

★ WELCOA
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2015

AN EXPERT INTERVIEW WITH

SHAPEUP



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ABOUT **RAJIV KUMAR, MD**

Founder & CEO • ShapeUp



Dr. Rajiv Kumar is the founder and chief executive officer of ShapeUp, a leading global provider of holistic and engaging wellbeing solutions to large employers and insurance companies. Under his leadership, ShapeUp now engages more than one and a half million participants across 138 countries—hailing from more than 600 companies. Dr. Kumar earned his medical degree from the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University and has focused his career on prevention, public health, and innovation in health care. He also received his Bachelor of Arts in Business Economics from Brown University.

ABOUT **RYAN PICARELLA, MS, SPHR**

President • WELCOA



As WELCOA's President, Ryan brings immense knowledge and insight from his career that spans over a decade in the health and wellness industry. He is a national speaker, health care consultant, and has designed and executed award winning wellness programs.

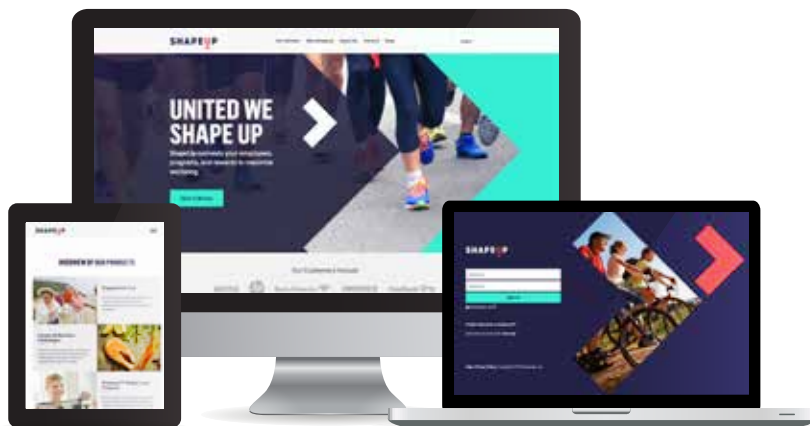
Ryan Picarella can be reached at rpicarella@welcoa.org.

For almost a decade ShapeUp has been helping employees across the globe get healthy. Using the latest technology and leveraging social networking, gaming, and behavioral economics, ShapeUp has supported more than 200 businesses and health plans around the world in their efforts to empower their employees to become healthier. In this expert interview, WELCOA president Ryan Picarella sits down with ShapeUp founder and CEO Dr. Rajiv Kumar to discuss what exciting developments will make up the next chapter of this innovative company.



Q1 ShapeUp recently revealed a new brand and market position. What can we expect from the “new” ShapeUp?

Dr. Rajiv Kumar: ShapeUp just unveiled a new website, brand, and logo, and we’re really proud of our evolved identity. It represents an expanded focus on holistic wellbeing solutions that we’re bringing to market. This has been a natural outgrowth of our mission to help people get healthier together. Moving forward, we’re placing a greater emphasis on all of the key components of wellbeing. Historically, we’ve been very focused on physical health—our team challenges have been incredibly successful among employers, for example—but that’s only one part of the wellness equation. Leading a well-balanced, successful life requires paying attention to emotional wellness and financial wellness, as well. Our customers have been asking us to help them broaden their focus to improve the overall wellbeing of their workforce. And they’re increasingly asking us to leverage our engagement expertise and software platform to drive increased utilization across their entire suite of health management programs and vendors. We’re excited to work with them to accomplish these goals.



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Q2 What exactly is "Social Wellness™" and how can people apply it to their programs?

RK: Health is inherently social. A tremendous body of research teaches us that ideas, beliefs, behaviors, and habits all spread through social networks. So why not use that phenomenon as a force for good? That's the idea behind Social Wellness—using social ties to spread healthy choices, emphasize good behaviors, and reinforce healthy attitudes. Any employer can adopt this approach, on a basic level, by equipping employees with tools to share their goals, invite others to join them, and work together toward shared success.

