

Business Allyship: A Playbook for Influence

Instructions: Use this guide to uncover the importance of mastering the power of coaching and influence to drive buy-in and decision making. Ultimately, this will help create the business partnership needed with decision makers to make your workplace wellness strategy a success.

TAKE ACTION!

1. Incorporate additional actions identified here into your project plan.
2. Note individual development opportunities.

STEP 1: OVERCOME COMMON BARRIERS

By using the Stakeholder Workplace Wellness Program “Personas” Worksheet, you likely have a solid understanding of the motivations and concerns of your key clients, or stakeholders. Now, you can overcome common barriers by addressing frequent concerns with leadership regarding change and transformation.

COMMON LEADERSHIP BARRIERS	SAMPLE BUSINESS ALLYSHIP ACTIONS	YOU TRY! WHAT ADDITIONAL ACTIONS CAN YOU INCORPORATE TO BECOME A BUSINESS ALLY?
They want to partner with you to disrupt the status quo and solve workplace wellness concerns, with the overall goal of improving their business challenges. They need your help cutting through the jargon and getting to the right data for quick action.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the leader what a good partnership looks like. 2. Offer to grab lunch or coffee to present and gain feedback on the workplace wellness vision. 3. Listen to their vision around wellness and overall well-being for the company. Pay close attention to the language they use. Ask questions to clarify, such as, “What does mental health mean to you?” 	
They want more time with you—only if you can better communicate strategic wellness needs to them and their leadership teams.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the leader if you can attend an upcoming team meeting to present the workplace wellness vision. 2. Ask to review their strategic plan or vision for their team/ department in order to best align the two. 	
They often lose the storyline and need your help to integrate and apply best practice solutions that align with their strategic goals. They may not know (or understand) your vision around wellness and how it can influence their team.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask to attend team meetings quarterly to learn about their most pressing items and to allow you time to deliver a progress update on the wellness initiative. 2. Develop a cadence for reviewing the Internal Workplace Wellness Evaluation. 	
They (or their employees) don’t have time. They see your initiative as additional work and time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Point to internal metrics that may be improved with better wellness, individually and collectively. 2. Present the business case for what they will lose (money, time, human resources) if wellness and well-being are not a priority. 	

BENCHMARK 1: Committed and Aligned Leadership



STEP 2: DEVELOP YOUR INFLUENCING CAPABILITIES

Business allyship requires a key set of capabilities and behaviors that can be actively worked on over time.

BUSINESS ALLYSHIP CAPABILITY	DESCRIPTION	YOU TRY! INCLUDE YOUR ACTION PLAN TO BUILD THIS CAPABILITY
Speak to logic (the head).	Speak to the head by leading with data and coherent alignment to business goals.	
Speak to emotions (the heart).	Speak to emotions by using storytelling, case studies, and testimonials.	
Encourage co-creation.	Encourage ongoing iteration and integration of stakeholder perspectives. When leaders see their input reflected in your plan, they are more likely to embrace and support what's to come.	
Embrace healthy conflict.	Lean into discomfort and disagreement. Have the courage to share your thought leadership and experiences during tough conversations.	
Explore with questions.	Stay curious by beginning with questions, not answers.	

