



Guide

Engage employees this *National Fitness Day*

Challenge employees to prioritise health & fitness





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What is *National Fitness Day?*



National Fitness Day - What is it?

Each September, the UK celebrates National Fitness Day, an awareness day that highlights the role physical activity plays across the UK. It helps to raise awareness of how staying physically active can help us to lead healthier, happier lives. Not only does exercise help to clear mental space, it can also relieve fatigue and boost brain function.

We encourage companies to use this day as a chance to encourage employees to prioritise their own health and fitness by celebrating a range of activities that can be enjoyed by participants of all ages and backgrounds.

Keep in mind that personal health isn't about one's body type or fitness level. In fact, National Fitness Day is a good opportunity to make exercise and fitness approachable by inspiring employees to consider changing even just one habit towards a healthier lifestyle. This is where purpose-driven micro actions can be a useful tool for engaging employees in fitness.

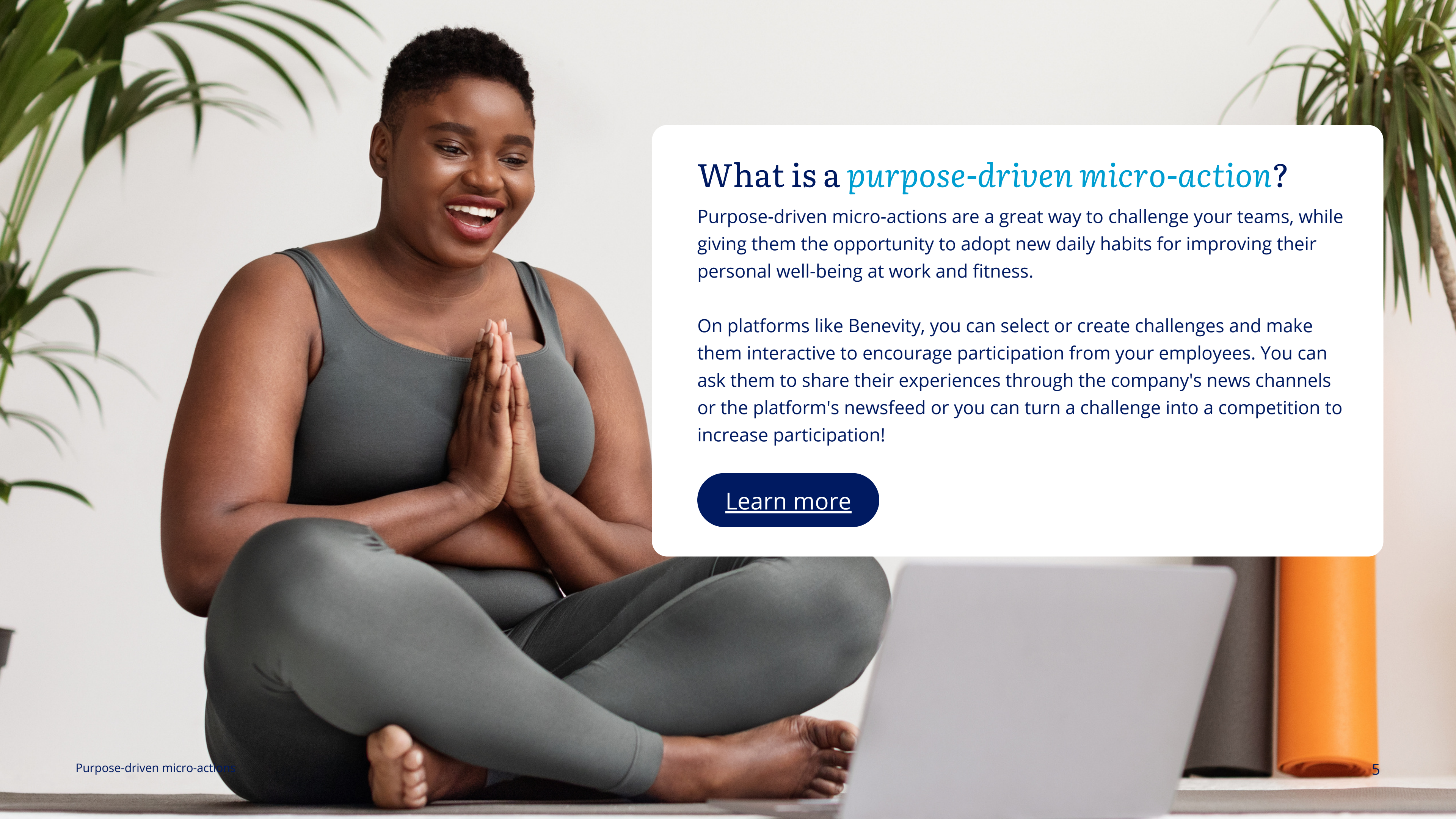


Date

20 September 2023

Keep in mind

In 2022, National Fitness Day saw participation reach an estimated 11 million people, including over four million children and young people. This year, ukactive has announced Movember and Endurance Zone as the campaign partners for National Fitness Day 2023, with the theme 'Your Health is for Life'.



