

Work & Life Award Winner: Coca-Cola Amatil

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/101046396>

Zero Harm programme - Safe and healthy staff

A beverage company wants to keep its drivers safe on the roads and employees free from injuries and back pain. They're encouraging all staff to get fitter and healthier too.

Coca-Cola Amatil NZ Ltd (CCANZ) employs over a thousand people throughout the country and is part of the Coca-Cola Amatil Group – one of the largest bottlers of non-alcoholic ready-to-drink beverages in the Asia-Pacific region. In New Zealand, it is primarily a sales and marketing business with two plants in Auckland, one in Putaruru and two in Christchurch. Employees carry out a wide range of activities from driving company vehicles and selling to stacking supermarkets with its product. They come from different cultures, have different qualifications and cross a wide age spectrum.

Zero Harm culture

The national health and safety manager, Sue Lahood, says CCANZ has a Zero Harm team that champions health and safety culture. “We focus on ThinkSafe + WorkSafe = HomeSafe. However, having a team so widely dispersed across the country makes seamless, cohesive communication and activation of nationwide projects difficult but the small dedicated team of three make it work,” says Ms Lahood.

Last year ensuring safety and wellbeing was paramount, a preventative measure was introduced to ensure that every employee got home safely at the end of every day.

“We gathered feedback and identified three key areas to help staff actively engage with the ZEROHARM brand and travel home safely.”

1. Wellbeing
2. Driver Safety
3. Manual Handling

Employee wellbeing

CCANZ's goal was to enhance the wellbeing of everyone who worked there and it used a number of techniques to work towards achieving this. To start with each staff member was taken through a seminar called 'Flip the Switch', which used an online diagnostic tool to evaluate employees' lifestyles and pinpoint areas they needed to work on.

Lisa Te Huia, from the business support group says

"The sessions helped me to realise I could make a greater impact on my physiology by changing little habits – making sure I look for ways to do 'incidental exercise' like parking my car further away."

Ms Lahood says this led to health checks. In larger centres a registered nurse was based onsite and in smaller ones staff were given a voucher to visit their doctor. A nutritional seminar was also trialled and everyone received access to a gym subsidy. Employees' children are also included by being offered free healthcare insurance until the age of 21. CCANZ also funds a cervical smear for female employees and they are encouraged to take a family member who is also offered the test for free.

Meanwhile Sales managers going on the road are also given a chilled lunch bag to encourage them to make themselves a healthy lunch every day. The total cost of all of these wellbeing initiatives is approximately one million dollars.

Driver Safety campaign

CCANZ took a look at its driver safety record of those who used work cars and fleet trucks – and realised improvements were needed.

"A campaign was created and a staff quiz was delivered through a business road-show that travelled around New Zealand. We also signed up to the E-Drive online driver safety training course."

Ms Lahood says the course was developed by the University of Waikato and uses state of the art technology to put drivers through real life driving scenarios. The course was made compulsory for everyone who drives a trade vehicle and also made available to other staff and their families.

The rate of driving accidents has dropped significantly – in 2011, there were 41 accidents per 100 vehicles and last year that dropped to 26. That's a 34% drop in crashes.

The annual cost of repairing each vehicle in 2011 was more than two thousand dollars and that amount decreased by 38% in 2012. Catherine Parlane is a territory sales manager:

"The E-Drive course was a fun way to ensure that we are all aware of our surroundings while we are on the road. It is great the company that we work for is continually looking at new and innovative ways to ensure we are safe while at work."

Reducing work-related injuries

The company's health and safety team was seeing an increasing number of injuries, especially from employees who did the lifting and moving of stock – mainly heavy crates and boxes of soft drinks. Employees also refurbish fridges and move or install new coolers – some of which weigh over 250kg.

Ms Lahood says this led to a manual handling programme being launched last year. “A fitness video was prepared by an All Blacks trainer who got footage from our workplaces and then showed employees how to correctly manoeuvre boxes and limit the stress on their bodies.” This led to a drop in work place injuries from well over 60 to fewer than 24 in the past year.

All aboard

Ms Lahood says an engagement survey showed that staff value CCANZ’s commitment to wellbeing along with health and safety. “The leaders and managers are committed to doing their part by committing to projects and taking an active role in the campaigns. Leading the safety culture from the top has been central to it working as it’s not just about ticking the boxes.”