



# Workplace Wellbeing in 2025

Addressing the diverse needs  
of a modern workforce



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# Happy, healthy employees – thriving business

**Our workplaces play a big role in our lives, both during the workday and beyond. What happens at work can make the difference between a good day and a bad one. So prioritizing wellbeing at work will have a significant impact on the lives of employees.**

When people feel supported, their stress levels drop. When they're happy and healthy, they're more engaged, more productive and more likely to make critical contributions to organizational growth. And research shows that businesses see lower turnover, less burnout and better organizational success.

Gallup found that, across the U.S. and Canada, only 33% of employees are engaged (compared to a global 23%), 51% of employees aren't engaged, and 16% are actively disengaged – with managers accounting for 70% of the variance in engagement. And, compared with the least engaged bottom quartile of business units, the most engaged top quartile showed **↓81% less** absenteeism, **↓41% fewer** quality defects, **↑10% more** customer loyalty, **↑18% more** sales and **↑23% higher** profitability<sup>1</sup>.

Because it can be directly linked to business results, and because many employees are struggling, employee wellbeing is not just a passing trend, but a major topic of conversation in boardrooms around the world. And in 2025, workplace wellbeing will be more important than ever.

This year is shaping up to be one of great change. The impact of societal and economic flux on workplaces is undeniable, and employers will be called upon to help their teams navigate the turns. But that may pose challenges as many corporations last year

began flattening their hierarchies to save costs. With significant restructuring and mass layoffs of middle managers, remaining managers have much larger teams. As we move through a tumultuous year, how can companies and managers support employees in the face of these headwinds?

**A first step is to understand how employees want to be supported.** In our most recent workplace survey, we sampled 3,000 employees, managers and executives, asking their opinions on what's going well, what isn't and how to fix what's broken in today's workplaces. We checked in with staffers in every function from marketing to IT. We asked people of all ages all kinds of questions, whether veteran or newcomer, job seeker or job stayer.

Using the insights from these honest and anonymous results, this report delves into why workplace wellbeing isn't just a "nice-to-have," but a must-have for success. We'll look at **why it matters, who needs it the most and the shortest routes to a workforce that isn't just surviving, but thriving.** So grab a coffee, and let's talk about how a little wellbeing can go a long way.



<sup>1</sup>Gallup, 2023

# Why does workplace wellbeing matter?

Our survey uncovered a few important insights that illustrate the critical need for a culture of wellbeing.

## Stress is affecting employees in the workplace

Despite more organizations focusing on wellbeing, stress continues to affect people in the workplace. About one third (32%) of employees frequently experience stress, 26% feel overwhelmed, and a full quarter (25%) are experiencing burnout. And the sources of these negative emotions are not just originating in the workplace: 47% of individuals agree that stress from the increasing cost of living is negatively impacting their work. We'll see in the next section who is most impacted, but it's clear that the road to wellness still has some miles ahead.

### Stress continues to take a toll

**32%** of employees frequently experience stress

**26%** of employees feel overwhelmed

**25%** of employees are experiencing burnout

**47%** agree that stress from the increasing cost of living is negatively impacting their work

## Most managers feel responsible for their teams' wellbeing

Nearly three in four managers (71%) surveyed feel responsible for their teams' wellbeing. Since, as employees consistently tell us, having a manager who cares is one of the most important factors in their workplace happiness, it's encouraging that a large majority of managers feel their role reaches beyond core, measurable goals like reaching team quotas.



Nearly **three in four** managers **feel responsible for their teams' wellbeing**

The pressure of caring for a team can add to a manager's already stressful day. Many RGER clients are taking steps to better support managers and employees by using their platforms as a benefits hub. Making EAP resources and benefits easier to find means managers can refer struggling employees to existing resources. This boosts usage of benefits and takes the pressure off managers.





## Employees appreciate the wellbeing support they're getting at work

Workplaces are making progress on the wellbeing front, and employees recognize the efforts they are making. Half (51%) of employees say their managers are listening to them, 49% say their physical wellbeing supports at work are good, and 47% are pleased with the rewards and recognition they get from colleagues.

### How are managers currently helping support their teams' wellbeing?

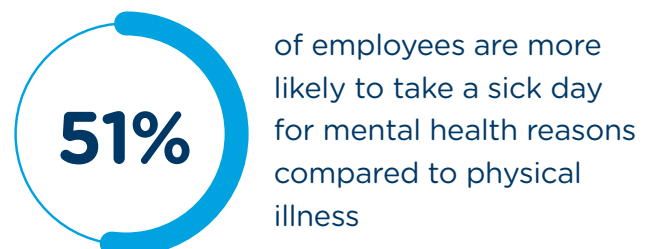


## Individuals make use of the benefits allotted to them through their employer

It's a positive sign that many employees feel they are getting good wellbeing support at work, and that they're using their benefits. Nearly four in five (79%) employees feel they have a good knowledge of the benefits offered at their work, and most (74%) use

the benefits that are relevant for them. Most (67%) feel they have a good understanding of how to maximize the financial benefits their work provides.

In terms of paid time off, nearly one-third (30%) of employees took fewer sick or personal days in 2024 compared to 2023. As **about half (51%) are more likely to take a sick day for mental health reasons compared to physical illness**, absentee metrics – if available – can be as valuable in tracking employee mental wellbeing as physical.



