

Your guide to a successful employee wellbeing strategy

Practical tips for the modern workplace



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Introduction

Companies have long struggled to embrace wellbeing in the workplace. Historically, it's been dismissed as a foolish initiative, something not worthy of budget or resources. However, there's a change coming. As more companies embrace the importance of wellbeing, thanks to research, we're seeing how a focus on employee wellbeing can help to reverse employee burnout and reduce stress, turnover, and absenteeism.

Measuring and taking action on wellbeing in the workplace is possible, and in the face of COVID-19, it's more important than ever. According to a [recent study](#), 69 percent of workers claimed this was the most stressful time of their entire professional career, including major events like the September 11 terror attacks, the 2008 Great Recession, and others.

Employees facing illness, employment uncertainty, ongoing distraction, or loneliness no longer have a boundary between their work and personal lives, so it's crucial to provide them with the support and resources to care for their wellbeing.

This guide brings together two unique perspectives from Culture Amp and Calm. Culture Amp is focused on systemic wellbeing issues in the workplace (culture, work processes, work relationships, etc.) that the organization has a direct influence over and/or can easily support. Calm's expertise focuses on empowering individuals with the right tools and knowledge to cultivate wellbeing and build their resilience.

After reading this guide, you'll have an understanding of the science behind wellbeing at work, why you should focus on wellbeing now, the factors of employee wellbeing you can take action on, and how to best utilize wellbeing tools to plan, launch, and measure your employee wellbeing strategy.

CHAPTER 1

Why you need to focus on employee wellbeing now

According to the [2018 Employee Benefits Report](#) from the Society for Human Resources Management, 75% of employers offer wellness resources and information and/or a general wellness program. While wellbeing is more than wellness ([more on that in chapter two](#)), this is a promising statistic.

However, according to the [World Health Organization](#), “Depression and anxiety have a significant economic impact; the estimated cost to the global economy is US \$1 trillion per year in lost productivity.” The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) cites work-related stress as the leading workplace health problem and a significant occupational health risk, one that outranks physical inactivity and obesity. In addition to supporting employee’s physical and mental health, wellbeing programs can help you tackle employee burnout, stress, turnover, and absenteeism.

These programs can also deliver cost savings. A [study on the financial return](#) from wellbeing programs demonstrated that for every dollar spent, medical costs decrease by approximately \$3.27 and by \$2.73 for absenteeism. Employers who adopt wellbeing programs are likely to see substantial positive returns within a few years.

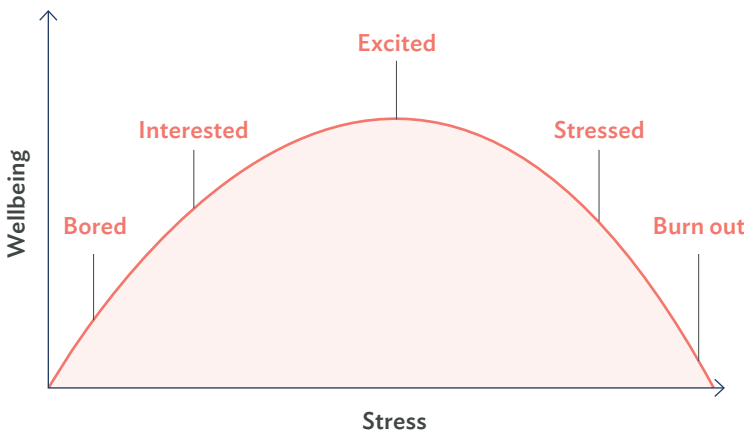
Employee wellbeing was important before COVID-19, but this global health emergency has caused workplaces to experience an unprecedented surge of stress and anxiety. Now, more than ever, organizations are looking for tools to help cope with this crisis and build resilience for the uncertainty that lies ahead.

The wrong amount of stress leads to burnout

Not all stress is bad, the right amount of pressure or challenge is critical to learning and growth. However, chronic high-stress levels can lead to burnout and it’s a global issue.

When it comes to employee engagement, people can be highly stressed and highly engaged at the same time. It’s the transition from feeling stressed to being burnt out when employees are more likely to be on their way to disengagement.