What is a *purpose-driven micro-action*?

Purpose-driven micro-actions are a great way to challenge your teams, while giving them the opportunity to adopt new daily habits for improving their personal well-being at work and fitness.

On platforms like Benevity, you can select or create challenges and make them interactive to encourage participation from your employees. You can ask them to share their experiences through the company's news channels or the platform's newsfeed or you can turn a challenge into a competition to increase participation!

[Learn more](#)

Health-related *micro-actions*



Mental health & physical health: give your body a *break from sugars*

While sugar sure tastes good, it is possible to have too much of a good thing! Consuming food that contains natural sugars such as fruits, vegetables, grains, or dairy is okay in moderation. The challenge is when we consume too much added sugar, which can have an impact on our wellbeing.

How to complete this micro-action

Toss out your table sugar, swap out sugary drinks for water, and cut back on sweet treats and processed foods with high sugar content. Take a week to limit your sugar consumption and see how it impacts your sleep, skin, and energy levels. Surely, you'll see the difference!

Keep this in mind!

Enhance foods with spices instead of sugar. For example, ginger, allspice, cinnamon or nutmeg will give you the illusion that you're eating something sweet - without the sugar!



Get outside and walk *45 minutes a day for a week*

Walking is one of the most underrated forms of exercise that comes with huge health benefits if you add it to your daily routine. Not only does it improve your general fitness, it can help alleviate depression and fatigue during the work week. It's a simple exercise that can be done no matter where you are in the world and is guaranteed to improve your weekly routine.

How to complete this micro-action

Schedule a 45 minute walk into your daily routine, whether it be before work, on your way to the office, during your break, or after work.

Keep this in mind!

Start a work walking group for people who want to motivate one another to complete this micro action. Find interesting routes near the office and enjoy some fresh air together!



Eat five portions of *fruit & vegetables* a day for a week

Fruits and vegetables are an important source of vitamins and minerals, including folate, vitamin C and potassium. Plus, they can help you maintain a healthy digestive system due to their high concentration of dietary fibre. They also have other health benefits such as lowering blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart disease and can help prevent certain types of cancer.

How to complete this micro-action

Make a list of all the fruits and vegetables that you eat throughout the week, making sure you reach 5 everyday. It's best to varyate the ones you eat to get all of the health benefits!

Keep this in mind!

Starting your morning with a smoothie is a great way to eat fruits and veggies. Plus, you can add a handful of spinach to the blend - we promise you won't be able to taste the difference!



Relieve back tension and strengthen your core with a *one minute plank every day for a month*

Plank position may be challenging - but the hardest things come with the highest rewards! 1 minute planks can help you to strengthen your spine and your abdominal muscles, which can naturally help to improve your posture. Good posture helps us fight against a number of ailments and can prevent the onset of other ones.

How to complete this micro-action

Set a reminder in your calendar every day for your 1 minute plank challenge, then put on your favorite song and get on to your elbows and feet. Make sure not to let your glutes lift up to get the most out of the posture!

Keep this in mind!

Schedule your plank for the second half of the workday to give yourself a boost of energy. Plus, invite your workmates to plank with you to get everyone feeling strong together!



This week, plan ahead and cook *five home-cooked, healthy meals*

Cooking at home naturally lends itself to a healthier meal, as studies show that people who cook meals at home consume less sugar and fat. And since you put all of the ingredients into the pot, you know exactly what you're eating - which helps if you want to fuel your body with a healthy meal.

How to complete this micro-action

Prep for the week by doing a big shop, adding lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins to your list. Save yourself some time by looking up recipes before you shop, so you know that you won't miss out on any ingredients. Cooking doesn't need to take up too much time either! Look out for fun 30-minute recipes using your favorite ingredients.

Keep this in mind!

To inspire yourself, take a picture of each meal and share it with your workmates on your CSR platform. It will encourage you and others to complete this micro action!



Practice yoga for twenty minutes *every day for a week* before sitting at your desk

One of the best ways to set yourself up for a good day is to fit in a good stretch break before you sit down to work. Even just 20 minutes of yoga can help to improve your physical and mental health, while increasing energy levels so that you feel more productive and motivated to work.

