

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Global Survey Uncovers Drive By Managers To Lower Stress, Motivate & Encourage Employees

Motivational 'extras' playing increasing role as firms look to incentivise and retain talent

- Stress epidemic leading UK investment in employee wellness
- 50% of firms now have a wellness strategy
- Firms see extras as way of improving productivity and reducing 'presenteeism'

LONDON: 20 NOVEMBER 2009 – There has been a marked increase in the number of businesses providing 'Wellness Programmes' to motivate and retain staff. Half of the 64 major UK institutions surveyed by Buck Consultants had a wellness strategy for their employees in place in 2009, with employee stress the key factor in encouraging bosses to implement wellness initiatives.

The findings are revealed today in Buck Consultants 3rd annual report on employer approaches to managing employee wellness, entitled "WORKING WELL: A Global Survey of Health Promotion and Workplace Wellness Strategies". Worldwide, the survey analyzed responses from more than 1,100 organizations representing 10 million employees in 45 countries.

Buck Consultants also revealed that 97% of the UK companies that presently implement a wellness programme said they were motivated by the objective of improving worker productivity and reducing "presenteeism" (employees who stay longer hours in the office to give the impression of productivity but who do no productive work). 30% of UK companies who measured employee productivity and presenteeism after implementing a wellness strategy said they had seen major, or fairly major, impact and that overall productivity had improved.

On a global level, the research found that 46% of multinational companies have implemented a wellness strategy, a rise of more than a fifth in the past year. Survey respondents predict that the fastest-growing components of wellness initiatives around the world will increase 100 percent or more over the next three years. These include technology-driven tools – such as Web portals, online healthy lifestyle programs, and personal health records. Another rapidly growing category includes on-site programs, such as caregiver support, personal health coaching, and healthy vending machine food choices.

Adrian Norris, Managing Director of the Health and Productivity practice at Buck Consultants UK said, "Improving the health and wellbeing of employees is not only part of a company's duty of care to its staff, it can be a cost effective way for companies to improve their productivity and help retain top talent. Stress levels are higher in the workplace and the negative impact this can have on motivation, productivity and employee churn is notable.

"Historically, companies have incentivised staff financially, but particularly in the wake of the credit crunch, finding a means to motivate your workforce, improve their wellbeing and thus their efficiency by other means can make a big difference to the financial health of the business", he added.

While 30% of companies in the UK said there is no current wellness strategy, they do offer numerous existing wellness initiatives in their organisations. "Soft" benefits such as gym membership, earning extra holiday and lifestyle management support are increasingly attractive to employees, and more UK companies are viewing them as a supplement to traditional financial incentives.

"The fact that organisations continue to expand wellness programmes, and are taking an ever more active role in the general wellness of their staff is to be welcome," concluded Norris despite this lack of measurement, suggests the intuitive value of improved employee health remains a major motivator for employers," said Norris, "Employers also recognise that health outcomes and behaviour changes inspired by wellness programmes are likely to take many years to manifest themselves in the form of measurable savings."

64 major UK companies participated in the research, representing more than 350,000 UK employees.

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About Buck

Buck Consultants, an ACS company, is a leader in human resource and benefits consulting with more than 1,700 professionals worldwide. Buck is an innovator in the areas of retirement benefits, health and welfare programs, human capital management, compensation, and employee communication. News and other information about Buck Consultants are available at www.buckconsultants.co.uk. Buck is an independent subsidiary of Affiliated Computer Services, Inc.

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About "WORKING WELL: A Global Survey of Health Promotion and Workplace Wellness Strategies"

The survey analysed responses from more than 1,100 organizations in 45 countries representing more than 10 million employees. Buck Consultants' survey was conducted in association with CIGNA, International Health Consulting, Pfizer, and WorldatWork.

The 64 participating U.K. organizations represent more than 350,000 employees in a broad range of industries.

About the co-sponsors

CIGNA (www.cigna.com) is a global health service company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being, and security, providing an integrated suite of medical, dental, behavioral health care, health coaching, and wellness programs to people around the world. **vielife** (www.vielife.com), a division of CIGNA, is a leading provider of global health and productivity solutions including online health assessment and behavioral change programs available in Chinese, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Hispanic, and English.

Pfizer (www.pfizer.com) is committed to being a global leader in health care and to helping change millions of lives for the better through providing access to safe, effective and affordable medicines and related health care services to the people who need them.

Wolf Kirsten International Health Consulting (www.wolfkirsten.com) helps international corporations, organizations, and governments improve the quality of life of their respective population through innovative, culturally appropriate, and cost-effective health promotion programs.

WorldatWork (worldatwork.org) is a global human resources association focused on compensation, benefits, work-life and integrated total rewards to attract, motivate and retain a talented workforce. Founded in 1955, WorldatWork provides a network of more than 30,000 members and professionals in 75 countries with training, certification, research, conferences and community. It has offices in Washington, D.C. and Scottsdale, Arizona.