

How Success Academy Scaled Their Engagement And Wellness Programs Using Fond Rewards

With the help of Fond, we were able to conduct an organization-wide step challenge with an almost 50% employee participation rate.”

— Tiffany Duncan, Associate Director of Benefits



SOLUTION



HIGHLIGHTS

2.4 times national average for employee wellness program participation

15.8 mil more steps taken during the 30-day walking challenge

20% increase in work performance³ from walking together

Company

Success Academy is a charter school system of 34 schools in New York City, based on the principle that world-class public schools with children from all backgrounds can succeed in college and life.

Challenge

Hard for employees to find time to connect with each other or focus on improving health. Plus, large scale wellness initiatives were manually intensive to execute, track and fulfill. Almost impossible to scale.

Results

“Success for Life” wellness initiative achieved almost 50% participation of teachers and staff. Increasing engagement and teamwork, while minimizing execution, tracking and fulfillment efforts by Benefits team.

How Success Academy Scaled Their Engagement And Wellness Programs Using Fond Rewards

Background

Starting with kindergarten and first grade, the first Success Academy was launched in 2006 with 165 young scholars in Harlem, emboldened with a dual mission:

To build exceptional, world-class public schools that prove that all children from all backgrounds can succeed in college and life; and to advocate to change public policies that prevent so many children from gaining access to the opportunities great education provides.

From that beginning in 2006, Success Academy has created 41 thriving public schools across New York City, on its way to 100 schools by 2020. Core to their success are the unifying values of “ACTION” – Agency (ownership), Curiosity, Try & Try, Integrity, Others and No Shortcuts. These same values have guided the growth and development of the organization’s leaders, teachers and staff.

Challenge

Educating children, especially children from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, is challenging, and the school day is long and full. It’s been hard for staff members to find time for their own wellness. At the same time, it’s been hard for them to take time out to connect and engage with each other. Past wellness and engagement efforts were challenging to organize and sustain, as they were complicated to set up, manually intensive to execute, hard to track and virtually impossible to scale. In addition, the employee experience was inconsistent from program to program, moderating the potential impact of wellness and recognition programs on employee engagement and performance.

Solution

Tiffany Duncan, the Associate Director of Employee Benefits at Success Academy, took a different approach in her new “Success for Life” wellness initiative – a 30-day Step Challenge for

everyone in their organization. The challenge was to walk 10,000 steps every day for 30 days. Every person who participated was given a Fitbit to track their daily steps. Those who achieved the 30-day goal got \$75 and were recognized school-wide. To encourage broader participation, those who achieved 10,000 steps for at least 15 days got a \$25 reward, plus the all-important recognition of success.

A key enabler of this program was to automate the program with Fond Rewards, an employee recognition and rewards platform, eliminating the manual effort required to set up, administer and fulfill the rewards for program winners. In addition, Fond tracked who received the rewards credits and which rewards options were most popular.

As soon as the challenge was completed, every winner received a congratulatory email with direct access to a wide variety Fond rewards, allowing them to immediately redeem the rewards of their choice. This immediacy helped to reinforce the positive glow from achieving such a significant milestone and being broadly recognized as a winner.

Results

The Success for Life program was wildly successful, with almost 50% percent of the network organization having participated in the challenge! The program reaped significant benefits for individual participants, the Benefits team and the organization as a whole.

Benefits to the Individuals – Be Healthy. Stay Happy.

- Walking regularly was a big step toward better health – in fact, 10,000 steps is the “magic number” used by the American Heart Association as a benchmark for improving health¹ and lowering heart disease.
- Walking together has been shown to improve happiness² as well as health.

Fond Rewards Case Study: In-Depth

Benefits to the Organization – Love Working Together.

- Walking together allowed peers to connect on a more personal level, establishing deeper relationships that facilitate better teamwork.
- Studies have shown that carving out 15 minutes to socialize with co-workers causes a 20% increase in performance³.

Benefits to HR – Make a Difference.

Fond's recognition and rewards platform provided the Benefits team and the organization significant value in five key areas:

1. Making a large-scale program like this possible.
2. Significantly increasing the Benefits team's productivity and eliminating the stress-laden activities of selecting, purchasing and fulfilling meaningful rewards.
3. Providing a consistent, simple experience for employees from program to program.
4. Tracking all employee engagement and wellness events over time.
5. Learning which rewards worked best for the next time around.

The benefits from "Success for Life" have since been extended to other successful engagement efforts, including the **#sahealthyselfies** program, where Success Academy teams vied for most active and most creative team workouts also supported by Fond Rewards.

"In a nutshell, Fond supported us in driving a culture of engagement with each other and engagement with our health!"

– Tiffany Duncan

Footnotes

- (1) [Global Corporate Challenge \(GCC\) 2010](#) – walking challenge of 60,000 workers in 55 countries
 (2) [Time Magazine – 2015](#) – Why You Should Start Forcing Your Coworkers to Take a Walk With You
 (3) [Fast Company](#) – Why You Need To Actually Talk To Your Coworkers Face To Face