How to complete this micro-action

Set your alarm to wake you up 30 minutes before you normally would (we promise it will be worth it!) then unroll your mat, set a timer and get to stretching! You can follow your own flow or use a video on YouTube or even Instagram. Search for 20 minute yoga classes and you'll find a ton of variations to fit your mood.

Keep this in mind!

Make this an office-wide initiative by inviting a yoga teacher (or work colleague who practices) to lead the group in 20 minutes of yoga every morning!



Spend a week *practicing intuitive eating*

Intuitive eating is a practice in trusting your body to make food choices that feel good for you, without judging yourself or the influence of diet culture. We all have natural ways of understanding when we're full or when something that we eat makes us feel good or bad. Intuitive eating is about listening to our bodies to tell us when we're satisfied or when something doesn't digest well, so that we can make choices that make us feel great.

How to complete this micro-action

Every time you eat this week, try to focus on how your body feels. Are you hungry? Are you full? What does your body need right now? Try to make choices that aren't based upon guilt or what you "deserve". Rather focus on making a positive choice for your body in that moment.

Keep this in mind!

Take away the shoulds of eating. For example, stop yourself from thinking "I shouldn't eat this because it has too many calories." Instead think about what will make you feel good!



This week, every two hours during the work day *meditate for two minutes*

The practice of meditation can give you a sense of calm, peace and balance that can benefit both your emotional well-being and your overall health. You can also use it to relax and cope with stress by refocusing your attention so that you can stay centered and keep inner peace. This is great when dealing with work stress and even 2 minutes between meetings will do wonders for your stress levels!

How to complete this micro-action

Set a reminder in your calendar to stop and meditate for 2 minutes everyday this week. You can use a meditation app for a guided meditation or simply close your eyes and notice your breathe for 2 minutes. This will help to clear your mind so you can concentrate better throughout the day!

Keep this in mind!

You don't have to leave your desk to meditate!
Simply plant your feet on the ground, place your hands face down on your thighs and breathe.



Other activities
for *National
Fitness Day*



Sign-up for a team *charity race* to get employees running for a cause

Charity races are a great way to motivate team members to get moving, while also raising money for a worthy cause. Here's what you need to do...

- Find a local run that's related to a cause that your company supports. For example, a run for cancer research, keeping children safe from child abuse or another relevant cause.
- Send around a sign-up sheet to see how many people are interested in participating from your company.
- Create a company team so that you can run and fundraise together.
- Make it a competition to see who can raise the most money to donate to the cause.
- Attend the event together! Even those who aren't running can show up to cheer on their teammates as they cross the finish line.



Organise a friendly company *sports tournament* for everyone to play together

Team sports get everyone out of their element, which is a useful when doing team-building. Here's what you need to do...

- Ask around what team sport your colleagues would be interesting in playing. For example, football, field hockey, frisbee or rugby!
- Send around a sign-up sheet asking for contact information, game-day availability and shirt size.
- Based on who signs up, create the teams and communicate them to everyone who signed-up. Pick a team captain for each team so you know who to communicate with.
- Have the team captain make a slack channel or WhatsApp group to discuss upcoming practices, winning strategies and share some laughs before the game.
- Make sure each team has a name!
- Find a space to play the tournament and organise an after-tournament celebration party.
- Give the winner a trophy, plus money that they cant donate towards a worthy cause!



Host a *home-cooked potluck* dinner at the office

Potluck dinners are an engaging way to get everyone involved in a team meal. Here's what you need to do...

- Pick an evening where most people are available for a team dinner.
- Make sure you can use the office space to host the dinner. If not, find someone's house or another venue where you can bring home-cooked food to share.
- Create a sign-up sheet so that there are no overlaps when it comes to menu.
- Communicate to everyone that everything brought to the event **must be** home-cooked.
- Play a game where participants can (anonymously) vote for their favourite dish and give the winner a free cooking class! This will encourage more people to put time into making the perfect dish.



Organising your company's *fitness day* campaign

While putting a focus on our personal health and fitness should be a priority, it helps to base our efforts in a specific impact day or initiative to increase engagement and participation. That's why we encourage you to use awareness days, like National Fitness Day, as a motivating factor at your company.

And if you need help connecting team members around a specific cause, we suggest you implement a [CSR platform](#) to give every employee a space to connect. This makes it easy for employees to log their micro actions, while finding new opportunities for volunteering, giving and tracking impact on a personal and company level.

Hopefully, you found this guide useful for planning a fitness-related initiative, whether its for National Fitness Day or beyond!



Have questions?
We're here to help

Get a Demo



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