Important Tips for Management Support of the Healthy Work Participatory Program

The Design Team (DT) identifies employee health/safety issues, and generates possible work improvements and health promotion solutions. The goal is to present a range of alternative interventions that will be evaluated for selection by the management Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee (SC) plays a crucial role in evaluating, selecting, and implementing the proposed interventions. The Steering Committee works with the Design Team in the implementation stage, soliciting input from them and other affected staff.

Collaboration, teamwork, and trust can result from positive interactions between the SC and DT groups. Below are examples of what management can do to achieve these outcomes.

After the Design Team presents an intervention proposal:
1. Communicate formal status updates to DT (written or verbal) within 4 weeks and continuously as research and implementation proceeds. It is essential for the DT to receive constructive feedback (see tips below for supporting design process).
2. Evaluate intervention options as provided by DT according to your IDEAS key performance indicators. Be sure to explain your estimates of KPIs if they are substantially different from the estimates provided by the DT.
   • Identify potential obstacles to each activity/solution and how they can be overcome.
   • Identify departments, budget sources, personnel, and other resources available.
   • Estimate anticipated costs for implementation.
   • Estimate benefits not already specified by DT as possible evaluation measures.
   • Estimate the time frame needed for considering and/or implementing each intervention.
3. Recommend priorities and/or sequencing for implementation of specific activities; you may recommend pilot-testing certain activities before full-scale implementation.

Once Steering Committee selects an intervention to be implemented:
4. Create a plan for implementation. Use project planning tools to document roles and deadlines so that everyone shares a common understanding of what will happen next. (A sample action plan table is available on the “IDEAS Step 6” webpage: www.uml.edu/cphnewtoolkit.)
5. Develop a communication plan for the intervention to inform workers, supervisors, and middle- and upper-management.
6. Determine staffing and financial resources necessary to implement an intervention; communicate with appropriate departments to generate support and initiate implementation.
7. Recommend roles for continued involvement of the DT in any further intervention planning, implementation, and evaluation.
8 Tips for SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION during the Design Process:

- **Acknowledge** the DT's learning and effort involved in generating alternatives to address ergonomic and health concerns using the IDEAS process.
- If there are points unexplained in the intervention alternatives, **provide feedback and ask** for rationale behind proposed activities.
- **Invite** DT members to participate in or present the intervention alternatives in key meetings where their input could assist the decision process.
- **Suggest and assure** DT member involvement wherever appropriate, such as in discussions about work process redesign or product selection during intervention implementation.
- **Invite** DT members to assist with evaluation of the interventions.
- **Follow through** on promised communication timeline, even if decisions are not yet reached. Long periods without feedback without any form of feedback will be interpreted by the DT as a "vote of no confidence" in their ideas.
- **Provide action items** with decision points identified along with explicit dates of completion/delivery.
- **Assume** that improved quality and/or productivity (customer service, company success) will go hand-in-hand with employee health improvements.