According to The American Psychological Association’s 2018 Work and Well-Being Survey, “More than a third of working Americans (35%) reported experiencing chronic work stress, and less than half said their employer provides sufficient resources to help employees manage their stress.” The European opinion poll on occupational safety and health 2013 reported that 35% of people say cases of work-related stress are fairly common in their workplace. Safe Work Australia reveals that “Between 2010–11 and 2014–15, around 91% of workers’ compensation claims involving a mental health condition were linked to work-related stress or mental stress.”



Employee burnout relates to absenteeism, intention to leave, turnover and poor performance

Stress and negative wellbeing are a gateway to burnout: a long-term stress reaction that can present as physical and/or mental collapse. Employees can feel overwhelmed, hopeless, and exhausted. According to foundational researchers Christina Maslach and Michael Leiter, in The Maslach Burnout Inventory Manual, “A key aspect of the burnout syndrome is increased feelings of emotional exhaustion; as emotional resources are depleted, workers feel they are no longer able to give of themselves on a psychological level.”

Multiple academic studies have shown the correlation between burnout and absenteeism, intention to leave, turnover, and decreased job performance.

What can be done to combat burnout? As proposed by researchers Ernest W. Brewer and Laura Faye Clippard in a 2002 study, the factors that affect burnout fall into three categories: environmental/organizational, individual, and demographic. Workplaces have the greatest opportunity to affect environmental and organizational elements like work overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, the physical workplace, and support from supervisors.

Employee wellbeing affects productivity

By studying a wealth of peer-reviewed wellbeing science, Australian research group Work on Wellbeing (WoW) reports that:

- Workers become more productive at work to the tune of about US\$1000 per year.
- Workers are generally healthier, so sick days are cut in half.
- Wellbeing increases organizational citizenship behavior (workers helping others at work).
- Workers react more positively to workplace changes.
- Workers being more positive about their workplace, so they are more likely to say good things to others and less likely to look for other work.

Absenteeism and presenteeism relate to negative employee wellbeing

Absenteeism is related to negative wellbeing. Approximately 40% of absent days are due to mental health problems such as stress, reports the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health in a 2007 study. The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Absence Management Survey for 2016, meanwhile, found that the average number of working days lost to sickness per employee, per year was 6.3 – a level of absence that costs an average of £522 per employee per year.



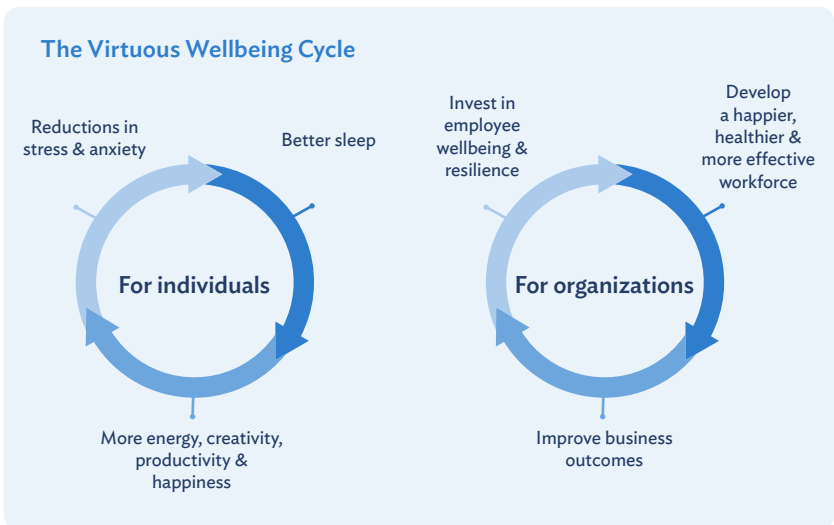
Design a wellbeing program that your people will love.
[Find out how by chatting to a Culture Amp People Geek.](#)

According to data from the Virgin Pulse Science Advisory Board, presenteeism is just as costly to a business' bottom line as absenteeism. Their data shows that employees took about four sick days each year, on average. However, when the numbers on how many days they lost on the job came in, the number climbed to 57.5 days per year, per employee. As Virgin Pulse says, "That's almost 12 working weeks – or one quarter of the entire year – that businesses are paying for employees who are present in body, but not in mind."

