



Pillar 3

Workplace Environment

**Why does workplace
environment matter in
building a culture of health
and well-being?**

*Insights from NEXTpert, Cheryl Christensen,
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Why is Pillar 3 – Workplace Environment – important to employers?

“The workplace environment can be very influential in sending messages to the employee's family, the “smell of the place,” to quote a famous author. It can be motivating and encouraging, sending positive messages about value, health, and success. Alternatively, the workplace environment can be mundane or even detrimental to business success and employee morale, engagement, and retention.”



How does Pillar 3 – Workplace Environment – contribute to a culture of health, safety, and well-being?

“This is a critical fork in the road for companies, large and small. It can provide, at not a huge expense, a work environment that encourages healthy choices and behaviors, or it can do the opposite, facilitating unhealthy decisions. ”



How does Pillar 3 – Workplace Environment – affect the workforce population?

“Our environment, whether at work or home, is either nurturing and life-giving, protective and encouraging, or negative and punitive, driving us to unhealthy choices and behaviors. Of course, it can be somewhere in between, but to live life to our full potential and give our best, we must be acknowledged and encouraged. So, the workplace environment greatly influences the workforce population, its engagement, productivity, creativity and overall success in business and life.”



Why does sequencing matter for this pillar?

“To achieve optimal success in employee health programs, employers should follow an appropriately sequenced multipronged strategic plan that includes health benefits plans, health and wellness activities, marketing, and communications. This plan should be based on a comprehensive understanding of employee health opportunities, which can be gained through diligent review of health data warehouses, employee characteristics, and employee listening groups. Without a sequencing and plan for implementation, the simple rollout of individual programs/benefits can be fragmented and lead to suboptimal success and frustration.”



A NEXTpert's tips on incorporating Pillar 3 – Workplace Environment – into a workplan:

- **Sequencing matters:** The first step is senior leadership support with visible messaging and budget support with clear success measures and tracking
- **Communicate, communicate, communicate:** Communicate in ways your business, be it local, national, or global, will understand and embrace



“The key factors associated with this pillar include sending healthy signals and cues in several ways. This includes demanding a tobacco/vaping-free environment and providing assistance through benefits design for cessation. It also involves encouraging healthy nutrition by providing healthy foods to make it easy to make a healthy choice. Additionally, there should be a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion with a foundation of focus on the social determinants of health (transportation, food, nutrition, social connectedness through needs assessment and tailored health promotion communications and community-clinical linkages). By focusing on a culture of health and well-being with a Social well-being lens (DE&I plus SDoH), employers can support health and well-being that is inclusive of all employees.”

– *NEXTpert, Cherryl Christensen, DO, MS, FACOEM*

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