



HEALTHGUARD PROGRAMME AT GUARDIAN TUDELA

1. Case metadata

▪ *Country of origin:*

Spain

▪ *Year of publication by agency:*

2012

▪ *Sector:*

MANUFACTURING - Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products - Manufacture of glass and glass products (23.1)

▪ *Keywords:*

Case studies (24401C) - Good practice (24361C) - Workplace health promotion (22881C) - Exercise and physical activity (22961D) - Healthy eating (22981D) - Healthy life-style (23041D) - Well-being (23076D)

▪ *Abstract*

Issue

The primary objective of the HealthGuard programme is integrating health as one of the principal values of Guardian Industries' corporate culture. This programme is intended to introduce workplace health promotion activities and help workers to improve their health.

The specific aims of the HealthGuard programme include:

- Improving the health of Guardian Tudela workers and that of their families by eliminating the risk of illnesses arising from a sedentary lifestyle and/or unhealthy eating habits;
- Promoting workplace health by developing a teamwork mentality amongst staff.

Action

All activities of the HealthGuard programme are aimed at establishing habits to achieve healthy lives. The aim is to encourage and support employees to change their behaviour, to rethink their nutritional habits, to encourage them to do exercise and to promote a change of their whole life outlook and value systems in general, and consequently, their personal health.

In order to motivate employees in participating, the company established a 'Motivation and Development' Team responsible for determining and implementing the various activities intended to improve the health of the company's employees and their families.

Various actions were set up to promote the practice of sport amongst employees, the most popular ones included:

- The 'Winner's Circle': This programme is a good motivator to take up a sport for those who are not actively engaged in any physical activity so far.
- The pedometer competition: 'Go on a Walking Visit of Guardian Plants'. Each employee is equipped with a pedometer and encouraged to count the number of steps s/he takes each week.
- The Everest Race: This initiative is an 8-week programme consisting of recording the number of stairs climbed each week by participants.



Results

All the objectives stated at the beginning of the first year of running of the HealthGuard programme, were achieved and included:

- Achieving a rate of participation of over 50% in the initiatives on the part of employees,
- Reducing absenteeism;
- Reducing insurance claims ratios;
- Improve the state of health of Guardian employees.

2. Organisations involved

Guardian Tudela

3. Description of the case

3.1. Introduction

Created in Detroit in 1932, Guardian Industries is specialised in the manufacturing and processing of glass for construction, cars and furniture; in plastics injection for cars; and in producing fibreglass for the construction sector.

Guardian is present in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin- and North America and in the Middle East and employs nearly 20,000 persons.

In Spain, Guardian has two plants of glass production and processing, one plant of plastic injection for cars, and a nationwide network of replacement of car windows and a broad network of warehouses for the distribution and marketing of their products.

Guardian Tudela (Navarra) is one of the two plants for glass production and processing, and employs 280 workers.

As the age of workers in Guardian Tudela increases, a more dynamic approach is needed for dealing with health-related risk factors. What initially appear to be simple risk factors can become illnesses or lead to accidents or other types of issues in the absence of adequate prevention or treatment actions.. These will affect not only the environment of the persons involved, but also that of their entire work, family and ultimately social surroundings.

To address this requirement and the concern associated with it, Guardian developed the HealthGuard programme in 2008.

This programme was initially launched in 1985 in the United States, to encourage healthy living for the employees of the company. It was presented to all the Guardian plants in the world in 2008 and Guardian Tudela decided to implement it in its workplaces.

The primary objective of this programme is integrating health as one of the principal values of Guardian's corporate culture. This programme is intended to help workers manage their health risks and consequently prevent against illnesses and their undesirable effects.

3.2. Aims

The specific aims of the HealthGuard programme include:

- Improving the health of Guardian Tudela workers and that of their families by eliminating the risk of illnesses arising from a sedentary lifestyle and/or unhealthy eating;

CASE STUDIES

- Promoting workplace health by developing a teamwork mentality amongst staff.

Three ways of approach are used to achieve this:

- Prevention of work-related health risks to the employees of Guardian Tudela;
- Instil healthy eating habits;
- Promote the practice of sports amongst workers and their families.

3.3. *What was done, and how?*

Guardian Tudela actively encourages its employees to participate in the various activities and initiatives organised under the HealthGuard programme, based on the following principles.

Involvement of Management

Guardian decided to set up a health programme and integrate it into the company policy after reviewing the analysis of its employees' health data provided by the insurance company.

