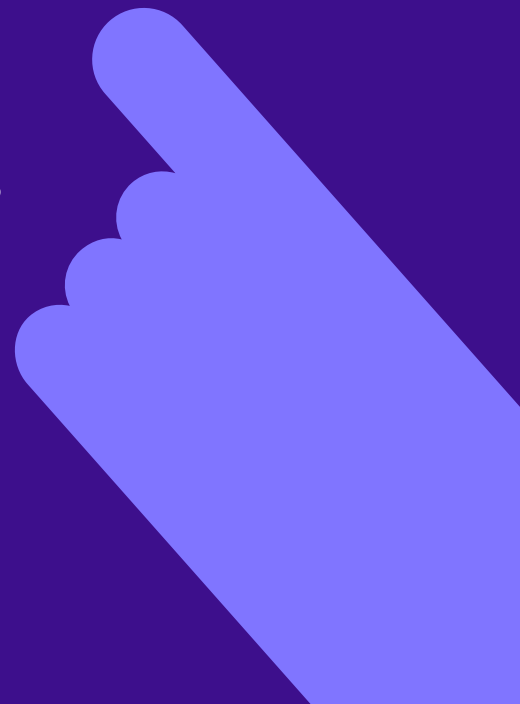


CSSC

Active Wellbeing

Top ten tips on getting active with your colleagues

Staying active is important for both physical and mental wellbeing but finding time to exercise can be challenging when balancing work commitments. One of the best ways to stay active is by incorporating movement into your workday with colleagues. Not only does this improve health and productivity, but it also fosters teamwork and camaraderie. Here are ten top tips for getting active with your work colleagues.



1. Organise Walking Meetings

Instead of sitting in a conference room for every meeting, take it outside! Walking meetings are a great way to get some fresh air, increase physical activity, and boost creativity. Research shows that walking can enhance cognitive function and improve mood, making it an excellent alternative to traditional sit-down discussions. If weather permits, find a nearby park or walking path and conduct your meeting on the go. Encourage colleagues to bring comfortable shoes and make it a habit for brainstorming sessions. They are especially helpful if you have colleagues working remotely, who can easily join in and don't feel left out or removed from the main conversation.

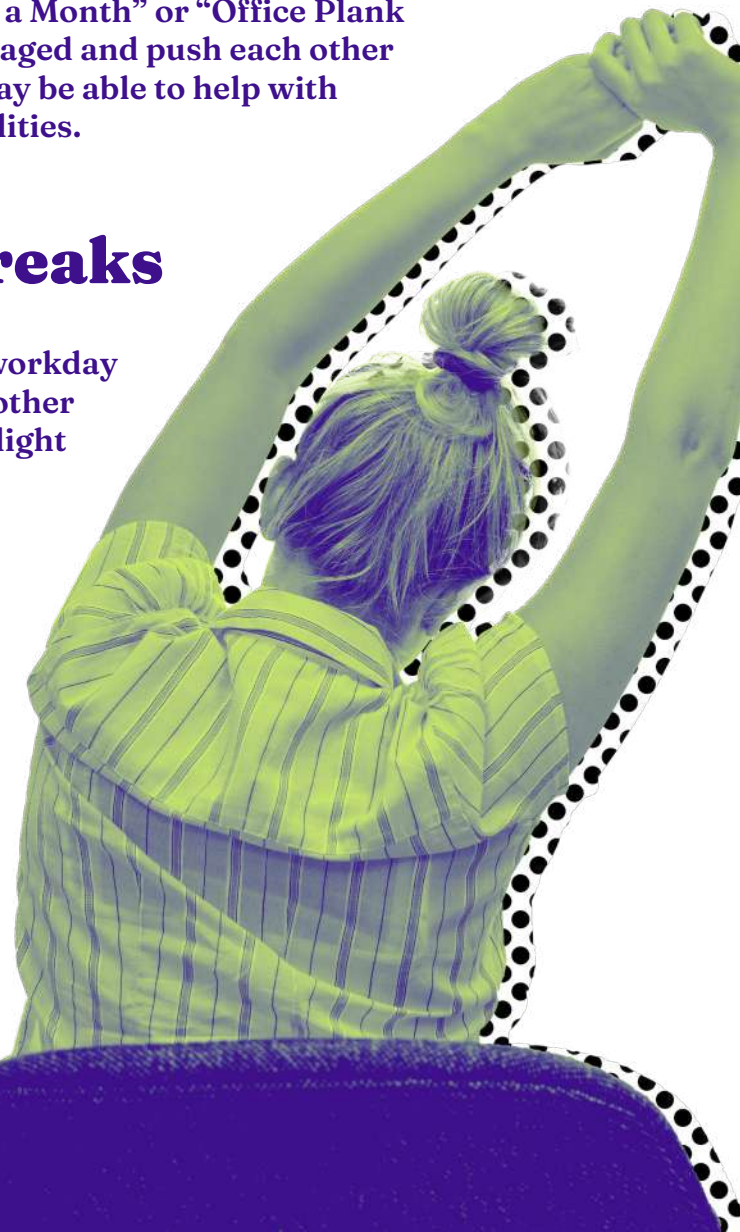
2. Set Up a Workplace Fitness Challenge

A bit of friendly competition can be a great motivator. Organise a workplace fitness challenge where employees track steps, workouts, or other physical activities. Just like this month's Active Wellbeing Around-the-World Challenge, The Around-the-UK step challenge coming this May, or CSSC's exclusive Active Wellbeing Autumn.

