

Healthy Behaviors Healthy People Healthy Companies

BY **Steven G. Aldana** PhD
AND
Troy Adams PhD



Introducing WellSteps 



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

—Margaret Mead

S MALL GROUPS OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD. We (Steven Aldana and Troy Adams) are committed to helping people adopt and maintain healthy behaviors in our effort to change the world. That’s why we founded WellSteps. We believe that helping people feel the power of change is our calling. We are passionate about inspiring personal transformation and from experience, we know that when people engage in healthy behaviors they transform into healthy people. Healthy people are more engaged and productive at home and at work. They consume less of every health-related employee benefit (health care, workers compensation, sick leave, short-term disability, and absenteeism) which helps create healthy companies. It’s not just companies that can benefit from having healthy people. Schools,

non-profit organizations, religious organizations, municipalities, and any other places where people work will become more effective and productive if the people who work there enjoy the benefits of good health.

Although healthy employees cost less, there is a more important even nobler reason to promote healthy behaviors. It transforms lives. For those who discover the new found benefits of a healthy diet and regular physical activity, the experience can be life changing. Some even refer to this transformation as a rebirth, a chance at a new, better life with more energy, a healthier body and a new found sense of vitality and spirit. Harnessing our commitment to improve the health of Americans is the WellSteps mission.

When we were creating WellSteps, we knew that if we were going to help as many people as possible improve their health, we would need to start

with those who have a vested interest in better health—worksites. Worksites are the only segment of our society that can benefit financially when people adopt and maintain healthy behaviors. At WellSteps, working with companies to help people adopt and maintain healthy behaviors is how we hope to change the world.

What Is Wellsteps?

WellSteps is a customizable wellness solution focused on helping people adopt and maintain healthy behaviors. When your employees use WellSteps they will change behaviors. This leads to improved health, lower health care costs, and increased productivity. People can and do change, but to do so, they need education and motivation. They need tools to help them change, and they need help changing their work and home environments so they can maintain healthy behaviors. In essence, we help them create and live in a culture of health.



WellSteps was created by Dr. Steven Aldana, one of the nation's foremost authorities on healthy living and author of best sellers: *The Culprit and The Cure* and the *Stop & Go Fast Food Nutrition Guide*; and Dr. Troy Adams, a nationally known health and wellness researcher and practitioner.

WellSteps uses the latest in web engineering and behavior change research to provide employees with a continuous stream of intuitive, engaging, and effective, behavior change programs. Employees will participate in 6 different behavior change programs per year. We still use many of the time tested wellness components like a health risk appraisal, effective communications, incentives, and peer support, but what makes WellSteps different from everyone else, is the emphasis our programs place on changing culture. Our programs change behavior and our cultural supports help maintain it.

How Does WellSteps Work?

First, your employees register and complete our Personal Health Assessment. This is our tailored health risk appraisal that helps employees see what they are doing right and what behaviors may need changing.

Upon completion of the Personal Health Assessment, employees have access to a WellSteps Program Center. The Program Center is the WellSteps hub. It's here that your employees can register for WellSteps programs, see the results of their Personal Health Assessment, watch videos, find recipes, locate their onsite WellSteps coordinator, and examine the calendar for upcoming programs.

At their Program Center, employees can use the interactive Personal Health Assessment tool or they can print out a copy of all their results.

When it is time for each of the WellSteps programs, we send out postcards and emails inviting employees to participate. Participation is always up to the employee. Employees keep track of their program participation and progress in their Program Center or by using the postcard that was mailed. Employees can get incentives when they complete any program.

WellSteps programs are turn-key from marketing to incentives and can be delivered to groups of any size in any location. Program marketing relies on US mail, email, company mail, posters, and webinars or conference calls with onsite coordinators. Our programs are available via online or paper/pencil in English, and via paper/pencil in Spanish. Programs focus on one behavior at a time, are 3-8 weeks long, use colorful materials, and use text written at the 6th grade level. The behavior change steps are simple, sequential, and fun.



“...what makes WellSteps different from everyone else, is the emphasis our programs place on changing culture...”



To sum it all up...To **Educate** your employees we:

- ◆ Offer six outstanding programs per year that will be announced to employees by mail and email
- ◆ Invite all benefits eligible employees to participate in the free WellSteps Personal Health Assessment (PHA)
- ◆ Deliver customized PHA feedback to all participants
- ◆ Communicate regularly with all benefits eligible employees by mail and email

To **Motivate** your employees we:

- ◆ Award incentives to randomly selected employees who meet simple program completion criteria. Each of the six programs is followed by incentives that can include iPods, airline tickets, gift cards, and other fun gifts.
- ◆ Use before and after stories from your employees to provide powerful peer support for others to change.
- ◆ Include your employees' families and significant others to help with peer support

Your employees get **Tools** to help them change when we:

- ◆ Give them books like *The Culprit and the Cure* and the *Stop & Go Fast Food Nutrition Guide* and others.
- ◆ Give every participant a pedometer
- ◆ Use video to show them how to shop for healthy food, cook healthy meals, and overcome exercise barriers

To change your **Environment** we help you:

- ◆ Complete a survey called the Checklist to Change which evaluates your worksite culture, policies, rules, and environmental factors that support or hinder healthy behavior
- ◆ Help you complete and use our tool called Plan to Change which will help a committee at your worksite identify and implement culture change strategies
- ◆ Designate a wellness coordinator within your company
- ◆ Appoint a wellness committee
- ◆ Share a letter of support from the CEO in our initial mailing

We are the first to admit that we don't have all the answers to America's poor health, but we're confident we're on the right track. By focusing on the problem—unhealthy employee behaviors, we know we are getting at the root cause of most chronic diseases. From this position we know we can prevent, arrest, and reverse many of the common chronic diseases that plague our country today. And as we continue to refine and improve different behavior change programs, we'll get even better. For us, helping your employees and their families experience better health is a lot of hard work, but it's the right thing to do. And at the end of everyday, if your people are just a little bit healthier, the world will be just a little bit better. ★

WellSteps.com



ABOUT **Steven G. Aldana** PhD

Dr. Steven G. Aldana is a former professor of Lifestyle Medicine in the Department of Exercise Sciences at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and he is an adjunct faculty member of the University of Illinois School of Medicine. Currently, Dr. Aldana is the CEO of WellSteps.com. He has spent his career researching and teaching about the impact of lifestyle on disease and quality of life.

Dr. Aldana has published over 60 research articles and has written five books on the connections between healthy living and disease prevention. He is a regular consultant to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, and the California Department of Health Services. In the past few years he has given over 80 invited lectures and keynote speeches around the United States. He has received numerous state, private, and federal grants to research how the adoption of healthy behaviors can prevent, arrest, and even reverse many common chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer.



ABOUT **Troy Adams** PhD

Dr. Troy Adams has been engaged in the health promotion industry for nearly 25 years. His research has focused on behavioral and psychosocial issues that impede people from experiencing optimal well-being. He has published several dozen articles and received nearly one million dollars in grants and contracts. His research has been presented at professional conferences all over the United States, in Great Britain and in Australia. He has also presented hundreds of invited lectures and speeches on personal effectiveness, wellness, and personal finance. He is currently the Vice President of WellSteps and a Principal in the Lifestyle Research Group. He also serves as a Graduate Program Director in the Health Promotion and Wellness Doctoral degree at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. Additionally, he is on the Editorial Board for the American Journal of Health Promotion and the National Wellness Institute Board of Trustees.



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