

# Nexsteppers:

## Towards a sustainable workplace physical activity programme

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# “Sustainable” in this context

Must fit with organisation i.e.:

- Not too expensive given \$\$\$ stress  
(e.g., use certificates rather than prizes)
- Easy to run so automate everything possible – including encouragement

- *When you can measure what you are speaking about and express it in numbers you know something about it;* Lord Kelvin
- *Did you know that if you torture the data long enough, eventually it will confess?*
  - Hoare research software newsletter August 2002

# The Official 10,000steps@work®



PHOTO: ANDREW SMITH  
PUBLIC health unit health promoter Heather Meribant steps out for a more active lifestyle. Supporting the team are Louise Schofield, left, and Chris Sepp.

## Stepping out for health

THEY'RE counting their steps at MacCentral Health.

Teams involving 120 board staff last week shared pedometers and are measuring how far they walk each day as part of the 10,000 Steps @ Work programme. The basic goal of 10,000 steps covers about 5km, the amount of walking recommended for a healthy lifestyle.

In two further challenges, half of the teams are aiming to accu-

mulate enough steps during the next 12 weeks to have taken them around New Zealand, and the others are aiming for a million steps from each member.

The health promotion programme aims to address issues raised by staff less than regular about their health and safety, particularly related to fitness, nutrition and stress. Those on the programme will be more likely to be using the stairs,

parking far from their work, and walking to breakfast.

The hoped-for benefits include increased psychological wellbeing, stress reduction, and prevention of long-term chronic diseases.

And the reason the teams have chosen suggests they expect to be having fun — the Fundamentals, Wriggle Pickers, the Merri Sisters and the Golf Busters among them.

- Uses a pedometer to motivate people to increase their physical activity
- Twelve (later 14) teams of 10
- Team members accumulate enough steps to virtually walk around New Zealand.