Guardian chose the HealthGuard programme to steer health improvement activities of its employees and their families and to eliminate the risks of illnesses arising from a sedentary lifestyle and poor nutritional habits.

It seeks to integrate a health aspect into its corporate culture together with its other values: order, cleanliness, safety, quality, costs and service.

Objectives should be clear to all, from the plant director down to the most recently hired employee. However for this programme to meet its objectives, it is of primary importance to secure the involvement of management.

The company's management demonstrates its involvement in the HealthGuard programme through the following actions:

- An invitation to participate from the plant director. This was done by sending a personalised card to each of the company's employees outlining the programme's start and the scheduled activities.
- The plant director actively participates in the various initiatives and activities.
- HealthGuard is a part of the day-to-day company life. It is discussed in the daily morning meetings, in the monthly company-wide staff meetings and at shift changes of the various teams.

Establishing a 'Motivation and Development' Team

The HealthGuard Team is the group responsible for determining and implementing the various activities intended to improve the health of the company's employees and their families.

The team is made up of the human resources director, the plant director and four employees.

The team's major tasks include the following:

- Carrying out an employee survey to gather ideas for initiatives to develop.
- Ensuring that the activities recommended meet the expectations of employees.
- Determine a number of objectives to achieve with indicators.
- Set up an annual calendar of activities.
- Organise all events set out in the calendar.
- Provide 'leadership for all' programmes.
- Communicate for all the events, including reporting on the programme's development periodically to Guardian staff.

CASE STUDIES

- Extend the programme to the local community.

The team meets once each month to:

- Analyse the results of the programmes undertaken.
- Present the suggestions of employees and prepare the activities planned for the upcoming month.

Determining a calendar of activities and development of these activities throughout the year

The annual calendar sets out the various activities to be programmed at the beginning of each year and spreads out activities over the year. Proposals from Guardian Tudela employees are used to structure the calendar, as are proposals stemming from survey results carried out at the beginning of the year on health, sports and nutritional habits, as well as an analysis of medical checks of the staff's health.

The calendar chooses a specific topic each month, basing content on those aspects that the HealthGuard team has determined as its objectives. This includes cardiovascular risk, participating in sports, how to quit smoking, mental health, etc. There exist activities within the programme that are chosen periodically and others that are specific to that month, depending on the subject.

The calendar is provided to all employees at the beginning of the year and monthly reminders are sent on the subject of the month and the various initiatives undertaken. The purpose is to provide incentives to participate in the various activities.

Promotion and implementation of the HealthGuard programme

Giving information to employees

Figure 1: Information for employees, provided by Guardian Tudela



All activities of the HealthGuard Programme are aimed at establishing habits for achieving healthy lives. This is extremely difficult to accomplish without proper training and information directed to workers. The aim is to encourage employees to change their behaviour, to rethink their nutritional habits, to encourage them to do exercise and to promote a change in their outlook on life and their values in general, and consequently, their personal health.

Guardian Tudela communications system for the HealthGuard programme includes:

- Daily and monthly meetings where HealthGuard is discussed.
- Publicity is achieved through the announcement board on which notices specific to HealthGuard projects appear on the cafeteria TV system. All employees can access this information any time during the working day.
- The Health letter: A company magazine dealing with health issues is distributed to workers on a monthly basis. It is also available to all visitors in the reception area and in the canteen.
- Brochures, recommendations etc. are available in the common areas.
- Mailings containing health-related information and hints for healthy life habits.
- Different messages are distributed all over the company premises, that focus on a healthy

CASE STUDIES

lifestyle, like e.g., welcome signs at the plant entrances stating: 'Enjoy a Healthy Life' (Figure 1).

- Health messages and pro-sport themes leaflets in the canteen.
- HealthGuard Intranet, available to all employees.
- The Corporate HealthGuard website includes pertinent news and good practices carried out in other plants.
- Chats on pertinent themes such as high blood pressure, nutrition, cardiovascular health, the benefits of sports etc., led by experts in the related fields.

