

A man in a pink and white striped shirt and dark trousers is walking from left to right against a green wall. He is looking towards the right with a slight smile. The background is a solid green wall with a white baseboard at the bottom.

# Walk the talk

**He thought he was fit, but when the CPA Australia finance chief joined the Global Corporate Challenge, he found that he had barely taken his first step.**

**"NORMALLY** I'm quite a fit person – I do boxing classes and walking and there's a lot of running around after my 20-month-old son.

While I do try to keep fit and active, when I decided to join the Global Corporate Challenge I realised that I was only walking between 2000 and 3000 steps a day.

[The Global Corporate Challenge is a worldwide corporate health initiative where participants and teams compete to walk as many steps as possible over 125 days, and at least 10,000 steps a day.]

CPA Australia has put 38 teams into the challenge this year. It's being driven by our corporate social responsibility team because they see it as delivering the dual benefits of reinforcing sustainability in the organisation and the global nature of our business.

With about half the organisation taking part, the challenge involves teams in Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia, along with a trans-Tasman team. It has definitely created more dialogue between colleagues in our different offices.

And being part of the challenge really makes you think about the impact that you have on the environment. It's about how you can do things differently, such as walking instead of taking the car.

It's also had a good effect on my

family as it made me get up and take my son out more often for walks, something my wife really appreciates.

It's also quite competitive and I'm pleased to say that our team – known as West Side Story – is not doing too badly. When I first started tracking my results and saw how few steps I was doing, the competitive spirit really kicked in.

We award a number of prizes internally to highlight team achievements and creativity. You can see people who are losing weight – although I haven't lost any yet – and more people are walking or riding to work.

I have to say, in the finance chief's role it can be challenging to get up to 10,000 steps a day, because you spend so much time sitting in your office. What this has done is force me to get up and go and see people.

Now I take more than 14,000 steps a day because I walk to people rather than call or email, and I take the stairs as opposed to catching the lift. The real bonus is that you start to have incidental dialogue with your people who don't necessarily see you all the time.

The other bonus has been how much the extra exercise clears my head. Just to get up from your chair and walk away from your desk helps you to clear your head before you begin the next dialogue.

That and the fact that my dogs are loving it!" \*