

Tuesday, 14 April 2009

## Pamper your workforce to stay well at work

W. Edwards Deming started 'Total Quality Management' (TQM) in the USA and brought it to Japan after World War II in the 1950's. Deming made a significant contribution to Japan's later-renown-for innovative high-quality products and its economic power. He is regarded as having had more impact upon Japanese manufacturing and business than any other individual not of Japanese heritage. And once again it is Japan who is leading the way in the latest management issue of 'Workplace Wellness'. And as you would expect in the 21<sup>st</sup> century they are using technology and robotics to deliver the highest quality methods for delivering wellness to the corporate marketplace in the form of **therapeutic massage chairs**.



Only the most forward looking companies like Google and Virgin are embracing what is coming out of Japan today. UK government are attempting to have UK companies pay major attention to their soaring absenteeism rates and have them investigate alternatives for reducing stress. Some sceptics would say that the government are asking corporate UK to become responsible for the health of the UK working population and you would be right. Everyone knows that the NHS is at breaking point and spending billions will not slow down the rate of sickness that is

continuing to increase amongst the UK working population.

The Far East have known for thousands of years that wellness is something that connects our mind and body and we are not merely machines that need repairing, cutting or poisoning through medication and surgery.



The Japanese and indeed the Chinese have many alternative methods for keeping well and prevention is something that is more accepted in those parts of the world. **Massage** is one of those methods that is widely used and promoted, you only need to walk down the streets in Tokyo or Beijing and you will see numerous booths and stores promoting Reflexology and Shiatsu massage.

Inada based in Japan is such a company that believe that the world can benefit from the traditions of Japanese medicine that emphasises preventative health care, especially the importance of acupressure massage in maintaining well-being. Inada has been devoted to designing and building therapeutic massage chair devices since its creation in 1962. They believe that their massage chairs can become an integral part of everyone's health care regime. Their mission is to share with the world the benefit of their years of experience and innovation in acupressure massage chairs.

The Inada Massage Chair is the only shiatsu massage chair that uses a state-of-the-art infrared technology to scan your body, detect pressure points and then gives you a customised massage.

The massage chair was designed by shiatsu and massage therapy professionals to give you the benefits of traditional Japanese

acupressure massage everyday, at your convenience. The massage chair can help you take command of your health by aiding in the release of disease-causing stress, enhancing the healing effects of sleep and relieving job-related fatigue. The Inada Chair is sold as a "Medical Massage Chair" in Japan. It was approved by the Japanese government in 1998 for use in non-clinical massage & acupressure therapy and is marketed for home-therapeutic medical purposes in Japan.

### **'Definition of Shiatsu'**

Shiatsu technique refers to applying pressure to particular sections on the surface of the body for the purpose of correcting the imbalances of the body, and for maintaining and promoting health. Andrew Long of The University of Leeds School of Healthcare (Faculty of Medicine and Health) published a document in 2008 with details of study in the effectiveness of Shiatsu, which highlighted that the sampled clients reported feeling relaxed, calm and better able to cope with things. A statistically significant improvement in symptoms was reported across a large number of participants with stress levels and muscular/joint problems showing the most improvement.

The Inada massage chair is the synergy of Eastern medical wisdom and modern technology. The ultimate goal of massage is to enhance the body's natural healing ability by releasing stress and promoting circulation.



According to Eastern medicine, the key to good health is maintaining a balance between

the yin and yang elements in the body, including the relationships between the upper and lower body, left and right, and front and back. The body has more than 350 pressure points aligned with the internal organs along the meridians. Stimulation of specific pressure points through kneading, tapping or pressing can energise the internal organs, helping in some cases to slow or possibly prevent the onset of disease.

Not suggesting for a minute that a massage chair will be the saviour of illness amongst the working population. However, just imagine that by having a chair in the workplace and allowing employees to take a 15-minute break to relax and experience a therapeutic massage, whilst listening via headphones to an audio guiding them to an imaginary beach to forget their troubles, it will guarantee to do wonders for the general 'feel-good' factor amongst your teams. After all a happy workforce is a 'well' workforce and a more engaged workforce.

Michael de Groot

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Notes to editors:

- Oakdale Ltd the authorised European dealer of Family Inada massage chairs. [www.inada.co.uk](http://www.inada.co.uk)
- Staying Alive (UK) Ltd is an authorised reseller of Oakdale (Inada) into the corporate marketplace and provides consultancy in the area of Workplace Wellness. [www.stayingalive.eu.com](http://www.stayingalive.eu.com)