Encouraging and motivating employees to practice sports

With the HealthGuard programme, Guardian has committed to combating overly sedentary tendencies amongst its employees. To accomplish this it has undertaken various initiatives and activities through the year to promote the practice of sports:

- The 'Winner's Circle': This programme promotes the practice of sports through a cycle of 16 weeks. Employees and all family members are eligible to participate in this programme. Each participant enters the number of hours dedicated to different physical activities in a registry during the week. Participants may choose from amongst more than 25 activities. Every 16 weeks, the registry is submitted to the Winner's Circle coordinator. Based on the number of hours dedicated to sports activities, as well as the number of different sports participants are engaged in, a number of points are awarded that are count towards various prizes. Through simple participation in the programme a participant earns a T-shirt with the Winner's Circle and HealthGuard designs. Once the three Winner's Circle cycles in the year are completed, the points awarded can be exchanged for vouchers worth between €20 and €175 in sports stores. Everyone that exercises regularly receives a prize simply by participating in the programme. This programme is a good motivator for employees to take up a sport if they are not currently actively engaged in any physical activity.
- The pedometer competition: 'Go on a Walking Visit of Guardian Plants'. Duration: 8 weeks. Each employee is equipped with a pedometer and encouraged to count the number of steps they take each week, which are then transferred into the kilometres to cover a worldwide route that would take them to a visit of all of Guardian's production facilities. This initiative has recorded a rate of participation of 92% amongst company staff and as a result is the most successful of all actions in combating sedentary lifestyles.
- The Everest Race: This initiative is an 8-week programme consisting of recording the number of stairs climbed each week by participants. Notebooks are provided to all participants to record weekly progress. Each step corresponds to a certain height, so that the more staircases climbed, the higher the overall height achieved, making it comparable to scaling different mountains. The work team that climbs the most staircases wins and receives a prize.
- The Company Challenge: The company participated in the Companies Challenge organised by the Chamber of Commerce of Navarra amongst Futsal teams, with seven *Frontenis* (Basque pelota game) pairs, two bowling teams and two table tennis teams.
- The first Futsal league: For the first time, an internal league of teams of employees has been set up, involving more than 80 participants.
- The Guardian Sports Club: Guardian Tudela has established a sports club with the intent of facilitating the practice of sports by making it easy for its employees to access the various sports facilities in Tudela.

Promoting good nutritional habits

Guardian Tudela seeks to promote good eating habits through the following means:

- Information on nutrition and good eating habits is distributed via the canteen TV, mailings and

CASE STUDIES

brochures.

- Fruity Friday: Every Friday throughout the year, without exception, fresh fruit is provided free to employees at lunch hour. Nutritional information is given related to the fruit served. Information is channelled through the canteen TV.
- Healthy Meals for Management and Employees. Managers and workers have a 2-hour healthy meal together where they can discuss together the health and safety issues in the company. These meals happen three times a year and employees participate on a voluntary basis, providing that the employees selected to take this meal with the managers change every time to offer this opportunity to all workers.
- An agreement has been reached with vending machine suppliers for offering healthy products. More than 80% of the products available are healthy. These include energy bars, natural fruit juices, fibre cakes, low-calorie salads, products for diabetics, etc. (Figure 2).
- Negotiations were completed with a catering supplier to provide healthy foods and balanced menus in the canteen.
- All food events in the plant's areas include a balanced menu and other healthy options.
- Observing World Nutrition Day on 28 May, with a promotional campaign for proper diets and better nutrition.
- Healthy recipes contest.

Figure 2: Vending machine with healthy snacks, picture provided by Guardian Tudela



Facilitating the organisation of initiatives and activities using company facilities

In the HealthGuard task meetings, ways are being explored to bring the programme's objective closer to employees in such a way as to make it easier to engage in specific activities.

Various actions were carried out throughout 2008, and are still ongoing, to integrate the final objective of the programme into the facility. Specifically, these include:

- Promoting a smoke-free workplace by means of programmes and methods for stopping tobacco consumption. The *Exfúmate* programme was carried out, paid by the company and organised during working hours on Guardian Tudela premises. It is aimed at employees who want to stop smoking and includes sessions with a psychologist of the Spanish association

CASE STUDIES

against cancer, with some doctors, and surveys.

- Creating sports practice areas. Guardian decided to designate a 2 km long area near the company's buildings to be fitted out as a bicycle track with signage and markings.

Promoting healthy values in the community

Guardian realised that it could not concentrate solely on the working environment, as this was too limited in scope, therefore decided to extend the programme's scope to include areas not purely professionally and locally oriented.

In 2008, Guardian cooperated with different organisations in the Tudela community to find various solutions for promoting healthy habits in the area's surroundings.

Some of the actions undertaken to promote and/or integrate a healthy lifestyle include the following:

- Dedicating the plant's open doors event to the HealthGuard programme. The latest event attracted 1,500 persons.
- Supporting youth sports by sponsoring youth football and swimming clubs.

Preventing health risks

With regard to health risk prevention, Guardian Tudela goes over and above the strict requirements of the law.

