



# Case Study for Viking Industries



## Viking Industries Healthcare Challenge:

As one of the largest corrugated packaging companies in the Northeastern United States, Viking Industries employs a staff of 58 with job duties ranging from skilled manufacturing labor, tractor trailer drivers, office support staff, sales executives and upper level managers.

*"With our diversified employee mix, Viking views our greatest asset and industry leading differentiator to be our employees. It is a strategic goal of Viking to insure that our employees and their families are well equipped and enabled to protect their greatest asset, their HEALTH."*

—Richard Croce, Sr.

## Viking Industries' Wellness Program Evaluation Criteria:

The Management Team at Viking embarked on a search for new and innovative programs that "break the mold" of the typical industry standard programs which "subsidize a fitness center membership" or "send employees junk mail brochures on the benefits of exercise and fitness."

As part of this industry analysis, Viking identified the 5 major criteria that they felt were needed in order to offer the company's employees a program that would enable them and encourage them to succeed. A program with these criteria would need to be a program that allowed participants to:

- Establish an individual program that was tailored to each employee
- Provide the employee with goals and a "coaching structure" for them to work towards developing new healthy behaviors
- Allow the employee to track their progress against goals and "share" their successes with others
- Make the program "aware" of the employee's successes or struggles and adjust the cadence of the program to meet their changing behaviors
- Be cost effective and not lock in employees to the scheduling challenges of working with a personal trainer.

These criteria proved to be problematic when evaluating the "usual suspects" in traditional wellness program companies. After a thorough search and analysis of what was in the market, Viking selected Indaba Health and Wellness and began using their HABIT program to promote true wellness through behavior modification.

## Enter IHW HABIT™

As the Viking Management Team was evaluating many of the traditional wellness programs, they began to realize that behavior modification was more important than rewarding “gym time” in helping people improve their Health. Viking changed the direction of their search and found Indaba Health and Wellness and their HABIT program.

As Viking engaged with IHW, they quickly realized that the HABIT product not only hit on all 5 of their major search criteria, but also offered them benefits in areas they had not begun to consider based on their experiences with traditional programs.

*“Within the first month of rolling out HABIT we had almost half of our people engaged in the program and one third completed every step of the initial program.”*

–Rich Croce, Jr.

Viking found that HABIT was easy to deploy and provided a new and unique “hook” to get their employees interested in participating in the program. Viking found that the biggest differentiator between HABIT and the competition was the use of the DISC Behavioral Assessment as part of the initial health assessment and employee onboarding. Most importantly, all of the positive aspects of the program contributed to the creation of a “company buzz” that led the employees to decide that they wanted to be part of something new and exciting that was directed toward making their lives better.

Viking has never seen this level of immediate participation in a voluntary program. It was very encouraging to the Management team to see not only the participation numbers, but also the new climate of “healthy collaboration” that rolling out HABIT initiated.

## INTERVIEW AND TESTIMONIAL CONVERSATION

### 1. **What was the problem or problems that you were addressing within Viking Industries that brought you to look at Indaba Health and Wellness' HABIT product?**

As a manufacturing company, our first priority is our employee's safety. We have won multiple safe shop awards from our industry association for achieving our safety goals, but we wanted to take it further beyond just safety. We wanted to promote health and wellness. We were not having problems with the health of our employees, but we look at things proactively. We have many long term employees and want to make sure they do everything they can to guard against preventable disease. One of the first steps in helping our diverse employee pool was to bring awareness. Many of our employees didn't know some of their key health factors.

### 2. **What has been the benefit of partnering with IHW in creating a program with which your most valued asset, your employees, can protect their greatest asset, their HEALTH?**

One of the best benefits of the HABIT program has been seeing our employees actively engaged in managing their health. We had a number of people who had not gotten a regular physical or even knew some of the risk factors that they had.

Within the first month of rolling out HABIT we had almost half of our people engaged in the program and one third completed every step of the program.

Some of our employees saw they could make small changes to improve their health: eliminating sugary drinks, reducing fast food and getting more regular physical activity. For some, it brought understanding of the risks associated with smoking and it gave them the behavioral tools to assist them in quitting.

### 3. **Do you currently have employee wellness problems or is this a proactive move by Viking Industries to ensure that the health of your most valued asset, your employees, remains positive?**

Using IHW's HABIT program is a proactive approach for our people. We want to invest in them and make sure that beyond their time with Viking they are able to lead healthy lives and enjoy the rewards that accompany a healthy life.

### 4. **Have you implemented traditional Wellness programs for your employees (such as subsidizing gym memberships, health check rebates, etc.)? Have you been happy with the results of these types of programs?**

We have tried to sponsor gym memberships and engage our health insurance provider and detail the rewards they offer with their wellness programs, but we could not get people engaged to participate. I think our employees found it difficult to engage with the other tools that were offered and some of them did not address all of their wellness needs.

We have had a long standing policy where we will pay for any aid to help an employee quit smoking, but we had very limited participation. We had some success, but it was infrequent and in some cases only led to temporary changes.

**5. Do you feel that IHW “sold” you a program or has “partnered with” Viking Management and its employees to deliver a quality program?**

IHW has definitely been a partner for Viking and our employees. Our employees have reached out directly to IHW staff on multiple occasions and they have always gotten the help they needed. They certainly listened to our management and understood why our previous efforts have fallen short and have given us a product that is truly helping our people.

**6. How hard was it to get your employees up and running on HABIT? After you signed the contract was the process easy or difficult to implement?**

The implementation was incredibly simple. IHW assisted us in sending e-mails directly to our people so they just had to click to get started. Those who did not provide an email address were also able to easily log in and get started. The only request we had was to make the site mobile browser friendly and we understand they are working to develop that now.

**7. What type of employee feedback have you gotten? Positive? Negative?**

The feedback has been very positive. For some it was a reinforcement of the healthy behaviors they already had. For others they learned the impact of their behaviors, both positively and negatively. The one thing we heard was that the tracking is a great feature. It allows them to really know where they are going and the progress they are making. A few of our employees were motivated to go out and get fitness trackers and the fact that HABIT incorporates these into their program was great. Then we had a number of our people find out things about themselves that they did not know. This is where our people will get the greatest results. They now understand how unhealthy those sugary drinks are and the risk it puts them at. For others it forced them to ask questions about their family's medical history and understand where they need to be cautious as they age. The only negative feedback was the one where they wanted to access the site from a mobile device.

**8. What were any major pitfalls you encountered as you implemented HABIT at Viking?**

The only pitfall we saw is that we were still not able to get 100% participation. What HABIT allows us to do is monitor who is using the program and what steps they are on. This helps us to engage the individuals and help provide support to get them going. For some it is that they lack a computer at home so we have made a computer station available to them in the office.

**9. How did IHW perform in a consultative and support partnership with you during implementation and usage of HABIT?**

They checked in with us on a regular basis to review the participation and get feedback on what our users liked and did not like about the site. For some they didn't like knowing the reality that they were at risk, but it also gave them the tools to reduce that risk. They helped us to engage those who were not participating to understand what we could do to help them. They also were available to walk our people through the site for those who were not very computer literate.

**10. Are you pleased with your decision to go with IHW and HABIT?**

We certainly are. We are seeing people change their behavior and live healthier lives and the participation in the program is significantly greater than any other we have tried and offered.

**11. If there were 1 or 2 major changes you could do if you embarked on this partnership with IHW from the beginning again what would they be?**

I would like to see a mobile version of the tool to help those that do not have access to a computer. I think we would also find people who would go to their phones or tablets on breaks or before lunch breaks to get that extra support they may need to make a healthy choice.