Q3 How do you capture the attention of busy employees?

RK: These days, it seems like employees are busier than they've ever been. While technology has increased the demands on our employees, it can also be a source of fun, connection, and education. The key is to use technology wisely. We use multiple media to attract the attention of employees, meeting them where they are, such as on their mobile phones, where an increasing amount of time is being spent. We also recognize that peer-to-peer messaging can be more influential than top-down approaches, so we empower employees to pull each other into the wellness program. We also take great care to craft communications that resonate by keeping them short, simple, and thought-provoking. That last piece takes some extra time and creativity, but it pays off in the long run. If you can deliver information in ways that are unexpected, you'll pique interest and have a better chance at sustaining long-term engagement.

Q4 Wellness rewards and penalties have stirred up trouble for some employers over the past couple of years. What is your approach to incentives?

DK: Incentives can be a very powerful tool for promoting wellness, and we believe they should always be structured as rewards rather than penalties. Our incentives product is built upon expert scholarship on behavioral economics, ensuring that employees feel appreciated and employers get the desired return on their invested dollars. The research has confirmed a set of core principles that drive all of our incentive designs, including this central one: provide personalized rewards that are based on progress and earned in real-time.

“If you can **deliver information** in ways that are **unexpected**, you'll **pique interest** and have a better chance at **sustaining long-term engagement.**”



Q5 Health is almost trendy these days. How does ShapeUp keep up with the ever-growing landscape of healthy apps and devices?

RK: This is such an exciting time to be a part of the health industry. The public conversation is growing each day, and there are so many companies working to make health more accessible for people. We're proud to be a part of that ecosystem, and we are always looking for ways to partner with successful companies that are moving the industry forward. Our product is designed to flexibly integrate with the most popular existing apps and devices—and we currently integrate with over 80 of them. This is the best way for everyone: we get to partner with the industry's best, and our participants can continue to choose and use their favorite tools in a seamless, integrated way. We like to call this the BYOA (Bring Your Own App) and BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) approach, and it resonates with employees.

Q6 Lately, many companies have realized that "wellness" extends far beyond the physical. How does ShapeUp address the various components of wellness? Or is the company specialized for fitness?

RK: ShapeUp has its roots in physical health, but we know wellness is so much more than that. In the past couple of years, we've invested in holistic wellbeing solutions that accommodate the physical and emotional aspects of wellness. For example, we'll soon be launching a program focused on boosting resilience in the corporate workforce. Our ever-growing suite of programs is designed to address the diverse range of wellness-related goals.

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What does your ideal customer look like?

RK: ShapeUp has all sorts of customers—we're very inclusive. We have turnkey, easy-to-implement solutions that work for middle market employers, as well as a robust suite of customizable solutions for large employers. We even serve a growing number of jumbo customers with more than 250,000 employees each. Our product is flexible, and social wellness works equally well for all employee populations. That being said, those companies with strong senior leadership support for wellness and a cohesive company culture tend to get the best results!



What's the best lesson a client has taught you?

RK: We've learned so much from our clients, and they're constantly helping us evolve to the next level. We really view our customers as partners. One of the lessons our clients keep driving home is the idea that less is often more. In an effort to continually provide more value and solve more problems, we can sometimes fall into the trap of making offerings too complicated. Cognitive load is an important constraint, and we work closely with our customers to ensure that we are offering programs that are simple to understand and easy to use. This guides our strategic choices about programs we offer, the rewards we design, and the communications we create. In the end, this delivers the most meaningful experience for everyone involved.



What is the future of employee wellness?

RK: Employers are almost at the point where they are able to articulate that their corporate wellness program isn't primarily about reducing health care costs but rather about doing what's right for their employees. This understanding will drive more of them to think beyond traditional wellness approaches to more creative and effective solutions for improving total wellbeing in their workforce. As the lines between work and outside life continue to blur, wellness will come to be seen as foundational to productive, happy, engaged employees and ultimately to successful business outcomes. PPN



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