# Around NZ Challenge

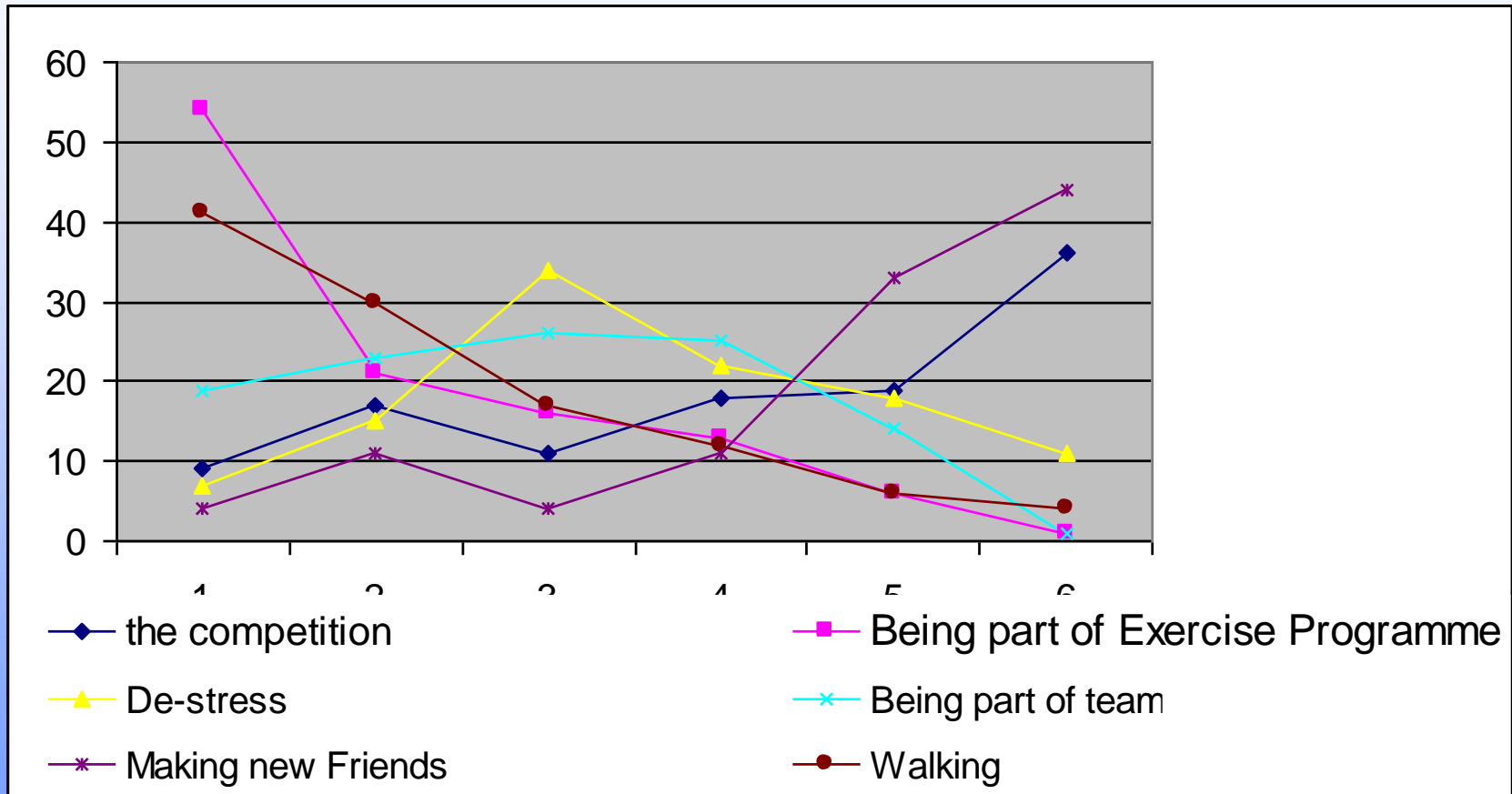
7,096,250 Steps



Once around NZ, participants aim for a total of 1,000,000 steps each

TOWN	STEPS	TOWN	STEPS	TOWN	STEPS
1 CAPE REinga TO PAHAU	279250	15 NELSON TO WESTPORT	202100	26 CHRISTCHURCH TO HANMER	181700
2 PARUA TO WHANGAREI	88250	16 WESTPORT TO GREYMOUTH	126250	28 HANMER TO KAIOIARA	181250
3 WHANGAREI TO HANGWHATI	125800	17 GREYMOUTH TO HOKITIKA	58000	31 KAIOIARA TO PICTON	381250
4 HANGWHATI TO COROMANDEL	FREE FERRY RIDE	18 HOKITIKA TO FRANZ JOSEF	173250	32 PICTON TO WELLINGTON	FREE FERRY RIDE
5 COROMANDEL TO TAURANGA	107500	19 FRANZ JOSEF TO HAAT	177000	33 WELLINGTON TO PALMERSTON NORTH	182500
6 TAURANGA TO ROTORUA	107500	20 HAAT TO NANAIYA	181250	34 PALMERSTON NORTH TO HANGAIKI	11250
7 ROTORUA TO TAPAO	101500	21 NANAIYA TO BLENHEIM	148250	35 HANGAIKI TO NEW PLYMOUTH	182750
8 TAPAO TO WHANGANEI	100250	22 BLENHEIM TO TE ANAU	148250	36 NEW PLYMOUTH TO NAPIER	225000
9 WHANGANEI TO GISBORNE	202500	23 TE ANAU TO INVERCARGILL	188250	37 NAPIER TO HAMILTON	87500
10 GISBORNE TO NAPIER	270000	24 INVERCARGILL TO BLUFF	75000	38 HAMILTON TO AUCKLAND	107500
11 NAPIER TO HASTING	205500	25 BLUFF TO DUNEDIN	188750	39 AUCKLAND TO DARGAVILLE	211250
12 HASTING TO WELLINGTON	138250	26 DUNEDIN TO TIMARU	248750	40 DARGAVILLE TO KAIOIARA	282750
13 WELLINGTON TO PICTON	FREE FERRY RIDE	27 TIMARU TO MT COOK	288750	41 KAIOIARA TO CAPE REINGA	162500
14 PICTON TO NELSON	150000	28 MT COOK TO CHRISTCHURCH	431750		

# Why people wanted 10,000steps@work®



# 10,000 steps@work® midcentral was successful, but ...

- Popular – strong demand for continued programme
- Increases in step counts and associated improvements in BMIs
- Met HEHA workplace health
- Great programme for corporate market

## But

- Cheaper programme needed
- Less demands on staff wanted
- Increased step count for non-walking activity

Reduce: food, prizes, staff input, prizes, support for step captains, evaluation



# Automate whatever we could

Excel sheet created that:

- Turns step counts into kilometres
- Turns Step Counts into distances travelled on virtual route
- Can be updated/accessed on intranet
- Ranks Teams
- Notes targets (increases/million steps)

# NextSteppers Walking Programme- developed

by Public Health MDHB 2009

Team Name	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Total	Rank	Most improv	Challe
PHU Fighters	708,465	645,952	778,447	2,132,864	7	1	B
Team two	1,038,255	1,053,816	958,070	3,050,141	1	0	A
Third Team	675655	679875	695987	2,051,517	1	4	B