The objective is to create a culture oriented on health and safety. To achieve this, the company has decided to invest in its workers' health.

Some of the targeted actions or programmes included:

- Facilitating periodic medical check-ups for all employees even where the risk evaluation concerning a person's workstation has shown that this is not a legal requirement.
- Analyses of medical check-up results and development of programmes and strategies to keep health problems discovered during the check-up under control (high blood pressure, cholesterol, overly sedentary lifestyle, addiction to tobacco, etc.).
- A flu virus vaccination campaign, offering free of charge vaccination to all employees. Vaccinations are performed in the plant's health facilities.
- A Tetanus vaccination campaign, also offering free of charge vaccinations to employees who request it.
- Awareness campaign on the risks of stress: what produces it, when it is most likely to occur, how to avoid it, what employees can do about it, etc.
- Awareness campaign on ergonomic risk: Data display screens, educational programmes on back pain, advises on how to sit ergonomically correct, etc.

Acknowledgement of employees' efforts

Acknowledgement of efforts communicated through different means; the company's TV channel in the canteen, the announcement boards and the monthly Health Letter publication are all propitious channels through which the achievements and participation of employees is recognised.

Guardian also rewards workers' efforts and commitment to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, by distributing prizes for their participation and achievements within the programme.

These prizes may include cyclist equipment adorned with the company's logo, sports sacks, a day at the Senda Viva theme park for all members of a team, a meal at a healthy restaurant, discount coupons at sports stores, at gyms, etc. The prizes are all carefully researched and selected for their healthy lifestyle features.

3.4. What was achieved?

All the objectives stated at the beginning of the first year of running of the HealthGuard programme, were achieved.

The objectives set initially were as follows:

- Reducing absenteeism;
- Reducing insurance claims ratios;
- Improve the state of health of Guardian employees, using the analyses of medical check-ups as a starting point;
- Achieve a rate of participation of over 50% in the initiatives on the part of employees.

Table 1: Health improvement of Guardian's workers (% of the total number of employees of Guardian Tudela)

Workers with unhealthy lifestyle or health problems (% of the total number of employees of Guardian Tudela)	2008	2009	2010
(% of) smokers	35.30%	34.90%	33.75%
(% of) workers with obesity problems	44.70%	42.90%	40.92%
(% of) workers with hypertension problems	14.28%	17.69%	12.65%
(% of) workers with sedentary life style	4.10%	2.10%	2.90%
(% of) workers with diabetes	3.75%	2.21%	3.70%
Workers with absenteeism	1.86%	1.76%	1.20%

Table 2: Participation of workers and their families in the HealthGuard programme

	2008	2009	2010
Number of participants	628	648	851

As shown in the data above, all the objectives for the first year of the programme were met or exceeded.

However, at first, HealthGuard programme was completely unknown to workers, but they soon knew about it and was promoted by the workers because:

- It raised health issues well known from all (cholesterol, diabetes, heart diseases, etc.),
- Activities proposed by the programme were fun and were liked by most of them (football, paddle tennis, bowling, basketball, organised walks etc.),
- Some activities were rewarded by prizes.

Guardian Tudela, through the results of this initial year of activity, is reinforcing its commitment to achieving the good health of its employees, and to go even further, if possible, in its objective of integrating health as a core value of the company.



3.5. Success factors

Guardian Tudela has managed, through great effort and dedication from management and from the employees themselves, to ensure that promoting good health through prevention, integration of healthy eating habits and support of sports activities is now part of the company's culture.

The success of the HealthGuard programme is also based on its variety of actions, covering all aspects of health and present in the daily lives of employees and their families, asking for active participation from them, like in for example the sport challenges.

3.6. Further information

Mrs Elena Pascual
Guardian Industries Navarra, S.L.U
Pol. Ind. Montes de Cierzo, N-232, km-86
Tel.: + 34 948 81 72 21-09
Fax: + 34 948 81 72 08
e-mail: epascual@Guardian.com

3.7. Transferability

This initiative can be transferred to any other company, and the HealthGuard programme can be promoted the same way to workers in any sector or type of company. However it requires a strong motivation from the management and good communication with the workers for it to work

The fact that the HealthGuard programme was developed and implemented in other plants before coming to Navarra helped Guardian Tudela to implement it and to benefit from the experience of other plants. Guardian Tudela also benefits from facilities like a canteen or some sport facilities, which are not always present in SMEs.

4. References, resources:

<http://www.mutuanavarra.es/documentacion/1.Memoriacompleta.pdf>