

Yoga in the Workplace Finding Strength, Flexibility and Peace

By Tim Brewer

Yoga is intended to unite the mind, body and spirit. If you want to bring together your workforce for something fun and a little different, consider offering a yoga class.

In our ongoing series focused on workplace wellness, we've explored a few traditional topics – burning calories, the annual New Year's resolution and eating on the go. Although yoga is one of the oldest and most popular practices around the globe, it wasn't until the last decade that it became common in American business wellness programs.

I highly encourage you to consider offering yoga to your employees. Survey them to see if they would be interested in bringing yoga or other options like aerobics, Pilates or meditation to your place of business. A balanced wellness program with educational opportunities, health screenings, incentives – and organized exercise and nutrition programs – could help boost employee productivity, health and retention.

We offer yoga to our employees once a week during the lunch hour. While still a rookie, I will gladly give two thumbs up to the power of yoga. Yes, I was a bit hesitant at first, but once I shed my macho cape and opened my arms to something new, I was pleasantly surprised by how great it made me feel. As mentioned in a previous wellness article, injecting variety with cardiovascular training, weightlifting and stretching is a great method to improve your health. But, let's be honest. Not everyone wants to lift weights with the “professionals” at the gym or try to jog while dodging the dogs and bikes on their favorite trail. Yoga offers health benefits and, unlike many other activities, it can be held in any open area at your place of business.

Yoga has benefits for physical, mental and spiritual health. It will help the body grow stronger, more flexible and more toned. I call it “get bendy time,” because I feel like Gumby when I'm finished with our one-hour session. I now know how to

stretch properly, and it is amazing how much better I recover after workouts at the gym. Yoga helps increase lubrication of your joints, tendons and ligaments. In addition, certain movements massage your organs, helping fight disease. Yoga helps you relax, handle stressful situations more easily, and focus your mind and breathing. Walking away relaxed and refreshed from our Monday yoga session is something I look forward to each week.



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Katie Meyer, a regular participant in our class, summarizes her experience: “For me, yoga is not only a great way to beat stress and relax, but it actually improves my focus for the rest of the work day. Plus, yoga has improved my flexibility and muscle tone. Not only is it great for your mind and spirit, but it can also be a terrific workout for your body.”

Sally Brown of Peace Through Yoga leads our weekly class. Visit www.peacethroughyoga.com to learn more about yoga instruction. Do a quick search online for yoga instructors in your community to find out their rates and availability.

Get some comfortable clothes and a yoga mat – and make it happen in your workplace. You will see benefits immediately and likely find a new form of exercise to work into your schedule on a regular basis.

INFORMATION LINK

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