Step Ahead Challenge

The E.W. Scripps Company, a growing media enterprise with television, radio, and digital media brands, wanted to create a culture that empowers its employees to think health first. But company leaders weren’t sure how a business with nearly 5,000 employees in more than 20 markets throughout the United States could create an engaging employee wellness program that would be effective, easily manageable, and fun. Then, they met Viverae®.

Where Scripps saw an obstacle, Viverae, an industry leader in workplace wellness, saw an opportunity. Viverae’s wellness coordinators helped Scripps inject wellness into its corporate DNA. A Viverae wellness coordinator is personally engaged in members’ health and wellness, and becomes the coach, quarterback, and cheerleader for the wellness program.

Viverae helped Scripps launch the Step Ahead Challenge, a four-week, physical activity Challenge that encouraged employees to increase the number of steps taken each day using a device to track steps through the MyViverae® portal.

To promote the event to the 2,200 eligible employees, Scripps and Viverae collaborated to kick off a marketing campaign that reached beyond state borders and engrossed employees in a companywide competition. Scripps created a promotional video to introduce the Challenge and get the competitive juices flowing, while Viverae’s wellness coordinators released weekly updates to show what teams were on the move.

Employees formed more teams, and the friendly rivalry grew.

“The ability to compete with teams in the company in different regions really pushed people to become more engaged in the program and compete,” said Kevin Donoghue, director of benefit operations for Scripps. “I saw employees encouraging each other to increase steps.”

According to Donoghue, employee participation soared. Teams met during lunch to walk and scheduled 10-minute breaks to get more steps in during the 28-day Challenge.

RESULTS

The overall winner, Dennis Supple of KMGH in Denver, Colorado, received a pair of customized Nike sneakers for completing 1,089,150 steps! In addition to the grand prize winner, teams competed to earn gift cards and bragging rights.

The biggest winner, however, was the entire company.
Step Ahead Challenge Results:

- **74** Teams
- **211,681** Average Total Steps Per Participant
- **423** Total Participants

Step Ahead Challenge **Grand Totals**

- **89,540,900** Total steps
- **1.8** Times around the Earth
- **44,770** Miles
- **8** Trips from San Francisco to New York

The most encouraging part of the Step Ahead Challenge has been the continuous effort of employees to walk each day.

“The Challenge is over and employees are still walking and having friendly competitions,” said Donoghue. “The participation is better than we could have wanted.” Scripps now provides a free Fitbit to new employees to motivate them to hit the ground running—or walking. The objective has been to build a culture that inspires employees to think health first, and thanks to activities like the Step Ahead Challenge, and the dedication of Viverae’s wellness coordinators, Scripps is well on its way.

**FINAL ANALYSIS**

Research has proven that even simple exercise, such as walking, lowers your risk of heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer, and increasing physical activity along with improving overall well-being are at the core of Viverae’s program design and company structure.

Viverae helps companies reach their goal of building and sustaining a culture of health. Scripps’ impressive results show just how far a culture of health can take an organization with a Viverae wellness program.