

## Health & Safety 2012: The benefits and challenges of demonstrating return on investment (ROI) for workplace wellness initiatives- Robert D. Lieberthal- Jefferson School of Population Health, Thomas Jefferson University, USA

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### Abstract

Workplace wellness initiatives are a popular approach to enhancing employee health. Employers benefit from reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, a healthier workforce, and the ability to monitor and manage interventions delivered at the workplace. In the current fiscal environment, employers may require a high expected return on investment in order to ensure it is efficiently allocating scarce resources. However, the data and methods required to produce rigorous return on investment studies may differ from standard approaches to the evaluation of occupational health programs. This presentation will use real world examples to motivate the importance of return on investment calculations. These examples will then serve as a basis for demonstrating the additional data required to perform a return on investment study. Simple calculations of internal rate of return (IRR) and dollars saved per dollar invested will be shown to demonstrate methods used to calculate ROI. Finally, the presentation will conclude with examples of how occupation health researchers can collaborate, and partner with, researchers who utilize health finance, in order to perform ROI calculations.

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