

CASE STUDY:

# Big changes for small business



## Victorian Workplace Mental Wellbeing Collaboration

### Mkt. Communications

As a PR and marketing agency providing the skills and expertise of their employees to clients, people come first at Mkt. Communications; alongside the need to challenge, recognise, enrich and support staff to deliver excellent customer service.

Developed with the input of all staff, the agency's wellness program aims to educate staff on how to balance the stress and pressure of providing excellent quality work to a deadline with the need to look after their health and wellbeing.

Mkt. Communications' investment in health and wellbeing has had a positive ripple effect on the business and is enthusiastically endorsed by employees who have seen improvements in their ability to deal with stress and their work satisfaction.

#### The balancing act

Mkt. Communications recognises that its 12 employees spend more of their waking life at work than anywhere else. Like every organisation, Mkt. Communications needs to attract and retain the best people. However, as a service-based organisation in the business of selling skills and time, it also needs to ensure employees are consistently providing clients with their best work.

Working to the timeline of a range of clients can be stressful and may at times require employees to work long days, spending too much time in front of the computer. This makes it difficult to balance home and work life to maintain a healthy lifestyle of eating well, regular exercise and sufficient rest.

Dealing with a fast-paced environment means making a routine of taking time out away from work, so that it becomes the norm to eat lunch outside the office, take regular breaks and avoid taking work home.



Watch this **case study in full** or click one of the questions below to see its answer:

#### Questions:

Where did you start the process of developing a mental health and wellbeing program – what were the first steps?

How did you determine which initiatives would be relevant to your organisation?

What initiatives did you implement as part of the program?

How did you get your employees on board with the program?

How will you measure the success of the program?

How important has the role of leadership been in undertaking this work?

What advice would you give workplaces considering a workplace wellbeing program?

How successful has the program been?

### Health and wellbeing at the heart of the business

The focus of the Mkt. Communications wellness program, 'An Upgraded Life', is on supporting staff to look after themselves and the planet. There are a series of activities over a 12-month period with three quarters devoted to mind, body and spirit, with the final quarter as employee choice. Voted on by employees, activities might include an inbox and time management course, Ayurvedic doctor consultation or meditation training.

In addition to a daily meditation at 4pm and a policy of not sending emails before 7am or after 6pm, there are also regular activities such as:

- Mindful Monday when staff practice mindfulness throughout the day and eat lunch away from their desks.
- Wellness Wednesday where an activity is organised by staff with a budget of \$12 per person
- Freedom Friday when the company closes early at 3 or 4pm in the summer
- Staff get a day off on their birthday, can take one personal leave day per quarter, and are funded to volunteer for two days per year
- Staff can award 'upgrade slips' to colleagues, and the person with the most slips at the end of the quarter receives \$250 to put towards an activity of their choice linked to the theme of the quarter.

### Multiple returns on investment

Mkt. Communications invests approximately \$30,000 per annum in employee wellness, but the company doesn't try to quantify a return on investment because the Director, Skye Tipler is convinced that the investment has a positive ripple effect that pays off in many and varied ways. 'We put our team front and centre, knowing that if we take care of our people, our people will take care of our clients and this makes great business sense,' she says.

[www.mktcommunications.com.au](http://www.mktcommunications.com.au)

Erin Roy, Account Director says: 'As a senior team member, the wellness program has benefited me in massive ways both personally and professionally. After a few months with the team, my husband even noticed my ability to start letting the small things go and to breathe and assess before I react to crises and emails.'

Account Manager, Katey Power says: 'My whole attitude towards how workplaces run and staff interact has changed since starting at Mkt. Coming into a fast-paced role with more responsibility, you would think that stress levels would rise immediately, but Mkt. has a culture unlike any other agency I've been a part of, and it helps each and every employee find their balance inside and out of the office. The emphasis placed on employee wellbeing here makes work an enjoyable part of my week, not just a necessity. It has changed my mood about coming to work, my demeanour in the office and my outlook about my career path knowing that I have the support and backing of my directors every day.'

The Victorian Workplace Mental Wellbeing Collaboration is a partnership between SuperFriend, VicHealth and WorkSafe Victoria. We are working together to help workplaces create positive and supportive work cultures and environments by focusing on organisational leadership and encouraging workplaces to implement positive mental wellbeing strategies that enhance existing policies and processes.

For more information, please visit:

[www.leadingwellvic.com.au](http://www.leadingwellvic.com.au)

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