

## Health – a financial investment in your business



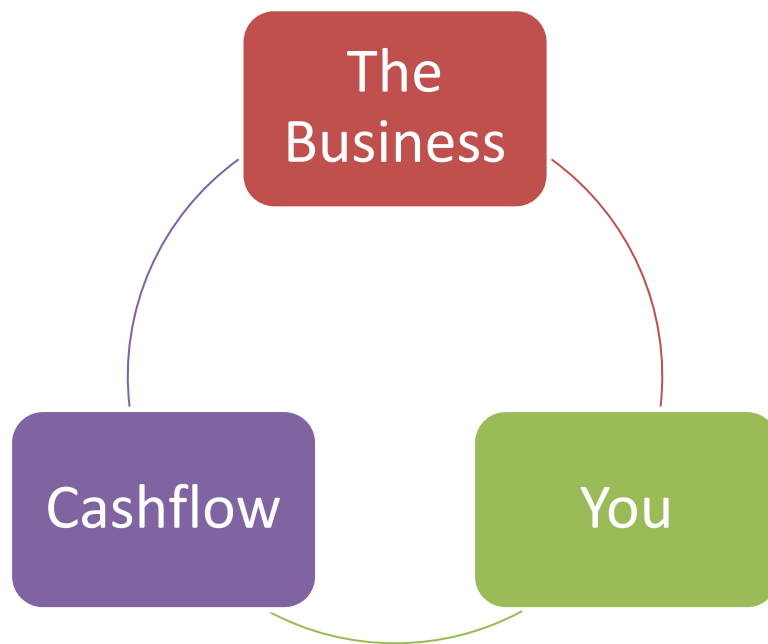
At RiteTrack NZ Limited we have researched the subject of health within the work place. The work place also expands out to the company vehicle on the road and in the yard. The intriguing aspect is that despite all the regulations and changes to the Health and Safety In Employment Act (as mentioned in the last edition of the Road Transport Association magazine) there is always a focus on safety and no one in New Zealand appears to be seriously addressing the well documented connection between Health in the work place and safety in the place of work.

There are various reasons for this. One of the principal reasons is that it is easier to measure physical results of cause and effect (hard data) rather than the soft data, ie how the environment within the work place affects our health and overall performance.

Looking at the article by Wynn Williams in the last edition of the Road Transport Association, the new legislation of the Health & Safety Act will bring renewed energy to the authorities in recognising and pursuing directors/ officers of a business for failing to provide the right environment within the work place. This will also include trucks, vans and cars.

The effect is more than just safety. Research clearly shows that the real problem is the ability of the employer to provide a **healthy** work environment. Let's put it this way. A healthy person will be a safe person. One aspect that many do not recognise is that if a person is unhealthy, suffering from fatigue, stress, anxiety or an illness including ailments such as the flu they have a significantly higher risk of making poor decisions, having accidents and making mistakes. Basically when feeling fatigued, anxious or stressed, we all know that we lose the ability to think and to learn. This is because the process of learning and thinking actually takes energy.

If interested, check out a book called 'Healthy Work' where there is a quote "learning prevents stress, stress prevents learning". Being anxious and not able to control the demands placed upon us by our daily role prevents us from thinking.



So with the imposing of tougher regulations in regards to health and the threat of directors/officers and PCBUs being sued there is the need for a solution and the solution is already within your own organisation. You just have to appreciate how truly healthy people in your work force can make a huge difference to you company and its future direction.

It has been proven overseas in university studies looking at performance of companies with a true health programme that for every dollar invested in a health programme the return on the bottom line is an average of \$6. This is without even trying to find new clients or customers or undercutting the next competitor.

So your next question has got to be how do you achieve this? Well in my last article we gave some tips, most of which are very inexpensive to implement. These are the first steps towards having healthy staff and it is good to be able to recognise that after a long duration of financial drought there can be a healthy return and increase in profitability on your bottom line.

Having a healthy bank balance and financial position is also going to assist you as the director or owner of a truck in reducing stress, fatigue and depression in the executive seat.

For a copy of last month's quick tips or further information on driver and workplace health solutions feel free to contact us (John Barley 09-827 7266 or 027 289 3162) – it doesn't cost to chat.



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