PHU Fighters	Bowen	Gladstone	Byron Bay
Team two	Kalarka	Tweed Heads	Sutherland
Third Team	Bowen	Gladstone	Nerang

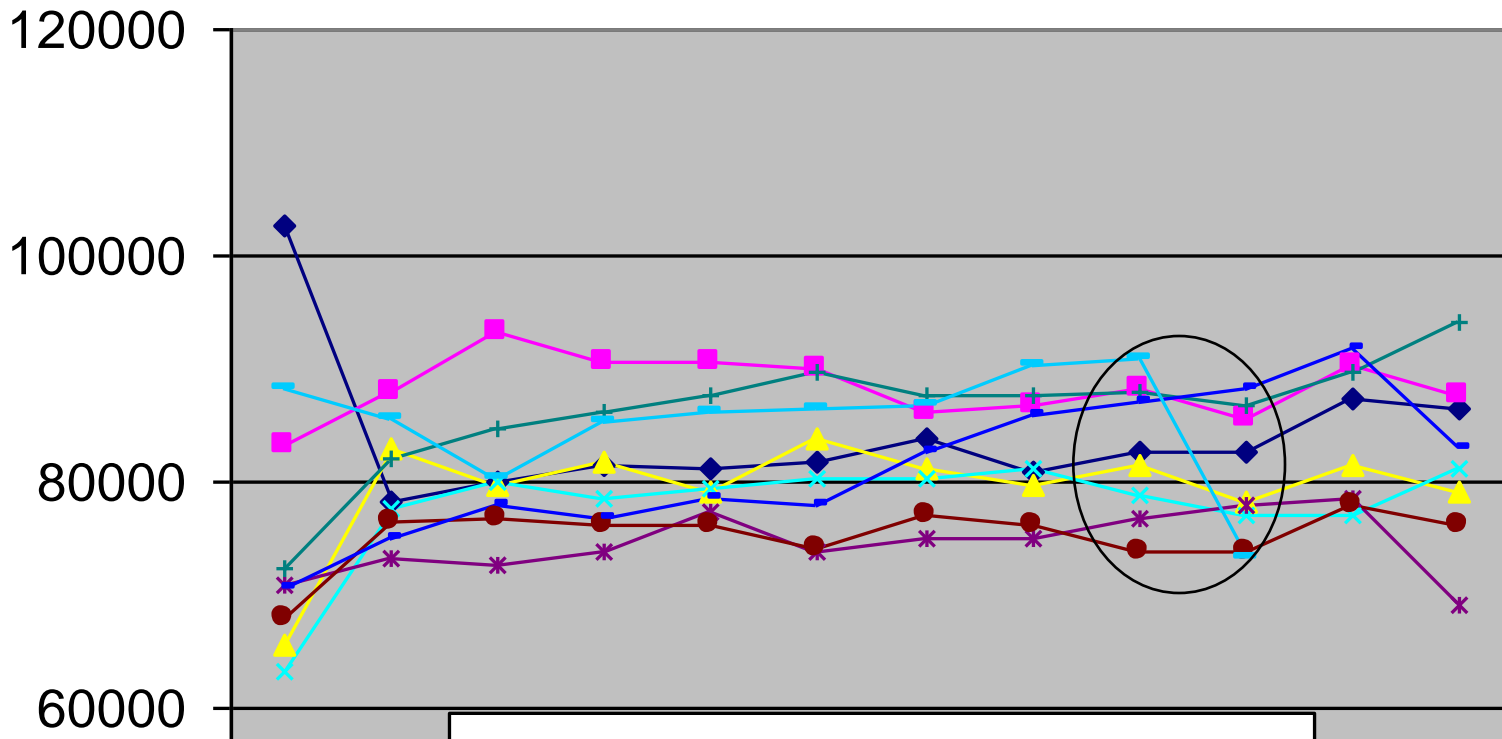


# NextSteppers

- Popular: 19 teams of 10 recruited in 10 days
- Weekly step counts increased (except for last week)
- Results broadly the same but less data to evaluate programme
- Fastest teams got faster (so need more encouragement for less active)

