

Step 4. Action Plan

Make an action plan

After completing a needs assessment, you are ready to develop your action plan.

Set your priorities

Use the information you gathered in the needs assessment to prioritise the key health issues for your workplace.

Consider

- › What are the most important health issues?
- › How will addressing these issues support a healthy and productive workforce? For example, how many employees may benefit? How will the workplace benefit?
- › Can you address an issue quickly with small changes, or is it a complex issue requiring a longer timeframe and effort?
- › What challenges do you need to overcome?
- › Is it feasible to address the issues with the available resources?

Use these tools to help determine issues your action plan can address.

- › [Healthy People Snapshot](#)
- › [Healthy Places Survey](#)

Design your action plan

Once you know the key health issues for your workplace, you can choose the best way to address them. Include the following key elements in your action plan.

Goals

Goals are overarching statements that describe the aim of the program. Use your identified priority health issues to develop goals.

Examples:

- › encourage employees to quit smoking
- › encourage employees to increase their level of physical activity
- › encourage healthy eating at work
- › encourage the enhanced social and emotional wellbeing of employees.

Objectives

Objectives describe the measurable steps to achieve your goals. There can be several objectives for each goal. Test your objectives to make sure they meet the SMART criteria (outlined in the text box).

Examples include:

- › reducing the number of employees who smoke by 15% within 18 months
- › increasing the number of employees who accumulate 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week by 15 per cent within 12 months
- › increasing the number of employees purchasing healthy food from the canteen by 15% within 12 months
- › increasing employees' awareness and knowledge of social and emotional wellbeing within 6 months.

SMART principles—a useful approach to identifying objectives

Specific—to your workplace and employees. What are we doing and for whom? To what extent do we want to change employee attitudes, knowledge or unhealthy lifestyle behaviours?

Measurable—can we measure it? Can we count the results of an activity? Do we have baseline information to measure changes? For example, what is the number of employees purchasing healthy food from the canteen compared with the number of employees doing the same after we implement the strategies?

Achievable—can we get it done in the proposed timeframe with the resources and support we have available?

Realistic—are our objectives sensible and practical?

Timely—have we set a reasonable timeframe to make any changes/adjustments?

Strategies

Strategies are the ways to achieve your program objectives. Develop a list of strategies for each objective. Include a mix of Healthy People and Healthy Places strategies.

Healthy People strategies	Healthy Places strategies
Healthy People strategies focus on supporting all employees to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours. Look for strategies that make a healthy choice the easy choice and help employees to maintain the healthy changes they make.	Healthy Places strategies create healthy, supportive workplace environments. This includes changes to the physical, policy and cultural environments within a workplace.
Example of quit smoking strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Inform your employees about the harm caused by tobacco smoking and the benefits of quitting. › Promote and support employees to quit smoking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop and implement a smoke-free policy in the workplace.
Example of physical activity strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Inform your employees about the benefits of physical activity. › Promote team and group activities that encourage physical activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide facilities that support physical activity. › Develop and implement a flexible work options policy to support employees to be active.

Activities

Activities are the day-to-day tasks to achieve your strategies.

Once you have decided on your strategies, you can identify the actual activities required to make it happen. Include communication activities to promote your strategies—you may want to develop a separate communication plan.

Example activities for the quit smoking strategies include:

- › organise lunchtime information sessions about the benefits of quitting smoking and available support services
- › develop resources to promote lunchtime information sessions
- › organise a peer support program for employees trying to stay smoke-free
- › establish a working group to develop and implement a smoke-free policy
- › organise consultation forums during policy development
- › promote the policy online and in employee inductions.

Example activities for the physical activity strategies include:

- › provide information about physical activity to employees (e.g. newsletters, email, pay slips)
- › implement a 12-week team walking challenge—such as the 10,000 Steps Workplace Challenge <www.10000steps.org.au>
- › recruit a challenge coordinator and workplace champions to lead a walking challenge
- › order and install additional lockers for employees
- › seek management commitment to develop the flexible work options policy
- › organise a launch event to inform employees about the policy.

Timeframes

How long will each strategy take? Outline a realistic timeframe for each strategy. Getting your action plan backed by management is important, but also allow for employee feedback.

Who

Who will be involved in making it happen? Outline the people responsible for implementing each strategy of the action plan.

Resources

What will be required to implement your strategies? Consider people, time and costs.

Evaluation ideas

It's important to look at your action plan regularly, review feedback and adjust goals, objectives and strategies to ensure the wellness program's success.

How will you measure your successes? Don't wait until the end of the strategy. Record your evaluation ideas in your action plan. This will help you develop a more detailed evaluation plan in the next step.