

A 2015 study by PwC asked the question 'Why is health and wellbeing back on the corporate agenda?' The report, presented at a Nigel Wright event in October last year, outlined the ever increasing importance of staff performance and productivity to UK competitiveness and the direct link between performance, productivity and workplace health and wellness. Significantly, it stated that integrating health protection and health promotion was a major factor in achieving an effective health and wellbeing strategy.

There are obviously a number of actions companies can take to make a difference to the health and wellbeing of employees. Some innovative examples highlighted by PwC included employee health assessments; reading, walking and running clubs, discount on gym membership, dietary changes in canteens, counselling, mediation, yoga classes and even standing desks.

Exploring the key factors which influence how employees choose to perform and what makes a difference to their desire to increase their efforts, is fundamental to any strategy planning in this area. Although there are universal factors that will make people happy and motivated at work, each organisation is uniquely different and will need to establish its own 'context' for change.

Often, the most important factor leading to a successful work based health and wellbeing programme is the extent to which employees *believe* their organisation has a sincere interest in their health and wellbeing. By placing employees at the heart of the strategy and communicating clearly its objective to fundamentally improve their lives, as well as how the organisation seeks to improve engagement in the business, will ensure that a health and wellbeing programme is a success.

At this year's awards we expect organisations with clearly defined, bespoke and well communicated strategies that demonstrate an understanding of the importance of health protection and health promotion, to be in contention for this award.