

# Why a holistic health approach is important in the workplace.



**We all spend so much of our lives at work, so it makes sense that organisations play an essential role in looking after their employees' health and wellbeing.**



Rather than focus on solely injury and illness, a person's wellbeing is much more. A holistic health approach looks at the entire person. It recognises that all the various aspects of health, such as mental, emotional, social, and physical factors, are interconnected and impact a person's overall wellbeing.

The goal is to create a balanced life that promotes living well, fostering resilience and long-term health, rather than simply addressing short-term health issues.

Organisations also benefit from this approach. When people have a better work experience and report better holistic health, they are more likely to be innovative and perform better at work, which is obviously good for business.<sup>1</sup>

It's pretty simple. When a person is happier, they work better. And when they feel good at work, they are happier. So everyone wins.

**Employees who feel supported holistically are more likely to experience better mental clarity, resilience, and happiness.**



## **Why is a holistic health approach important?**

Good mental health, a work-life balance, relationships with colleagues, and emotional resilience all play an essential role in how employees function at work and in life.

A recent report from the McKinsey Health Institute found that organisations that implement holistic health strategies increasingly recognise the benefits of such an approach, not just for individual employees but for the organisation's overall performance.<sup>2</sup>

With a rise in work-related stress, burnout, and mental health challenges, the importance of health and wellbeing in the workplace has increasingly become a key focus for many successful businesses.

McKinsey found that reframing employee health from simply preventing burnout to adopting a holistic health model helps businesses foster better work experiences, retain top talent, and ultimately improve their financial performance.<sup>3</sup>

Their research highlights the long-term benefits of taking a holistic approach to employee wellbeing. It means organisations are not just addressing the day-to-day issues but are going deeper and addressing the causes of poor wellbeing. This could be from stress, poor work environments, lack of social support, or personal challenges they are dealing with outside of work.

By looking at the whole person, they can promote long-term health benefits, which in turn reduces absenteeism, increases productivity, and improves employee satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>

Employees who feel supported holistically are more likely to experience better mental clarity, resilience, and happiness. This often leads to higher engagement at work and a greater sense of purpose, all of which are linked to better outcomes for the organisation.<sup>5</sup>

## **Better work experiences lead to improved innovation and performance**

The McKinsey study showed that employees who report positive work experiences are often more innovative and productive, and contribute more significantly to company performance.<sup>6</sup> When a person feels good both physically and mentally, they can be more creative and innovative. They're also more likely to collaborate effectively, solve complex problems, and adapt to changing conditions.

When employees feel their emotional, mental, and physical needs are respected and valued by their employer, they become more motivated and productive.

All of this combines to help drive long-term business success

**Managers and leaders play a critical role in ensuring people's holistic health is a priority.**



## 10 ways you can support your team's holistic health.

Managers and leaders play a critical role in ensuring people's holistic health is a priority. Here are some tips and strategies for how you can take a more holistic approach and help improve your team's health and your business's success.

### 1. Encourage work-life balance.

Allow flexible working hours or remote work options if possible. Encourage taking breaks and holidays, and avoid overwork.<sup>7</sup>

### 2. Promote mental health resources.

Provide access to counselling services, mental health days, or stress management programs. Be open and build a workplace culture where mental health is openly discussed and prioritised.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. Foster strong social connections.

Team-building activities, mentorship programs, and collaborative workspaces can help employees form meaningful connections, enhancing emotional wellbeing and reducing workplace stress.<sup>9</sup>

### 4. Create a safe and inclusive environment.

Ensure that every employee feels safe to express themselves and that diversity and inclusion are promoted at all levels. A sense of belonging is crucial for emotional health.<sup>10</sup>

### 5. Offer professional development opportunities.

Offer your team training, learning, and development opportunities that help build their growth and enhance both their professional and personal lives.<sup>11</sup>

### 6. Encourage physical health

Provide on-site fitness facilities, access to gyms, or healthy snack options. Try walking meetings or make break times for physical activities.<sup>12</sup>

### 7. Recognise and reward achievements.

Regularly acknowledging employees' hard work and achievements boosts self-esteem and makes them feel valued, contributing to their emotional wellbeing.<sup>13</sup>

### 8. Support flexible career paths.

Allow employees to explore different roles or responsibilities within the organisation, allowing them to follow their interests and build on their professional strengths.

### 9. Provide financial wellness resources.

Financial stress can have a huge effect on mental and emotional health.<sup>14</sup> Offer financial education and resources to help employees manage their personal finances.

### 10. Listen and respond to employee needs.

Actively seek employee feedback through surveys, one-on-one check-ins, or open-door policies. Addressing employee concerns and needs helps build trust and wellbeing.<sup>15</sup>

If a company wants to care for their people and build a better workforce, then a holistic health approach is essential. It allows organisations to not only address current challenges but also build future success.

When you prioritise holistic wellbeing, you'll create an environment where employees can thrive, leading to a more resilient, productive, and profitable organisation.

The information contained in this article is for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as health or medical advice. Always consult a physician or other qualified health provider regarding any questions you may have about a medical condition or health objectives.

## Sources

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