About \$224 billion is taken out of the US economy per year due to lost productivity from absence and presenteeism, according to data from the Integrated Benefits Institute. Presenteeism is defined as, "being present at work, but limited in some aspects of job performance by a health problem."

High employee wellbeing leads to lower turnover

High employee wellbeing is related to lower turnover. In a 2017 survey of employer-sponsored health plans in the United States, HR consultancy Mercer found that companies who do the most to promote wellbeing have lower turnover rates. Companies with five or more wellbeing best practices had an average turnover rate of 18%, while those with zero to two best practices had average turnover rates of 29%.



CHAPTER 2

What wellbeing at work means today

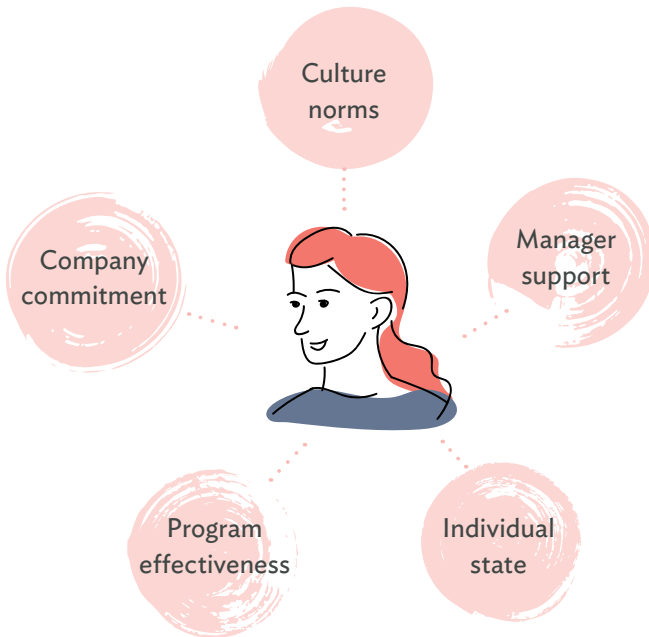
Wellbeing is a holistic understanding of someone's physical, emotional, mental, and social state. It's more than wellness, which typically focuses on a person's physical health. When people are in a state of wellbeing at work, they're able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build positive relationships with others, cope with the normal stresses of life, and make a meaningful contribution.

When affecting employee wellbeing, focus on aspects that are largely impacted or determined by workplace factors. This means that as a company you are able to directly address any of the areas, rather than just provide support. This is not to say that you shouldn't support all areas of employee wellbeing, however, when it comes to understanding, measuring, improving employee wellbeing we want to focus on areas that are actionable within a work context.

Understanding wellbeing at work

If your ambition is to build wellbeing into how you do things at your company, it requires more than just understanding and addressing how individuals are doing. Establishing a culture of wellbeing requires deliberately building the right structure or ecosystem rather than simply focusing on individuals. This means that you need to address things such as the company's commitment to wellbeing, culture norms, manager support and any programs or initiatives in place.

These aspects of wellbeing at work can be grouped into five core areas:



Understanding each part of the ecosystem will give you an overview of wellbeing at your company. In chapter four we'll review specific questions from Culture Amp's wellbeing survey that align to each of these areas. Here, we provide five questions for you to consider before getting started on your wellbeing strategy.

Company commitment: Is your organization dedicated to employee wellbeing?

For employee wellbeing to be most effective and sustainable, it should be a priority for your company and not simply championed by a wellbeing group. Most importantly, this means that the wellbeing of employees is considered when discretionary budget decisions are made around performance, work environment, and rewards.

Culture norms: Does your culture support employee wellbeing?

No matter how strong your wellbeing initiatives are and how many resources your company is willing to put towards it, your wellbeing efforts will fall flat if the culture doesn't support it. For example, during employee onboarding, a company shares that everyone enjoys a flexible schedule. As a new employee packs up at 5:30 pm, they get a judgemental look from their colleague. The employee sits down and conforms with the cultural norm of working late, even though they were supposedly empowered to have a flexible schedule.

Manager support: Do your managers care about wellbeing?

