety culture, by focusing on wellness. I know for me personally that it's something that I really work on and believe in and I don't mean just wellness in terms of physical wellness but I in terms of mental wellness. And I think there's a role to play for employers, not that I am again, being cautious with the legalities of taking responsibility for someone's mental and physical health, from the standpoint of wellness. I don't think we want to do and on the other side we spend eight hours a day, five days a week, or more, working often we can be such a positive influence on someone in terms of their health and wellness, and I think that that can pay dividends back to employers.

— **Benefits of Wellness**

— there's a ton of great studies out there that show that if someone is physically fit and mentally happy and doing things, that they have this really great life, they tend to be really great employees. So I think that there's a great potential for employers in general.

— I think at CSTC, we've really benefited by doing some really great things with our staff to benefit that and I think in the future there is a potential for CSTC to work with companies to help them develop their own wellness programs and doing that. Although at this point, we do not do that, we are a compliance company, but I see that as some of the future and I really encourage employers in general just to do little things that really help their employees to be healthy and it could be little things. Like for me I've tried more and more to bring apples and bananas with the doughnuts to the safety meeting. So I don't know if it makes a difference, they seem to eat the doughnut and the apple and the banana maybe, but at least they have some options.

— **How does Wellness help employees**

— I see that wellness aspect being a really big deal, and in my classes I'll often tell people I'll say "okay, what happens when you have an emergency?" Well you take care of yourself, you need to do that, but you also stop and take a deep breath right.

— And I really talk about being conscious of your breath and there's a whole world around being mindful of your breathing. I see that as part of that mental health and just encouraging employees, to you know, think about it be aware of their state of mind, being aware of the state of their body, I think can lead to great proactive safety culture, that has to do with the whole person and not just that you're accomplishing and checking off the boxes for the tasks that you have at work. Or even going beyond compliance, where you just check off the compliance boxes, but you actually get into a "how can this be better for everyone?" And umn, not just to get the job done in a safe way, but hey how can we overall do that, not get complacent, not be not getting stuck in that rut, and then also for new employees it will help them to feel welcome if they have those kinds of activities, tends to bring in the social element and really help cultures out there.

— **What activities has CSTC participated in to help with Wellness?**

— One of the activities that we did, in the past, was we did Ragnar relays. And we did it as the CSTC Ragnar team. We did it five years and we had a really great time. I think we still talk about that. I can see that there's a potential for us to maybe do this, there are other companies that do these kinds of things.

— Ragnar, um 200-mile run, that you did as a relay race, someone as always running. And we went from Huntington Pier to downtown San Diego. And you have support vans, they go along with the person, to make sure that they're okay and to group up twelve runners, six people in each van that would run that Ragnar relay race. Great, it was a great time and it was really beneficial to a lot of our employees, in terms of, that they had this event to really get healthy and physically fit for, and it was a great experience for us, to just to get to know each other and really see ourselves outside of that, normal everyday work space. Yep we've done picnics, together. In fact the last two years we've done a picnic in the spring. We visited the escape room and had a great time in the escape room. If you haven't done that, I, in fact took my family and went and did it a couple weeks ago as I follow up. Those, any of those activities we do. Our staff meeting, we, it was a great improvement last year at staff meeting, to instead of bringing in lunch, we had employees choose what lunch and then we paid for it. So some people really got into it and have their mom cooking tortillas and there they would make their favorite dish and bring it for lunch. That was a lot of fun. And we try to do it one or two really fun activities a year. We do our Christmas dinner, that everyone does but we try to pick a different restaurant in Bakersfield every year and take everyone and their significant other and go out and have a really nice meal together, and that's always great for us. We love doing those kinds of things so.

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Photos from CSTC running in the Ragnar Race

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