

Public Health England Releases New Health Guidelines for Companies

Posted April 28, 2018

Category : Health

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

1. **outreach** / **ˈaʊt ɹɪtʃ** / (adj) – referring to the process or act of providing advice or services to people who are in need
Example: The **outreach** program aims to help feed the homeless.
2. **accountability** / **ə ˌkaʊn təˈbɪl ɪ ti** / (n) – the state of being responsible for something
Example: Supervisors have the **accountability** to help improve their staff’s performance.
3. **foster** / **ˈfɒ stər, ˈfʊs tər** / (v) – to promote or encourage
Example: The company aims to **foster** work-life balance among employees.
4. **musculoskeletal** / **ˈmʌs kyə lʊəˈskel ɪ tl** / (adj) – relating to the muscles and bones
Example: Office workers are encouraged to stand every two hours to prevent **musculoskeletal** disorders.
5. **side by side** / **sɑɪd baɪ sɑɪd** / (idiom) – together
Example: The government is working **side by side** with some businesses to promote its health campaign.

Article

Read the text below.

Public Health England (PHE) has released a set of health guidelines for companies in March this year.

The PHE’s 55-page health guidelines, which were developed in cooperation with **outreach** charity Business in the Community, urge companies to motivate their employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle. The guidelines emphasize the employers’ **accountability** when it comes to **fostering** a work environment that promotes good health habits and does not put an employee’s health at risk.

The guidelines contain specific action plans that companies can follow to promote a healthy lifestyle in the workplace. For one, companies are urged to aid employees in doing physical activities more frequently. Doing so can improve mental health and reduce the risk of **musculoskeletal** disorders, which greatly contribute to employee absences.

In addition, other parts of the guidelines highlight the importance of healthy eating and maintaining a healthy weight. Employees are encouraged to prepare their own food so that they can control what they eat and how much calories they consume. The guidelines even recommend bringing healthier alternatives like fruits and vegetables instead of cakes and other treats during special events at work.

Aside from the said guidelines, the PHE has also challenged food companies to have a 20% calorie reduction in their products by 2024. Known as the 400-600-600 tip, the challenge limits calorie intake to 400 for breakfast and 600 each for lunch and dinner. Leading businesses are now working **side by side** with the PHE by promoting meals that follow the said calorie count.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- In your opinion, should the PHE’s health guidelines be strictly imposed on employees? Why or why not?

- Do you think that companies in your country prioritize the health of their employees? What made you say so?

Discussion B

- Do you think that reducing calorie intake is enough to improve one's health? Why or why not?

- Aside from calorie count, what other factors should people consider when deciding on what food to eat (e.g. method of preparation, sugar content)? Explain your answer.

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