

BEFORE-DURING-AFTER: AN EFFECTIVE RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM



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WHY RETURN TO WORK PROGRAMS?

Four million workplace injuries/1.12M of those injuries result in lost days

Disability Costs Continue to Increase



40%–60%
of expenses
associated
with a claim



2014: Lost-Time
Claim Frequency
declined **2%**, but
costs increased **4%**



Average
disability
cost/claim:
\$23,600



Medical severity
for lost time
claims up **4%**
in 2014

A well structured program can reduce disability costs 20% - 40%

BENEFITS OF RETURN TO WORK PROGRAMS

Returning Employees to Work Is a Key Component of Program Success

An Effective RTW Program Can Provide



Better employer-employee communication



Lower turnover costs due to reduced need of injured worker replacement



A work environment where employees feel more valued



Better retention of more experienced workers



Lower incidences of fraud or litigation



Faster healing times and medical improvement, leading to lower medical costs

START WITH A RETURN TO WORK POLICY

Return to Work Policy



Written guidelines that clearly articulate the company's RTW policies and philosophy



Create a "stay at work" mentality



Clear roles, responsibilities and expectations



Supports/directs strong communication with workers



RTW program "owner"



Ongoing evaluation and review as business changes



Organizational awareness and training

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Job Assessments and Functional Job Descriptions

Various tasks that are routinely performed

- Physical requirements (average and maximum)
- Postures and positions used in the tasks
- Required lifting or carrying
- Environmental conditions
- Use of equipment



Updated regularly



Use certified or licensed professional



Share information w/ treating physicians



Critical to any pre-employment or post offer physical screening

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM COMPONENTS



Job Analysis

Understanding functions of each position helps assess return to work options for workers with restrictions

Analyses assist employers in properly placing injured workers into job tasks fitting restrictions

Conducting on-site analyses to identify work-specific essential functions of identified jobs, including material and non-material handling tolerances of each is key to ensure accuracy of demands of each position

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM



Job Analysis and Job Description Evaluation

Observe employees in each position to create a task-by-task outline of each job

Documenting essential job functions, job task elements and equipment/tools utilized to complete each task

Complete a summary of physical job demands for each task to determine all lift and carry demands, physical aptitudes, positions, abilities and endurance.

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

Physical Demands

Strength: In an 8 hour day, this job requires:

LIFT	Never	Occasionally (up to 33%)	Frequently (34 % - 66%)	Continuously (67% - 100%)
Under 10 lbs				
11 to 20 lbs				
21 to 50 lbs				
51 to 100 lbs				
Over 100 lbs				
CARRY				
Under 10 lbs				
11 to 20 lbs				
21 to 50 lbs				
51 to 100 lbs				
Over 100 lbs				
PUSH				
Under 10 lbs				
11 to 20 lbs				
21 to 50 lbs				
51 to 100 lbs				
Over 100 lbs				
PULL				
Under 10 lbs				
11 to 20 lbs				
21 to 50 lbs				
51 to 100 lbs				
Over 100 lbs				

LIGHT/MODIFIED DUTY OPTIONS

Define Light-Duty or Modified Duty RTW Options



Use updated functional job descriptions



Identify suitable alternatives in advance (use your wish list)



Develop a bank of light duty options



Train managers and supervisors on managing these situations



Reinforce program philosophy



ALTERNATIVE RETURN TO WORK OPTIONS

Alternative RTW Programs



Some industries and employers have very limited light or modified duty options

- Simple job modifications are unfeasible
- Alternative jobs with light duty are very limited



Partner with non-profits to identify appropriate transitional duty options



Recovering workers become engaged in work activities



Workers will wait out their injuries concerned about the ability to RTW



Reduction of lost time days with OSHA



Alternative RTW programs provide an option between a release to RTW and light or modified duty restrictions

CASE STUDY: MODIFIED DUTY PROGRAM

VocWorks assisted National Transportation company in partnering with non-profit organizations to design a Modified Duty program when employer was unable to accommodate restrictions onsite



Very few transitional jobs within the organization due to the nature of business (dispatch and security jobs were limited)



Matching a placement at a non-profit with a recovering worker's current skills and physician documented restrictions



Provided a structure and sense of purpose that builds confidence in the recovering worker's ability to handle their regular duties when they return to work

CASE STUDY: MODIFIED DUTY PROGRAM



Provided social interaction and improves an injured worker's mental and social well being



Employer paid employee wages during the program



Program up to 90 days in length (may be extended on a case by case basis)



For every dollar this employer invested, they calculated a savings of \$7.00



Increased organization culture of RTW following an injury thereby reducing lost time claims overall (medical only claims increased)



Rolled out as an added benefit to employees



Union collaboration as employees who return to work are paying dues

COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE



Early and frequent communication with injured employee



Actively involve managers and supervisors



Set the tone for cooperation between all parties

- Employee, employer, physician, adjuster and case manager



Track and communicate success and progress



Help the employee to feel connected

CASE STUDY: MANAGEMENT/COMPLIANCE



National Logistics Company



Transition to full duty job



Field Case Manager (FCM)
follow up bi-weekly at worksite



FCM at initial meeting for
Transitional Work (TW) or Modified
Duty Off Site (MDOS)



Involve Local Manager in RTW
and identification of TW duties



Monthly review of overall
program and outcomes



Alternative Work Committee
—HR, Management, Safety
Director, Employee
Representation, Union Rep,
RTW Provider, TPA



Return to work to transitional
duty onsite or at non-profit
location offsite or terminal
onsite

REVIEW AND RE-EVALUATE

Annual Program Review and Re-Evaluation



Have clear goals and objectives



Defined key performance indicators



Solicit feedback from all interested parties



As business changes, adapt program changes accordingly



Regular and consistent reporting throughout the year to track performance



Target categories of job descriptions for audit and review for updates

MAKING RETURN TO WORK WORK FOR YOU



Return to work is a culture



It takes effort



BENEFITS OF A RTW PROGRAM



Employees are more engaged



Reduces overall cost of claim



Employees invest in their recovery



Reduces overall length of a claim



Employees recovery quicker



Helps to avoid long term opioid usage when extended disability occurs



Identifies other skills employees may have

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Program customized to meet Employer's Organizational Needs and Culture



Benefits to Employer and Employee



Promotes Remain at Work Philosophy throughout the Organization



Can be modified as needed to incorporate industry trends or changes in law



May be used for overall disability —not just worker's compensation



QUESTIONS?