Managers play an important role in supporting the wellbeing of individuals at work. They often have discretion in the work individuals do, when and how they do it and with who. They set an example of expected behaviour (in addition to leaders) and are able to directly provide support to individuals. Furthermore, they are often closest on the ground for when things go well and not so well.

Individual state: How are employees doing in personal health and wellbeing?

Workplace wellness has historically focused on physical health, but it's important to understand other major components of holistic wellbeing. Mental and emotional health directly impact employee experience and morale, so it's important to identify ways to support employees in these areas. Consider aspects such as meaningful work and purpose, autonomy, progress, and growth. Meditation and mindfulness are two of many ways to help employees connect with a sense of purpose and find how their work makes a meaningful impact.

Improving mental health & fitness through mindfulness

Neuroscience is discovering new, effective ways to develop our brains for enhanced mental strength and performance. What we are learning about neuroplasticity means that at any age, through training, we can change our brains to become even more mentally strong, healthy, and fit.

As much as we need physical exercise and movement to build bodily strength, agility, and resilience; we can also benefit from exercises — or practices — to strengthen our minds. Mindfulness is a practice of paying attention to the present moment on purpose, with kindness and curiosity.

Research shows that mindfulness in the workplace boosts our sense of wellbeing and improves our ability to achieve work goals. It allows us to respond to stressful situations thoughtfully rather than react. When we invest in mindfulness practices over the long run, we're able to build the resilience and mental strength needed to successfully manage the many stressors we face in our lives.

Programs: Are our current wellbeing initiatives of value and/or what initiatives would employees value?

This is the area that most companies get excited about. Wellbeing programs are tangible and actionable ways to make a positive impact on employee wellbeing and demonstrate that your company cares. Throughout the rest of this guide you'll learn how to ensure that your wellbeing initiatives are integrated into a holistic strategy so that they don't fall short.



Learn how employers can bring the [Calm experience](#) to their employees to help build mental fitness and resilience through better sleep, mindfulness, and meditation.

CHAPTER 3

The pillars of a successful employee wellbeing strategy



The number one reason employee wellbeing programs fail is that they are comprised of bolt-on programs or ad-hoc perks. When wellbeing programs are stand alone initiatives and are not integrated into a company's culture or operations, they're bound to fall short.

A successful employee wellbeing strategy is proactive, holistic for the individual and company, respects employee privacy, and is integrated into the company's cultural norms. Here we cover the four challenges that stand in the way of creating a successful employee wellbeing strategy.

Top five ways to create an effective wellbeing strategy

1

BE PROACTIVE, NOT REACTIVE

A reactive approach to wellbeing is based on responding to events after they've happened. For example, you may have noticed many employees starting to show signs of stress, so you implement a flexible vacation policy. However, reactive approaches often fall short, since during the time it takes to implement a strategy employees may become burnt out and leave. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are incredibly important and still relevant for workplaces but also represent a reactive approach in that they are primarily set-up for employees to use once they have hit a major issue.

Solution: A proactive approach to wellbeing focuses on preventing problems from arising. For example, offer proactive resilience building tools and training. Online mindfulness programs like Calm give employees the opportunity to strengthen their mental and emotional capacity so that they are better prepared to navigate the inevitable highs and lows of work and life. EAP hotlines are critical in a time of crisis, but if you can proactively teach employees how to deal with stress, they'll have more confidence to face situations as they arise.

2

AVOID A CHECKBOX APPROACH

Simply offering a gym membership or yoga class once a week is not a holistic approach to employee wellbeing. These offerings are great, but without a holistic approach, they may not create an overarching culture of wellbeing. To achieve this, all offerings and programs need to be baked into the company's culture and the employee lifecycle.

Solution: Wellbeing should be part of how you make decisions, structure your team, and be felt meaningfully across the employee lifecycle from onboard to exit. Many companies offer stand-alone initiatives such as yoga classes or fruit bowls and consider that their complete wellbeing strategy. Wellbeing researcher Dr. Peggy Kern refers to such approaches as the 3 Fs of wellbeing - Fruit, Fitness and Flu shots. These are all great things but are certainly not enough.

3

STRIVE FOR IMPROVED WELLBEING, NOT JUST PERFORMANCE

Using wellbeing initiatives as a means to an end for improved productivity or performance is ineffective. Productivity is a natural benefit, but employee wellbeing as the goal itself ensures that your initiatives are well received and effectively utilized. It shouldn't feel like just one more way to save money or squeeze productivity out of employees.

