

A HEALTHY COMPANY **PAYS** **OFF**

- Practical tips for a healthy company, now and in the future
- This is how they do it: practical examples of SMEs
- Advice from our experts

More info?

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Healthy
business

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People who feel good about themselves benefit not only privately but also at work, as demonstrated by a wide range of studies. They are less easily stressed, have more energy, feel like working and are less likely to call in sick. Vital employees are sustainably employable and hence particularly valuable to you as an employer.

The good news is that you can help your employees with this. However, many employers find this difficult, because health and lifestyle are private, are they not?

This is what you can do

It is true that lifestyle is the employee's choice. Under privacy legislation, health data is 'special personal data' which you, as an employer, are not allowed to access. But you can certainly do something. Put safe working, health and sustainable employability on the map within your company. In this way, you set a good example and your employees realise that they themselves can also positively influence their health.

This does not just mean paying attention to personal protective equipment or healthy food. Personal and career development, for example, are also important for sustainable employability. Because employees who experience sufficient

freedom, support and room for development experience enjoy their work more and are more productive. And if you invest in vitality, you can retain valuable employees in your company for longer.

This is how you go about it

But how do you go about it in practice? The basis for a safe and healthy company, where employees are sustainably employable, can be found in the Working Conditions Act. For example, you have an up-to-date Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE) with an associated Action Plan. This gives you insight into the risks in your company, so you know what you can do to tackle them. And you periodically offer your employees a Preventive Medical Examination (PME) based on the RAE.

Read more in this guide about how the RAE, the PME and attention to vitality can benefit your company.



A safe workplace

As an employer, you have a duty of care. This means that you must protect the safety and health of your employees. The starting point for mapping out whether you offer a healthy and safe workplace is the Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE).

An RAE maps out all occupational risks, including those associated with the coronavirus. Only when you know the risks can you address them. How you go about that is described in the Action Plan. In this way you can ensure a safe, healthy and vital workplace.

To make it easier for you, many sector organisations offer a sector RAE. This is a model RAE drawn up by employers and employees in a particular sector. The sector RAE is tailored to the common risks in that sector.

Need help?

Could you use some help with your RAE? Please feel free to contact your regular point of contact..



Focus on sustainable employability

From practice

The employees of Pipelife Enkhuizen are committed. To reward and stimulate this involvement, all kinds of initiatives are undertaken within the company. Sustainable employability is paid close attention. Liesbeth Wolters, HR Advisor:

“We have of course a comprehensive safety programme. You can't do without one in our type of production environment. We have an up-to-date Risk Assessment and Evaluation, and a Preventive Medical Examination has been done. We have a health and safety policy in place that ranges from small toolbox meetings to an entire emergency response organisation.

Two years ago we started a sustainable employability working group with colleagues from all divisions of the company. We are implementing the recommendations from that working group. We work with a personal options budget, for example, which allows employees to choose from certain terms of employment. In addition, each employee receives an 'employability budget' of 500 euros per year, which they are free to spend in a special web shop with products and services relating to sustainable employability, health and vitality.

We also organise education about various topics. For example, an ergonomist gives a talk about our new sitting/standing desks. The production department has been educated about working in shifts. About what eating and sleeping does to you. Since then, healthy choices have become more popular in the canteen.”

“Two years ago we started a sustainable employability working group with colleagues from all divisions of the company.”



Liesbeth Wolters,
HR Advisor Pipelife



Health on the map

Once you have the Risk Assessment and Evaluation (RAE) in order, the Preventive Medical Examination (PME) is the next step. You are working on a healthy and vital company, and as an employer you show your appreciation for your employees. You show that you care about their health.

The ArboNed PME consists of an online questionnaire and any relevant physical examinations. The content is geared to the occupational risks that emerge from the RAE.

The results of the PME give your employees insight into their mental and physical health.

If it is necessary to take action, your employee will receive a concrete recommendation. If more than fifteen employees take part in the PME, you as an employer will gain insight into opportunities and challenges at an organisational level.

The right questions for a successful PME

Prior to the PME, ask yourself these 3 questions:

1 Why a PME?

The number one question: Why do I want a PME for my company? Just because it is a legal requirement? To reduce absence within your organisation? To demonstrate good employership? It is important that the board and/or the management team are involved in formulating the objectives. And that it is clear how they want to propagate them in the company (also in the long term).

If the reason and the ultimate goals are clear to everyone, it is easier to get everyone on the same page. This gives you the best chance of enthusiastic participants and a successful result.

2 Who is the PME for?

You probably invite everyone and hope for the highest possible turnout. But perhaps it is mainly those employees who already have a healthy lifestyle high on their agenda who sign up. If you want to involve precisely those employees who would benefit from a medical examination, it would be wise to tailor your communication to them.