In between these great events, why not arrange your own mini version for your workplace of team? Apps like Strava, Fitbit, or MyFitnessPal can help with tracking progress. Set achievable goals and offer small incentives for milestones, such as a healthy lunch or an extra break. Challenges like "Most Steps in a Month" or "Office Plank Challenge" can encourage colleagues to stay engaged and push each other to be more active. The Active Wellbeing funds may be able to help with hiring or purchasing equipment, training or facilities.

3. Implement Active Breaks

Encourage short, active breaks throughout the workday to get people moving. Instead of reaching for another cup of coffee, take a few minutes for stretching, light exercises, or even a quick dance break. Simple activities like standing up and stretching every hour, doing a few squats, or using a standing desk can make a big difference. Office-wide reminders or apps like Pomodoro timers can prompt employees to take active breaks. If you're lucky enough to have kitchens or tea machines in your workplace, you can take the long way round to get a few more extra steps to really earn your snack. If your workplace has multiple floors, consider taking the stairs if possible, rather than the lift.



4. Create a Lunchtime Workout Group

Lunchtime provides a perfect opportunity to get moving. Form a group that participates in activities like yoga, a short run, or a brisk walk during lunch. Many companies have on-site gyms, but if yours doesn't, nearby parks or fitness studios may offer lunchtime sessions. Exercising together during lunch not only helps with fitness goals but also improves mood and afternoon productivity. Check out cssc.co.uk to see what gyms you can save up to 33% off memberships. And use their expertise to organise a local active community group.

5. Start a Sports Team or Club

If you have a group of colleagues who enjoy sports, consider starting a company team. Activities such as football, basketball, volleyball, or even bowling can be great for team-building and fitness. Some local leagues cater specifically to businesses, offering a great way to bond outside of the office while staying active. Even if you don't join a league, organising a weekly or monthly game can be a fun way to break up the work routine. If you don't have enough colleagues to make a team, consider sports and activities which just require two members, such as badminton, squash or even darts, pool, scrabble or chess.

6. Use Active Commuting Options

Encourage colleagues to walk, cycle, or use public transport to get to work instead of driving. If possible, create incentives for active commuting, such as reimbursement for public transport or discounts on bike-sharing programmes. Organising a "Bike to Work" day or setting up a carpool that involves parking further from the office to encourage walking are small steps that can lead to a more active workplace. If you commute, like others in your workplace, you can agree to meet 10 minutes away from the workplace and walk or push yourselves the rest of the way. Those valuable 10 minutes before/after the working day with few other distractions can be extremely valuable in really getting to know your colleagues and for winding down or gearing up for the day ahead.



7. Host Wellness Events and Workshops

Arrange wellness events that focus on physical activity, such as yoga sessions, group stretching, or guided meditation. Bringing in fitness professionals to lead sessions or offering short exercise classes during lunch hours can encourage participation. Health and wellness fairs, workshops on posture and movement, or demonstrations on desk exercises like CSSC's Chairobics, can educate employees on the benefits of staying active at work. Remember to keep activities fully inclusive for all and grow in size as they become more popular. Try booking out a meeting room before the working day starts when availability might be higher and start the day with a 30 minute group stretch. CSSC's Active Wellbeing funds might be able to help cover the costs of a fitness professional who can guide you for the first classes and you can go it alone after that. You may even have part-time health enthusiasts among your teammates who would love to lead your group in a yoga or Pilates class.

8. Introduce Standing or Treadmill Desks

Sitting for prolonged periods has been linked to numerous health issues, including obesity and cardiovascular disease. Standing desks or treadmill desks provide an easy way to stay active while working. If possible, provide these options for employees, or set up a shared standing desk space where people can take turns using it. Even swapping out chairs for exercise balls occasionally can promote movement and better posture. These larger exercise balls can be reused in group fitness classes and can be purchased through CSSC savings for discounted prices. Active Wellbeing funding may be able to help advise on bulk purchases for the best possible savings.

9. Plan Active Team-Building Activities

Instead of traditional happy hours or sit-down dinners, opt for team-building activities that involve movement. Activities such as rock climbing, escape rooms, hiking, or obstacle course races encourage teamwork while keeping everyone active. Office outings to trampoline parks, bowling alleys, or mini-golf courses are also fun alternatives to traditional social events. For history buffs you can organise lunchtime walks which take in local sites and points of interest, run by resident experts or novice enthusiasts. Without centring activities around evening entertainment or alcohol, they may become more engaging and inclusive for a wider audience.



10. Foster a Supportive Culture

The most important aspect of getting active with colleagues is creating a workplace culture that values movement and wellbeing. Encourage management to lead by example and participate in fitness initiatives. Recognise employees who engage in physical activities and promote wellness within the organisation. Consider whether it is important or practical to include an employee end-of-year objective to look after their health and wellbeing to really encourage colleagues to take care of their own wellbeing. When an active lifestyle is celebrated, more people will be inclined to join in and make fitness a workplace priority. Remember to keep activities inclusive to provide options for all ages, genders and abilities. Look for feedback and ideas on which activities and events might be popular with email circulars, notice boards and of course get some extra steps in by walking around colleagues' workspaces and having a chat.

Activate your colleagues

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