Solution: Make sure employees understand that wellbeing itself is the primary goal, and not just a means to an end. Demonstrating genuine care for people's mental health and emotional needs will naturally improve morale and performance. Consider offering tools like Calm to support employees achieve holistic mental and emotional wellbeing, not just in the workplace. It can be used to cope with personal issues, to help put your kids to sleep, to improve your relationships, etc.– all of which have an indirect impact on performance.

4

ALIGN CULTURAL NORMS WITH YOUR WELLBEING STRATEGY

Some companies have holistic programs that accommodate physical, emotional, mental, and social wellbeing, but they lack the cultural support to make them succeed. This is represented by the employee example in Chapter Two: Does your culture support employee wellbeing? Wherein an employee is told they have a flexible schedule, and yet are judged for leaving at 5:30 pm.

Solution: Cultural norms need to support wellbeing strategies and be role modeled by all employees. Leadership plays a key role in demonstrating desired behaviors and new program adoption. Employees may wrestle with whether to attend a company fitness class or take a vacation if they don't see their peers and mentors doing the same. At Calm, the co-founders regularly take time out of their busy schedules to join the company's daily meditation at 10am. With this simple act, Calm's leaders are able to send a clear message to all employees: no matter how busy you are, it's important to set aside time to take care of yourself. Culture and wellbeing should be inextricably linked in order to be successful.

5

RESPECT INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY

When companies have access to data from fitness wearables, genetic testing, or even routine health screenings, employees' personal lives can be exploited. These types of services can be great when employees have complete control of their data, but they shouldn't feel intruded on or discriminated against if they choose not to participate in any programs.

Solution: Give employees complete access to any data connected to your wellbeing strategy, and communicate that participation in any initiative is voluntary. Do your research on how wellness tools protect confidentiality. For example, Calm provides aggregated high-level data on how employees are engaging with the app and what types of content are most popular. With this approach, organizations can gather valuable insights to help inform their wellbeing strategy, while still ensuring user privacy is entirely protected.

CHAPTER 4

Three steps to planning your wellbeing strategy

We know that wellbeing is something all workplaces should focus on, what wellbeing means at work today, and the challenges that stand in the way of a great employee wellbeing strategy. Now, it's time to get into the step-by-step details of how you can get started on your strategy. In this section, we've included practical tips from HR Directors, People Operations Managers, and others who have successfully started an employee wellbeing strategy.

STEP ONE

Get executive and leadership buy-in

Company executives want to know that any new program, including wellbeing, is going to support the bottom line of the business and its long term growth. Stacey Nordwall, Senior People Operations Manager at Culture Amp says there's no one-size-fits-all answer in getting buy-in and support from executive and leadership, but when launching Culture Amp's employee wellbeing guide, part of our overall strategy, she used these three tactics:

- Create a business case that highlights how wellbeing fits into to your mission, values, brand, or employee value proposition. Show how it's a valuable tool for supporting and retaining employees.
- Understand what kind of information matters to your leadership. Do they want to see data or do they want stories with personal impact? Gather external benchmarking data and examples of what similar companies are doing. Get internal data (think surveys and focus groups) to validate the gap your program will address and collect employee stories that you could present.
- Frame your wellbeing strategy in terms of its impact on Employee Lifetime Value. Demonstrate how it will help people onboard, acclimate or ramp up faster. Show how you can build more effective leaders and influence them to stay longer. These are all valuable in terms of reducing the costs of turnover.

An additional important component is presenting a case for wellbeing budget. Clair Cameron and Sarah Zaccari from the Performance Reward team at Vicinity Centres, an Australian Real Estate Investment Trust company with over 1,000 employees – shares these tips in securing budget for an employee wellbeing strategy:

- Outline why the investment is worth the expected program value in both quantitative and qualitative measures. What is the return on investment?
- Highlight the potential cost to the business of not investing.
- Identify how you will measure the short-term success and the overall value to the business.
- Provide evidence that you have conducted the appropriate research before making a funding request.
- Prioritize the program and focus on a few actions that have a big impact.



Design a wellbeing program that your people will love.