If you have a clear picture of who your employees are, what drives them and who you want to participate, you can communicate in a more targeted way and encourage your people to participate. ArboNed helps inform and motivate your employees, for example via an (online) kick-off, a video by our vitality and health expert, intranet texts and/or flyers.

3 How do I ensure that a PME attracts attention?

If you want to get the right people on board, make sure that your employees know how they benefit from a PME. Involve your employees in the content of the project as well. What is important to them?

The goal is for your employees not to see the PME as an obligation, but rather as a token of appreciation from their employer. After all, you want to be a good employer for your employees; their health is your top priority.

“If you are offering your employee a PME for the first time, you will have a good baseline measurement. How are your employees and hence your company doing? ‘Baseline measurement’ does not necessarily mean that you start from scratch. I always check with clients what the company has already organised in terms of health and vitality. What do we already know and what is already being done? We can then make the objectives of the PME even more specific. What overlooked issues are left, what insights can the PME offer? Of course, your vitality and health expert in your area will be happy to brainstorm with you.”

Malou Eilering, vitality and health expert



From practice

PME in corona time

Working from home makes it even more important to stay connected with your employees. Visma Connect agrees. And that is why their Preventive Medical Examination was conducted regardless, despite corona. Nathan van Veen, vitality and health expert at ArboNed, organised an online kick-off for the employees. They were able to ask questions live during the presentation. Jacqueline Hendriks, HR Manager at Visma Connect:

“We felt it was important to keep our employees involved during the first lockdown through weekly online meetings.”

“When the first corona infection was diagnosed in the Netherlands, we thought it would blow over. Initially, we postponed the PME, which was actually scheduled for April. Then it became clear that the circumstances would not change. We decided to conduct the PME anyway.

We felt it was important to keep our employees involved during the first lockdown through weekly online meetings. When I saw that these meetings went well, I knew that the PME would also go well.

We are now working on the results of the PME. As an expert will explain the report, you can look at the follow-up. How do you ensure that your employees are more vital at work? A working group with our prevention officers, the works council and other employees are working on this. With such a cross-section of the company, we involve the entire organisation in the improvements as much as possible.”



“We are now working on the results of the PME.”

Preventive medical examination or pre-employment physical examination

In certain sectors a physical is required in order to be allowed to perform specific work. The examination assistant or medical examiner assesses whether your employee is healthy enough to do their job. There are a few differences compared to the PME:

- All employers must offer their employees a periodic PME. A physical is only mandatory for certain occupations.
- Participation in the PME is voluntary for your employees, a physical is not.
- A physical looks at the occupational risks, while a PME has a wider range. The PME also deals with lifestyle and work-related stress, for example.

5 tips for a more vital company

- 1 Start simple**
For example, by offering free fruit or making arrangements with a local gym. You can combine the Friday afternoon drink or the work outing with something healthy.
- 2 Keep it positive**
Do not ban smoking straight away and do not immediately skip unhealthy snacks and alcoholic drinks during get-togethers. Allow employees to think about the right approach and then implement the measures in consultation and step by step. For everything you take away: give something in return.
- 3 Set a good example**
As an employer, you have an exemplary role and a good example leads the way. Wear your personal protective equipment where it is required. Take a lunch walk and invite your employees to join you. And do not send any work-related emails or texts outside working hours.
- 4 Remain in dialogue**
Discuss subjects related to vitality during work meetings and during the annual planning meeting, for example. These subjects may include: how are things at work/home, does everyone still enjoy their work, how do they want to develop further, are there any issues and, if so, how can they be resolved.
- 5 Include everyone**
Set up a vitality working group of employees from different tiers of the company, who will work on the vitality policy under the guidance of the HR/prevention officer. Also introduce new employees to how you have organised occupational health & safety matters. For example, pair new employees with an experienced buddy who sets a good example.



The PME as a stepping stone to a vital organisation

From practice

The insights gained from the Preventive Medical Examination enable RENOLIT Nederland BV to take steps towards having employees who can be employed sustainably. Lonneke Rentinck, HR officer:

“In our company, we face specific occupational hazards. At the start of the PME, we therefore looked closely at our Risk Assessment and Evaluation. If you know the occupational risks, you can use a PME in a more targeted way.”

For us, the PME is an important starting point for a broader approach to sustainable employability. The PME provides tools and data that you can use to get started. Successfully. For a number of employees, taking part in the PME was the final push to stop smoking. The company doctor also offered interventions with which employees set to work. This immediately enabled RENOLIT Nederland bv to prevent absence. In this way, you quickly recoup the investment in the PME.”

“The interventions immediately enabled us to prevent absence.”