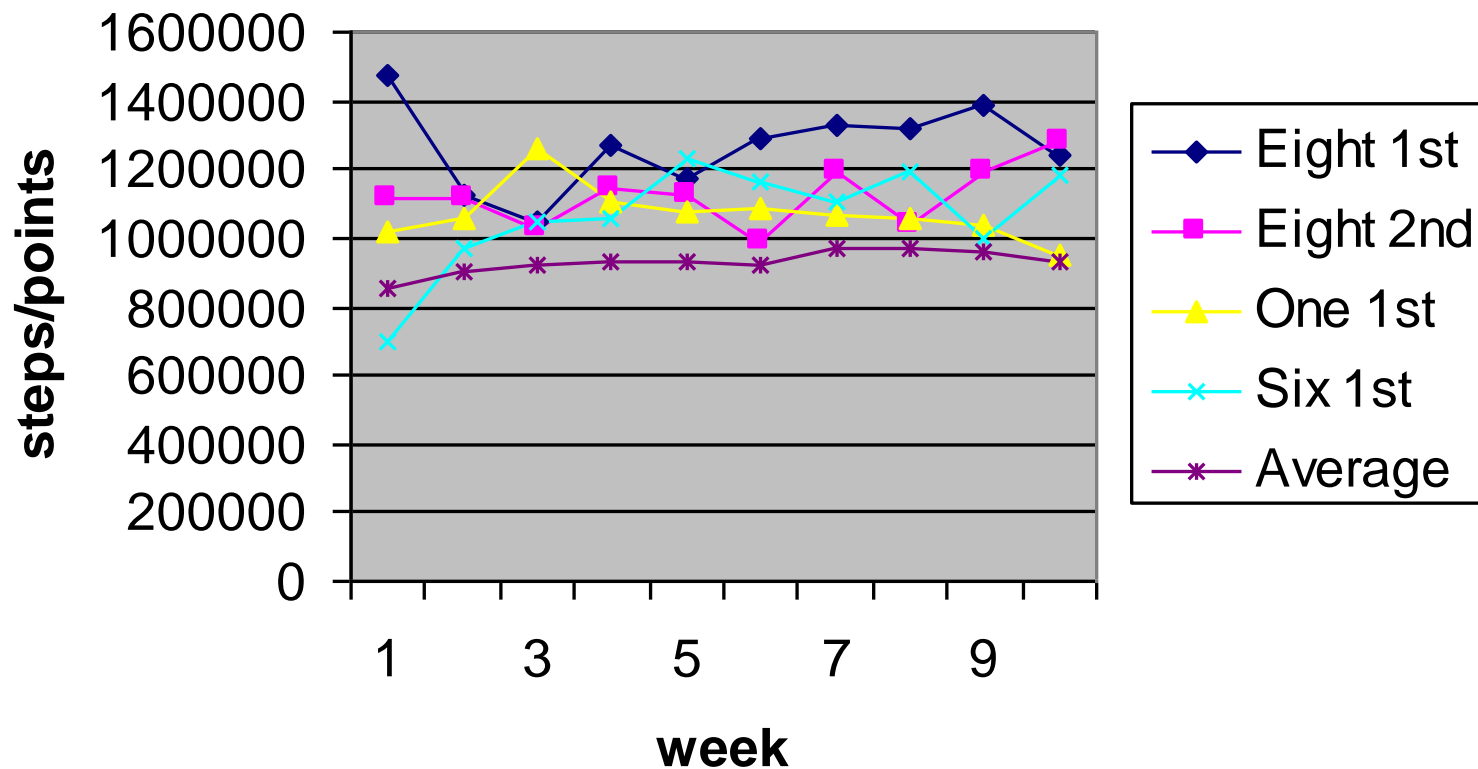
# Avoid mid-December

## Weekly step/point counts by rollout



# Fastest teams got faster

Fastest teams compared with average  
of two fastest teams/rollout



# Need to attract less-active people

- But Google/guess 59,500 and average pre-programme was 56,000
- In first week, 71% doing more than this step count
- Incomplete step counts about 50% more common in bottom quartile than in remaining quartiles

# Future Changes

- Reward increase of around 10% for those under 100,000 steps/week
- More bonuses to encourage permanent change
- Need to complement e-mail messages
- Biggest increase is pre-programme step counts compared to average programme steps
- Involve Massey

# Programme being used by other organisations

- Offered by Sport Manawatu to other organisations as part of local HEHA initiatives
- Te Kete Hauora o Rangitane ki Tamaki nui a Rua

# My major lessons so far:

Must fit with organisation ie:

- Not too expensive given economic stress (e.g., use certificates rather than prizes)
- Easy to run so automate everything possible – including encouragement

# Want to use this programme?

- For corporate market use an existing commercial programme

For non-commercial workplace:

- We provide excel sheet free and some advice
- Would want to compare your data with ours