[Find out how by chatting to a Culture Amp People Geek.](#)

STEP TWO

Establish your wellbeing baseline

In chapter three we talked about the number one reason employee wellbeing programs fail - they're made of bolt-on programs or ad-hoc perks. One of the best ways to build a comprehensive wellbeing strategy is by using a wellbeing survey to understand your baseline.

Culture Amp's wellbeing survey was created to help companies uncover their unique drivers of employee wellbeing. With this information, companies can ensure they're focusing (and spending budget) on the right programs.

Here we list sample questions from Culture Amp's wellbeing survey and how they can help you establish your baseline and move into choosing the components of your strategy.

COMPANY

Is your organization dedicated to employee wellbeing?

Sample questions:

- *[My company] demonstrates a commitment to the wellbeing of employees*
- *I believe employee wellbeing is a priority at my company*

Use answers to these questions when presenting to your executive team and leadership. The percentage of employees who agree to each could be a wakeup call, and this is a great question to measure change over time so you can see the impact of your wellbeing strategy as it grows.

CULTURE

Does your culture support employee wellbeing?

Sample questions:

- *We are genuinely supported if we choose to make use of flexible working arrangements*
- *Our culture encourages a healthy blend between work and family life*

As we covered in chapter three, one of the challenges to a successful wellbeing strategy is a lack of cultural norms. This section of the survey will help you understand if employees feel supported by the company when it comes to wellbeing. If there is disagreement that your work culture encourages a balance between work and family life, this could become an area of focus for your initial wellbeing strategy.

MANAGER

Do your managers care about wellbeing?

Sample question:

My manager genuinely cares about my wellbeing

If scores for this question are particularly low in your baseline survey, you'll know that raising awareness about wellbeing among managers is critically important before launching your wellbeing strategy.

INDIVIDUAL

How are employees doing in personal health and wellbeing?

Sample questions:

- *When I am stressed I feel I have the support available to help*
- *I usually feel I am making progress at work*

These questions can be particularly enlightening through comments or employee focus groups. Use insights from the individual-related questions to help plan future wellbeing programs that address any low-scoring questions.

PROGRAMS

Are our initiatives of value?

Sample question:

I believe I would get the most value from these wellbeing initiatives (list potential initiatives and ask employees to select up to 3)

If this is your first wellbeing survey, get feedback on initiatives you're considering to set yourself up for success. You might learn that people are very interested in one but not another, or that value varies by team or department. Employees might also provide comments to help you improve programs before they're launched, making them more successful over time.

“Your best bet for influencing wellbeing is management. Managers have an outsized impact on the employee experience, so if you can effectively train and support your managers in making decisions that maximize for healthy and happy employees, you’ll see a more engaged, productive workforce.”

Maddy Wilson, Health and Happiness Manager, Collective Health

What do we see in Culture Amp's wellbeing data so far?

While our Wellbeing Survey has only recently been released, our data looking at scores from 4,000+ individuals in around 20 organizations paints a mixed picture for the state of employee wellbeing.

4,000+

individuals

~20

organizations



Only around

67%

regularly find themselves in state of 'flow'*

THE GOOD NEWS

85% feel that what they do at work is worthwhile

79% feel that they receive support from people around them

THE NOT SO GOOD NEWS

48% feel fresh and rested for work each day

48% feel they can't accomplish what they need to within normal work hours

**As Martin Seligman, known as the father of positive psychology, has shown in his work on the PERMA model, we know that a sense of absorption in one's work is a critical outcome of wellbeing at work.*

What is ‘flow’ and how can we achieve more of it?

Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, the psychologist who coined the term, defined flow as an “optimal state of consciousness where you feel your best and perform your best.” Some people describe this feeling as being “in the zone.” Practicing mindfulness helps generate flow experiences and allows us to let go of worries so that we can focus on the task at hand. Through regular mindfulness practice, your brain becomes better at paying attention to whatever you choose to focus on, making a flow experience far more likely. [Researchers at UC Riverside](#) recently studied people under quarantine and found that flow seemed to mitigate the negative psychological effects of being cooped up during a global health crisis.

