



## The Five Biggest Mistakes Companies Make in Planning an Onsite Fitness Center — and how to avoid them!

It's easy to grasp the benefits of an onsite corporate fitness center. When people exercise regularly and are motivated to take care of themselves, they become healthier, more productive employees, with fewer absences and better morale. Companies who offer onsite fitness centers are able to recruit and retain higher quality workers while benefitting from lower insurance premiums and other expenses incurred from a less fit, underperforming workforce.

What's more difficult to figure out is how to design and implement a fitness center that attracts members and meets the desired objectives. If your company plans to launch an onsite fitness center, be sure to avoid the Top 5 costliest mistakes:

### **MISTAKE #1: Spending too much money on exercise equipment.**

Companies can easily over-budget on exercise equipment because they follow the recommendations of one salesperson rather than consider other options. Seek the advice of an unbiased consultant who can identify the quantity and type of equipment your company needs. Make sure you get two or more bids from equipment providers for comparison. Don't be dazzled by the latest technology in cardio machines. Consider the durability and how user-friendly the apparatus is. Understand that the leading exercise equipment manufacturers offer products that are similar in performance. When comparing bids, focus on price and warranties as well as how well each piece will appeal to the members of your fitness center.

### **MISTAKE: #2 Selecting too many types of weight machines.**

Exercise equipment manufacturers offer a full range of selectorized weight training machines, but some of the apparatus is ineffective and unnecessary. Don't feel pressured to order the entire line of machines! Stick with the core machines that provide user-friendly movements, and then supplement these with a good mix of free weights and other less-costly fitness training tools. The money you save on weight machines can be put towards additional cardio equipment or enhancing your group exercise area.



### **MISTAKE #3: Designing the fitness center with little flair or functionality.**

Nobody wants to work out at a fitness center that is in a remote location and made to look like bland office space jammed with exercise equipment. Extensive planning must go into the design and building of a successful facility. Work with a design team comprised of the architect, interior designer, and fitness consultant along with your contractor. Many issues surrounding the aesthetics, traffic flow, safety, and other features need to be considered to ensure that the fitness center is both attractive and functional.

### **MISTAKE #4: Not charging employees to use the fitness center.**

Interestingly, when companies do not charge their employees to use an onsite fitness center, participation is not as strong as when a fee is imposed. A membership fee raises the perceived value of a facility, and employees are more apt to join as long as the rate is significantly lower than the cost to join a commercial health club. Also, the fees can be used to help subsidize the fitness center's expenses as well as for promotional purposes.

### **MISTAKE #5: Leaving the fitness center unstaffed.**

Some companies with an onsite fitness center decide to leave it unstaffed. For obvious reasons, allowing employees to exercise without supervision is unsafe and exposes the company to potential liability that could prove disastrous. Less obvious is the fact that a qualified fitness staff is a major motivating factor for people. A well-managed, actively promoted fitness center attracts employees who wouldn't join without encouragement. The staff can offer a myriad of services and incentive programs that complement the fitness center, making it a much greater employee benefit than one that is unstaffed.

To learn more about how to avoid these — and other — mistakes, contact HealthEase, Inc. at 610-688-2040. You can also email HealthEase at [info@healtheasefitness.com](mailto:info@healtheasefitness.com). Be sure to request our tip sheet titled "Worksite Fitness Saves You Money."

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