

March 3, 2015

The Wellness Program for the Oregon City Police Department began in the summer of 2011. The only effort prior to this was the City would pay up to \$25 toward monthly dues for each member at a local fitness facility.

The Oregon City Police Department is in the Portland Metropolitan Area. We are an agency that has 43 sworn officers; 60 total full time employees including our Code Enforcement Division.

Crossfit is the main aspect of our wellness program, though there are several other options I will discuss later. There are several reasons we chose Crossfit, which is something that two of our members were doing in gyms on their own time. The main reasons are:

1. Crossfit stresses constantly varied, functional movements at high intensity. These key points of Crossfit describe every physical altercation or demand on a police officer. An officer must be both strong and fit to be prepared for the random and demanding incidents that come up on the street.
2. There is a camaraderie that exists when people suffer through a workout together. In terms of team building, we have found that having officers, captains, detectives and the chief work out together is an amazing morale booster. There is no rank in the gym.
3. Most do not realize that Crossfit is completely scalable to people of all fitness levels. We have opened our gym to spouses and other family members of employees. We have several wives that have consistently been in the gym working out with their husbands for several years now – also their kids. This has been huge as we have really tried to bring the health of our employees' families into the picture.
4. The demands of the Crossfit program build physical confidence, which translates to an officer's safety on the street.
5. The physical benefits of high intensity workouts in terms of stress management are excellent. This makes healthier, happier cops – they are better at home and on the street.

At the same time we started Crossfit, we purchased a treadmill, an elliptical machine and a couple of exercise bikes. We do have people who utilize these machines, but the usage does not compare to the number of people who attend our Crossfit classes.

In addition to the Crossfit program and exercise machines, there are two other aspects of our wellness program. The first is that we have made available to our staff the use of a professional nutritionist to help

address dietary needs and goals. We know that working out is key to stress management and getting more physically fit. But, in terms of overall health and weight management, no workout program can outrun a poor diet. Our employees can meet with a nutritionist who helps them identify goals and formulate a game plan. We have had a number of employees take us up on this with good results. Employees are offered one visit and follow up with the nutritionist on an annual basis.

The other additional aspect of our wellness program is the availability of a paid trainer. Crossfit is not for everybody. We noticed that several people started using the exercise equipment and just ended up quitting out of boredom. We also had people interested in Crossfit, but were too intimidated to go to that first class. We chose a trainer with a bachelor's degree in exercise science, who also coaches Crossfit. Our goal was to help people who did not fit into Crossfit to find their own strategy that would work and sustain.

We pay this trainer for 5 consultations/workouts with whatever employees would like to utilize her services. She meets with them to identify their goals and together, they devise a game plan. Over the next several months, she will meet with them and check in on their progress. She gives them workouts to do either at home, at their own gyms or at our facility. This program has been a great success; some of her clients have ended up joining us at the Crossfit gym and some have come up with their own programs.

Within the first year of this program, we had an estimated total of 500-600 pounds of weight loss amongst the attendees at our gym. As time has gone on, we have had several other people join the gym – these have all had tremendous weight loss gains as well. After losing weight, they generally have become stronger. This translates into people being less likely to get injured on the job.

Our class sizes vary, depending on the changes in shifts, family schedules with kids' sports and vacations. At our highs we have had over twenty people in class and sometimes, there are only a handful of attendants. Out of a department of 43 sworn officers, we have about 13 different officers from our agency doing Crossfit; this is about 30% of our department that is sustaining in the program. In addition, there are a number of wives, non-sworn employees and members of other departments that attend. Our scheduled classes are Monday, Wednesday and Fridays at 5 pm, the gym is utilized by people at all hours however.

Several members have ended up purchasing their own equipment and also workout now at home. Several of these members have joined Crossfit gyms. There is a lot of departmental pride, as people from other agencies are telling our officers how "cool" it is that we are doing something so effective and

outside of the normal box of fitness. They also have heard a lot of great feedback about how much people like the idea of all levels working out together – from officer to chief.

In terms of cost, we now have approximately \$25,000 into Crossfit equipment and the floor matting that we have in our space. Our initial investment to get started was less than \$10,000. We can accommodate classes of more than 20 people working out at one time. A good, commercial grade treadmill is at least \$5,000 for comparison.

A benefit of the Crossfit program is safety. Every class is coached by a certified instructor, who ensures that everybody is lifting safely and effectively. This is much safer than making equipment available to people and letting them just lift however they choose. Our coaches are staff people (we have officers, a wife, a sergeant and the chief) who volunteer; they do it on their own time. The department pays their certification class, which is a one-time \$800 fee. There is no shortage of people who want to be coaches.

This program can be implemented by any agency. The great thing is that people show up, warm up, work out and cool down inside an hour. It is different every day and you are always working out with a great group of people. That is probably the biggest benefit because it keeps people from getting bored and quitting.