

**For Immediate Release**

## **DMEC Think Tank Addresses “Extreme Productivity” in Difficult Economic Environment**

**San Diego, California –April 8, 2009—** The Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC) today released its 2008 Think Tank report entitled, “Extreme Productivity: Are Your Employees Hitting the Wall?” This in-depth report addresses the urgent challenges faced by employers trying to maintain employees’ full engagement in their work while promoting health and wellness and reducing stress.

The topic is critical, given the severe downturn in the economy and widespread job cutbacks, which add to already high levels of workplace stress. In this environment, companies need to promote employee health and wellness to maintain *optimal* productivity—not maximal, which is unsustainable. Employers that fail to meet this challenge risk losing their most precious resource—their human capital—to burnout.

Examining the problem of extreme productivity, the Think Tank concluded that employers must tailor solutions to their workplace, taking into consideration such factors as the size of the organization, the average age of employees, the type of work performed, and prevalent health issues.

Further, to mitigate the impact of extreme productivity, companies must be willing to “ask the excellent questions” to discern how best to promote employee health and wellness. For some companies, questions may center on how to build resiliency to help employees handle tough work demands while gaining a sense of control over their lives. For others, it might be how to give employees a greater say in their work and enhance job satisfaction to reduce turnover and improve morale.

The Think Tank also showcased specific initiatives undertaken by employers, representing both large and small companies, across several industries:

- Global pharmaceutical firm GlaxoSmithKline aims to generate optimal productivity while promoting the health of its employees through its Energy and Resilience portfolio of programs and benefits.
- Union Pacific Railroad Company’s comprehensive behavioral health intervention initiative seeks to meet the unique needs of its workforce, a large percentage of which works shifts with irregular hours.
- Crowe Paradis, a benefit advocacy firm, uses a variety of innovative programs to address turnover and motivation within its younger employee base.
- H-E-B Grocery Company, a family-owned retailer, aligns programs and policies with its “culture of caring” that is telegraphed throughout the organization.

- USAA, a financial services company for members of the military and their families, offers the Personal Balance Tool, a web-based resource, to help promote healthier work/life balance.

To read the full report on Extreme Productivity, please visit:

[http://www.dmec.org/associations/5959/files/2008ThinkTankWhitePaper\(long\).pdf](http://www.dmec.org/associations/5959/files/2008ThinkTankWhitePaper(long).pdf)

As the Think Tank found, the push to work harder and faster is accelerating—and employees are being pushed to the limit. In order to take systemic action that is right for their industry, work environment, and culture, companies need to ask the excellent questions about employee health, safety, program effectiveness, and satisfaction that are germane to the specific workplace. Companies that ignore these stresses and try to achieve more than optimal productivity may very well end up with less output, efficiency, and profitability.

### **About DMEC**

The Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC) is a non-profit organization that provides educational resources to employers in the areas of disability, absence, health, and productivity. The primary goal of DMEC is to assist employers in developing cost-saving programs, encouraging responsive market products, and returning employees to productive employment. Visit [www.dmec.org](http://www.dmec.org) for more information about educational publications and events.

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