Importance of sleep and sleep support

Daytime stress affects nighttime sleep. Making matters worse, losing sleep can affect both your thinking and mood. [Listening to a Sleep Story](#) is one helpful strategy to redirect thoughts and settle a busy mind. Calm Sleep Stories are sleepy tales read by soothing voices to help unwind and fall into a deep sleep.

“There’s a paradox to sleep, in that it comes when you’re not trying,” says Dr. Steve Orma, a clinical psychologist in San Francisco who specializes in treating people with insomnia. “When you try to sleep, your mind monitors your efforts, which then keeps you awake. So, doing something calming before bed to help you let go will prepare you for sleep.”

STEP THREE

Develop goals and measures of success

If this is your first time creating an employee wellbeing strategy, set goals relevant to your first year of implementation. Consider including the following milestones as your goals, mapped to your own timeline:

- Launch a wellbeing survey to the whole company (baseline scores)
- Analyze and present results of the wellbeing survey
- Develop core wellbeing programs based on employee feedback (gathered from your survey or other means)
- Launch a wellbeing program
- At end of year 1, repeat the wellbeing survey and mark the change over time

To develop your measures of success, look back on the work you did in making the case to your executive team. You probably talked about things like how wellbeing will help your company mission, employee value proposition, improve retention, and reduce healthcare costs. Use these as your measures of success, which we'll dive into in [chapter 5](#).



Learn how employers can bring the [Calm experience](#) to their employees to help build mental fitness and resilience through better sleep, mindfulness, and meditation.

CHAPTER 5

Launching and measuring the success of your wellbeing strategy

Now that you've gotten executive buy-in, secured budget, established your baseline, and set goals, you're ready to launch your wellbeing strategy. Since wellbeing is likely one of many HR initiatives being executed, knowing how to balance the launch of this new strategy with everything else is key. One way to streamline the launch of this new initiative is to have a clear plan for informing employees, and keeping up the momentum post-launch.

How to inform employees about their new wellbeing offerings

If you've launched a wellbeing survey or conducted employee focus groups on the topic, people will already be excited about what's to come. Once you're ready to communicate your strategy and new wellbeing offerings to the whole company, keep these tips in mind:

1. Communicate often, and reach employees where they are

What's the primary method of communication at your company? Do people use email and Slack or something else? Start your communications at an in-person event, like an all-hands meeting if possible, to give people time for questions. Follow up about your new wellbeing offerings via email, Slack and any other communication channels you use. Consider remote employees, and provide additional communication to this group.

2. Integrate wellbeing into new hire onboarding

To ensure the longevity of your wellbeing strategy, incorporate it into new hire onboarding.

“We integrated our Mental Health guide into our new hire onboarding and Workplace Wellbeing training sessions to reflect how we think about mental health. It's super important for our newest Benchmates to know that this resource is available, and to set the tone around how we talk about wellbeing”

Bonnie Powell, Director of People, Bench Accounting

3. Appeal to future employees

A focus on wellbeing can be appealing to future employees as well. Put information about your wellbeing strategy and offered programs on your website. Add employee testimonials so candidates can see that these programs are integrated into the company's cultural norms.

“Startups are often a high stress and fast paced environment. But fortunately, employee wellbeing has been woven into Cazoo’s company culture from the start. We believe it is fundamental to building a community of people who work well together, respect each other, and can perform at their best.”

Philippa Cresswell, Employee Engagement Manager at Cazoo

Cazoo is a 300+ person technology company that’s transforming the way people buy used cars. It’s also one of the fastest growing startups in the UK, having grown from 4 employees to over 300 in 2019. Since the beginning, holistic employee wellbeing has been an essential part of their company culture, with mental health seen as just as important as physical health.

After rapid growth, Cazoo decided to provide Calm as a benefit to support employee mental health and wellbeing. They launched this initiative to employees in a matter of days, and to this day they continue to leverage Calm to improve employee wellbeing and ultimately retention. With Calm, Cazoo is able to demonstrate their commitment to employee wellbeing. In fact, Cazoo has seen their investment in Calm lead to a better dialogue about workplace wellness and reduce the stigma around mental health.

CAZOO

Keeping up the momentum for your wellbeing strategy

With all of the work that goes into creating an employee wellbeing strategy, there are a few key steps you can take to ensure the momentum (and success) keep going.

