

Walking to RECHARGE Toolkit

What is Walking to RECHARGE?

Walking to RECHARGE is an organized group that meets routinely to take short and mindful walks during the workday. Walking groups are especially great for workplaces that have set schedules which allows you to meet routinely at the same day and time and have walkable routes in or accessible to the workplace. Start a department walking group today to encourage walking at work all year long!

Background

Walking, beyond the physical benefits, has positive psychological benefits. Walking allows you to physically move away from stressors and gives your brain a chance to think and reflect. Studies have shown that walking helps to reduce stress hormones and improve memory and attention, which helps you be more productive at work.

How to Implement Walking to RECHARGE?

Start by dedicating a walking leader, then planning a time, day, and route where the walking group is going to take place. Routes can be indoors, outdoors, or even around the perimeter of your cubicles. Employees can destress by going to nearby parks or use provided conversation prompts this to reflect on their week in a supportive environment.

Instructions

Consider Logistics

- **Identify a Walk Leader.** Identify one or more individuals who are committed to walking weekly and are willing to 'lead' the walk. Their role is to lead the walking group and keep participants engaged and interested. It's a good idea to have more than one lead as a back-up to each other. Walking leaders are also responsible for maintaining the pace of the walking group. If someone is walking at a significantly different pace, then the leader must accompany them.
- **Select an Interesting Route.** Consider using [Mapometer](#) to find a local 15-30 minutes walking route. Here are [instructions](#) on how to use the website.
 - **Do a test walk.** Scan the route during the time of day that you plan to walk.
 - ✓ Did you have room to walk? Will there be enough room for your walking group?
 - ✓ Was it easy to cross the streets?
 - ✓ Did drivers yield to pedestrians?
 - ✓ Was your walk pleasant and safe?
 - **Have a backup route.** Remember that on some days, the great outdoors isn't too inviting due to weather--or construction can lead to sidewalks being closed. Consider mapping out an indoor route through the office and common stairwells. If that is not possible, consider playing 15 minutes of a [nature walk](#) video in an empty area instead.
- **Set a Specific Time.** Pick a time that's convenient for most employees. Make sure your Walking Team meets at least once or twice a week. Schedule outings at a time when there are no recurring meetings. 30-minute lunch time walks work well for most groups, but you can also consider shorter 15-minute walks to accommodate a common break time.

Advertise & Promote:

- Send [an email](#) to all employees. Ask your HR/Communications department to add a message in the next department e-newsletter.
- [Post flyers](#) in highly visible areas such as a hallway or break area with permission from management or building facilities.

Start Walking!

- **Start walking promptly.** To ensure that you respect everyone's designated break time, make sure to start on time. If members show up after the clock, then let them know that they can catch up by themselves or create their own group by asking a colleague to walk with them for that particular day.
- **Encourage productive conversations.** To amplify the de-stressing effect of these walks, use one of these [conversation starters](#) to help employees get to know each other and reflect on positive moments.
- **Emphasize Inclusivity.** While walking, recognize all fitness levels. Encourage everyone to walk at their own pace, and if needed, the leader should walk with anyone who has a different pace than the rest of the group. Relaxation should be for everyone!

TAKE TIME TO

 **RECHARGE**

Tips to Encourage Participation

- **Create a name/slogan for your walking group.** Some fun names include: Walk of Clarity, Mind your Foot, Mindful Walkers, etc. Be creative!
- **Change up the route.** Walk to a destination. Start or end the walk just in time for an existing event, such as a local farmers market. You can also consider walking to and through a local park or lake.