Lonneke Rentinck
HR officer RENOLIT

Buckle down for long-term success

If you have offered your employees a Preventive Medical Examination, this is of course a very good step. The pitfall for many organisations is that they then do not know how to get started. The report is left untouched or they go into 'solutions mode' too quickly. Derive real benefit from the PME by addressing the root cause of the problem and achieving long-term success.

The PME offers your employees and your organisation valuable insights. Your employees receive personal advice and you can opt for a group report with recommendations. But then the real work begins. My vitality expert can help translate the insights into concrete steps. Ask your regular point of contact for more information.

What you can do at the organisational level

Vitality Plan

Based on the results of the PME and in collaboration with your employees, you draw up a vitality plan.

- You describe your organisation's mission and vision with regard to vitality.
- You list the issues you will work on, with priorities, actions and intended interventions.
- You evaluate and adjust the vitality plan regularly, preferably together with your employees.

Organisational structure

If an action or intervention from the vitality plan proves to be effective, embed it in your organisation. For example, by incorporating a lifestyle theme into the company outing or by making a Sustainable Employability Interview part of the assessment cycle.

Adjust the environment

If the environment remains the same, employees may

lapse into their old behaviour. To give an example: employees follow a stop-smoking workshop, but the designated smoking area remains.

How you can support employees

Show exemplary conduct

Show that you, as management, support the vitality plan and set a good example. For more, see our [5 tips](#) on page 12.

Involve your employees

Employees who feel involved in the PME and the actions afterwards are more motivated to work on their lifestyle. You will get your employees on board if you allow them to suggest potential solutions to experienced issues.

Find ambassadors

Find employees who want to be ambassadors for healthy behaviour in the workplace. This is how you make vitality and health part of the work culture.

Reward positive behaviour

You can reward your employees if they succeed in changing their lifestyle. Research has shown, for example, that it is easier to stop smoking if someone receives a present from their employer for their effort.

Give your employees time

It may happen that an employee relapses into their old behaviour. This is human and often just part of the behaviour change process. Have a conversation to find out why and see how you can coach them.

What about the mental health of your employees?

A healthy company is about more than the physical health of your employees. Mental health and social environment also play a role. And as an employer, you can work on that too. Besides health and vitality, it pays to think about the points below:

Culture and leadership

How would you describe the company culture and how does it influence the (mental) wellbeing of your employees? Is it, for example, an open culture? How do you view sustainable employability? How do you deal with work pressure and how important is vitality to you? What style of leadership does your organisation use and how do leaders propagate the company culture?

Motivation and commitment

Ask yourself how you ensure that your employees are motivated and involved. Do you talk to them about this? And what do you expect from your employees in this area?

Expertise and skill

Do you offer your employees opportunities to keep their professional knowledge and skills up to date? What ways do your employees have to develop? How important is this issue to your organisation?

Career and mobility

How do you ensure that your employees are and remain (flexibly) employable? Do you discuss this with them and do you offer training, for example?

Could you use coaching and concrete advice in this area? Simply call in an experienced occupational health and safety expert: My organisation expert. Ask your regular point of contact for more information.





Working on lifestyle and personal development

From practice

ETC is an innovative company that provides its customers with safe, competitive and sustainable enrichment technology and advanced high-tech solutions. They periodically offer their employees a PME, which is conducted by ArboNed.

The physical examinations carried out during the last PME showed that the employees' lifestyle left something to be desired. Concerns included high BMI, lack of exercise and smoking. The online questionnaire showed that employees missed development opportunities in their jobs. ETC started working on it immediately. Remco van Ham, Manager Human Resources & Administration:

“From ETC, we offer a stop-smoking program, bike buddies, fitness and swim allowance and boot camps. The staff association also organises all kinds of activities. From walking together during lunch to cooking workshops. It is difficult to express

the results in exact figures, but besides the fact that it helps with a healthy lifestyle, it also contributes greatly to the team spirit within the company. You can sense it. That's a real rush.

If there is a vacancy, we offer all our colleagues the opportunity to apply. This is how we keep our people broadly employable and offer them opportunities for development. Employees also think about their own development, which is a healthy starting point.”

If you are stuck, we are here for you



If you apply the tips in this guide, you will have a healthy business and meet your legal obligations. Of course we are always there for you, so you can reap the benefits of a healthy and safe working environment.

Our consultants work all over the country, so there is always an expert near you. Someone who understands you. Someone who understands how things work in your sector and who knows what is going on around you. Who speaks your language and whose knowledge and experience prove that

they are there for you. Someone who takes care of things for you. Things that sometimes seem small, but can have a big impact. Things that keep your business healthy. One way is by keeping the people in your company healthy. So that you can continue to do what you do best: business.

More info: arbo.ned.nl/en