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“How” and “When” of employee health incentives answered in new IncentOne issue brief

Lyndhurst, N.J. — May 3, 2007 — Major corporations are doing it. Universities like Ohio State are doing it. State legislators in Texas and Minnesota are proposing it. Now IncentOne explains how to do it right.

Today IncentOne released “The Art and Science of Health Incentives,” an issue brief addressing the rapidly growing trend among employers to offer incentives for improved employee health and wellness. The brief lends IncentOne’s expert voice to explain how and when employers should offer incentives.

IncentOne is a technology solutions company specializing in administration of incentives for employer-based health and productivity programs. IncentOne provides solutions to half of the Fortune 50 companies, major health plans, insurance companies, financial institutes and membership organizations throughout the country.

A recent Hewitt survey found that nearly half of the nation’s major employers now offer or plan to offer incentives next year to employees who participate in wellness or other health-related initiatives, compared with just 38 percent in 2006. The sharp increase is based in large part on the rising cost of health care, especially for coverage of those with chronic illness.

“Lifestyle factors- smoking, a sedentary lifestyle and poor nutrition- play a prominent role in the development of chronic disease,” says Michael Dermer, president and chief executive officer of IncentOne. “Improving employee health lowers costs and increases productivity--a tangible financial benefit for anyone watching the bottom line.”

But implementing a successful incentives plan takes both art and science to execute. “The Art and Science of Health Incentives” identifies and examines six steps organizations should take when implementing an incentives program:

1. Identify what type of behavior you’re trying to incent. “Clearly defined goals are critically important,” says Sue Lewis, senior vice president of Health and Productivity Solutions for IncentOne. “A company needs to identify what exactly it’s trying to achieve and why.”
2. Understand what will motivate your employees — and what won’t. Some employees value a \$100 gift card, but others will more likely appreciate a \$250 contribution to a Health Savings Account.
3. Identify your preferred method of incentives. Monetary or non-monetary? Health-focused awards or debit cards?
4. Choose a vendor smartly. “You want somebody who can integrate all of the program data, track participation, goal achievement, delight and engage the end-user over time and essentially grow with you as your program evolves,” Lewis says.
5. Communicate. Employees need to know exactly what they’re being encouraged to do.
6. Adopt a culture of health in the workplace. Offer healthy cafeteria options. Allow flexibility so employees can use a gym

membership. "A good health and productivity program must allow employees to actually do the things that incentives are encouraging them to do," Lewis says.

"The Art and Science of Health Incentives" is available at <http://www.IncentOne.com/IssueBrief> .

About IncentOne

Since 1997, IncentOne has provided integrated incentive solutions to clients ranging from small businesses to the FORTUNE® 500, including half of the FORTUNE® 50. IncentOne's solutions combine its proven incentive platform with the industry's most comprehensive reward portfolio and best practices to provide companies with a tool to drive business objectives. IncentOne's clients include Washington Mutual, WebMD, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Deloitte, MGM, ADP, NBC and the United States Postal Service. For more information, please visit www.IncentOne.com.

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