Encourage ongoing employee participation

It's likely that you'll have a few employees who are already bought-in to your wellbeing strategy with minimal effort. These employees can become wellbeing champions, responsible for helping with programming and promotion across different offices or locations. You could even have a wellbeing guild, or "taskforce" that meets quarterly to touch based on wellbeing program and helps to evaluate progress based on survey results.

For those passionate about creating happier, healthier, and more resilient work environments, Calm has created a Calm at Work Ambassador Program. The ambassador community is designed to empower members with the tools and resources to promote mindfulness and mental fitness in their own workplaces. Ambassadors are able to connect with one another from around the globe, share insights, offer encouragement, and ask questions.

Develop manager support

As we've said before, managers play an important role in supporting the wellbeing of individuals at work. Keep an eye on how people are feeling in response to the question "My manager genuinely cares about my wellbeing" to see how you need to sustain manager involvement. It may be about having some standout managers run training on how to look out for the wellbeing of their direct reports. External training for all managers can also be effective.

Maintain executive and senior sponsorship

Getting executive buy-in is the first step to getting started on your wellbeing strategy. It's important to maintain this buy-in and support over time. Use employee feedback captured in your surveys to show the impact of your wellbeing strategy and keep leadership onboard. Have leadership continue to model the behaviors that make for positive employee wellbeing.

Communication tools to support your wellbeing launch

Here are a few communication ideas to support your wellbeing launch. Use them all, or choose a few that are the best fit for your company. Remember, the more people understand and embrace your wellbeing strategy, the more successful it will be.

- Wellbeing calendars to share with the whole company
- Wellbeing guide outlining your company's philosophy and offerings
- Swag to celebrate the launch of your strategy (water bottle, t-shirt, reusable bag)
- Slack channels specific to wellbeing for questions and feedback
- Email newsletter
- Video announcements

Measuring the success of your wellbeing strategy

If you've been able to overcome the challenges of creating an employee wellbeing strategy, take the steps needed to get started and launch your initial strategy, you'll want measures of success in place to keep the momentum going.

Here we've provided sample evaluation measures that map to key wellbeing survey results, and company ROI. Customize this table to fit your organization's needs.

Indicator	Baseline	End of Year 1	Change over time
Overall employee wellbeing	Total score	Total score	
Focus area 1 from wellbeing survey	% agreement	% agreement	
Focus area 2 from wellbeing survey	% agreement	% agreement	
Sample wellbeing program: Flu shot clinic	Participation	Participation	
Sample wellbeing program: Manager wellbeing onboarding	Participation	Participation	
Traffic to the company's wellbeing intranet	Visits	Visits	
Sick days utilized	# of claims or dollars	# of claims or dollars	
Healthcare costs	Monetary value	Monetary value	
Employee retention	%	%	

Communication plan for internal stakeholders

While you can use the table above for your own reference, here's a guide on what to share with your key internal stakeholders. For each level, sharing results of your wellbeing survey is a great way to communicate your progress over time.



EMPLOYEES

- High-level survey results
- Focus area 1 and 2 from the wellbeing survey
- Level of participation in a wellbeing program (e.g. your flu shot clinic)



MANAGERS

- All of the above, but include team level survey results for the manager's team and;
- Participation and qualitative feedback in a sample wellbeing program



EXECUTIVES

- All of the above but detailed survey results and;
- Sick days utilized
- Healthcare costs
- Employee retention

Jumpstart your wellbeing strategy

In this guide, we've explored why it's important to focus on employee wellbeing now. Wellbeing impacts employee stress, burnout, absenteeism, and turnover. We also learned why it's time to move beyond physical wellness programs and embrace holistic wellbeing, influencing the factors we can control through the workplace.

You have strategies to tackle to top challenges that prevent employee wellbeing programs from being successful and an overview of what it takes to get started on your wellbeing strategy. With the right communication plan to take your strategy to launch and measures of success in place, you'll be able to create your company's employee wellbeing strategy with confidence.

Get a demo of Culture Amp's wellbeing survey and learn how you can:

- Improve employee retention by identifying groups at risk of burnout
- Make better use of your wellbeing budget by knowing where to focus
- Prioritize the right initiatives and track progress over time

Contact us today

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