Ancient Wellness Practices
Day of rest, yoga, meditation, food as medicine, nature-based medicine, etc.

1830s-60s
Europe/US passed legislation to abolish slavery, a positive step in worker’s human rights (still an ongoing issue in some parts of the world)

1884
Early Adopters: Pullman Car Company built a company town for their workforce: it was composed of a library, theater, hotel, church, market, sewage farm, park, and residential buildings

1911
Early Adopters: Wanamaker’s Employees were to be treated respectfully by management (including not being scolded in public), and John Wanamaker & Company offered its employees access to the John Wanamaker Commercial Institute, as well as free medical care, recreational facilities, profit sharing plans, and pensions

1930s-50s
Unions: Regulated hours, negotiated wages, workers’ rights, occupational safety/health, workers’ comp

1980s
Stress management; fitness movement; rise in sedentary jobs; onsite gyms; cardiac rehab/safe return to work

1990s
Workplace Health Promotion Movement/Jakarta Declaration from the WHO and EU

2000s
Growing number of disease management programs, wellness programs; tools and resources; escalating costs related to healthcare spend in industrialized nations

2008
Economic meltdown; more focus on mental and financial well-being; obesity crisis

Present Day
Built environment, access to outdoors (and biophilia) and emphasis on supporting employees’ families (work/life balance and health initiatives)

The Future
Fluid, autonomous work spaces, places and times; intertwined relationship between communities and organizations; broad individual access to wellness through modern use of ancient wellness practices such as mindfulness and energy management, plus new science and telemedicine for employees and loved ones

To learn more about the Wellness at Work Initiative and download a Culture of Well-Being and Care Questionnaire to evaluate your organization, visit https://www.globalwellnessinstitute.org/wellness-at-work-initiative-resources

WELLNESS AT WORK

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

THE BUILDING BLOCKS

CULTURE OF CARE: THE FOUNDATION

HOW WE GOT HERE
The Path of Worksite Well-being History

1990s
Employee Health Programs

1980s
State requirements for on-site health care

1980s
Women in the workforce helped reshape gender norms/roles and laid the foundation for women doing more “male” jobs

1984
Early innovators: Andersen Consulting

1930s-50s
Union regulations that mandated regular vacations, parental leave, work/life balance policies

1830s-60s
Women worked in factories

Ancient Wellness Practices

1884
Early innovators: Founder’s Circle

1884
Early innovators: National Association of Manufacturers

1911
Early innovators: John Wanamaker

1911
Early innovators: Pullman Car

1930s-50s
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WELLNESS AT WORK

LEVEL 2
Clarity, drive and integration

LEVEL 4
Goals

LEVEL 3
Healthy Foods

LEVEL 1
Financial Well-being

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & FINANCIALLY HEALTHIER COMPANIES*

147% higher earnings per share
22% higher profitability
41% lower quality incidents/defects
48% fewer safety incidents
10% higher customer satisfaction
21% higher productivity
25-65% lower turnover
37% lower absenteeism

Sources: *Gallup research **

The Future of Wellness at Work Report.

For more worksite wellness history, see Appendix A, page 39.

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