# Who struggles with wellbeing the most?

**While every employee thrives through wellbeing support, it's crucial to know who in your organization might need special attention to ensure they're happy and resilient. While negative feelings at work are still widespread, our survey discovered that women, managers and those who work in hybrid workplace arrangements are particularly affected. Let's unpack these numbers to see to what extent and why this is happening.**

## Women are more likely than men to experience burnout at work

Forbes found that about 44% of female staffers in the U.S. say they are burnt out from their job, while only 36% of their male coworkers feel the same way. Our survey reflects the same pattern across the board: Burnout, stress, loneliness and feeling overwhelmed were more common among female than male employees (see chart).

Why is this happening? It's likely the Double Shift: women typically carry out twice as much housework and childcare than their male counterparts<sup>2</sup>, and therefore show up at work already tired – a surefire route to burnout. And if that's not enough, the American Psychological Association's 2023 Work in America Survey found that more female employees (23%) reported a toxic workplace than male employees (15%)<sup>3</sup>.

## Managers suffer from burnout and stress more than non-managers

It's not surprising that managers' additional responsibilities – having to handle both the demands of their superiors and the wellbeing of employees – can sandwich them in a situation where they neglect their own wellbeing. Companies must ensure managers' mental, emotional and physical wellbeing is prioritized so they can take care of business – and their employees.

Frequently or very frequently experience	Managers	Non-managers
Burnout	28%	24%
Feeling overwhelmed	29%	24%
Stress	34%	29%
Loneliness	21%	17%



<sup>2</sup>GEPI, 2024

<sup>3</sup>APA 2023

## Hybrid workers are more affected than remote and in-office workers

People who work in a hybrid workplace arrangement suffer more from these negative emotions than colleagues who work from one location – regardless of whether that's in the office or remote – and the differences are notable (see chart). Examining the week of a hybrid worker helps explain this. Fully remote employees never have to leave the house, which might reduce socialization opportunities,

but also reduces stress. Fully in-office workers get used to travelling every day to an office, and when they arrive, everything they need is there. Hybrid employees, on the other hand, must continually flip back and forth between home and office, packing everything that's needed in the morning and packing it back home again at night. This arrangement has the potential to add chaos to already busy days.

Frequently or very frequently experience	Hybrid	Remote	In-office
Burnout	<b>33%</b>	26%	27%
Feeling overwhelmed	<b>32%</b>	25%	28%
Stress	<b>38%</b>	32%	32%
Loneliness	<b>25%</b>	18%	18%



# How to support wellbeing

Forward-thinking companies are building comprehensive employee wellbeing support to ensure a highly engaging and productive work environment. You may already provide a range of employee wellbeing supports, and you may want to do more. Let's see what employees are specifically asking for so you can focus your efforts on what works best.

## 50% of employees rank wellbeing support as more important than a 10% pay raise

When asked what their employer could do to enhance their wellbeing, a bigger paycheck topped the list as usual, with more than half (53%) of employees wanting to see a pay raise or bonus. It's true that more money can relieve a great deal of life's daily stresses, and getting paid what you feel you're worth is a form of recognition. But experts agree that happiness does not necessarily track up alongside pay increases<sup>4</sup>. **Notably, however, half (50%) of employees say that a company that cares about their wellbeing is more important than a 10% pay raise.** This number is up from 44% last year and is higher than 50% for people aged 18-44. Supporting wellbeing sends a clear message that your organization appreciates its employees beyond their productivity.

## Employees want to see clear expectations and equitable workload distribution

When asked what their manager could do to enhance their wellbeing in the workplace, employees' top need was clear goals and expectations (40%). Ensuring fair and equitable workload distribution ranked second at 36%.

But it's not just managerial support employees are seeking; they want similar things from their employers, too: to set realistic expectations for their role and responsibilities (28%). The prominence of these employee sentiments should send a message to employers: that they're either asking too much of all employees, or only of some.

It's important that all managers have the skills to delegate tasks reasonably and to the most appropriate people, then to take the time to check on progress and provide support. Hiring more people may feel counterintuitive in times of budget cuts, but may save money in the long run as employees are able to be more productive and are less likely to leave for a less stressful situation.



<sup>4</sup>[The Happiness Index](#), 2022

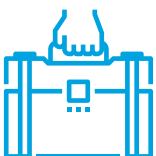


## Recognition and reward are important to employee wellbeing

Showing employees they are valued for their contributions gives them a sense of accomplishment and motivates them to do more great things. And recognition pays off.

**Currently, only 25% of employees across the globe say they've received recognition for doing good work in the past week<sup>5</sup>.** In Gallup's studies, when organizations can move that ratio to 60%, they can see quality improve 28% and absenteeism drop 31%<sup>6</sup>. On the other side of the coin, **employees who do not feel recognized are twice as likely to say they'll quit in the next year<sup>7</sup>.**

Especially important for hard-to-recruit positions and top-performing talent, recognition also demonstrates to other employees what success looks like. Our survey showed that almost one third of employees want employers (32%) and managers (34%) to recognize, reward and provide feedback for their contributions as a means to support wellbeing. In fact, 36% of people feel that consistent, frequent recognition is more important than a 10% pay raise. This percentage jumps to 48% in those 25-24! Good leaders find out how people like to be recognized and make it easy for managers and colleagues alike to praise each other for high performance often, whether one-on-one or publicly.

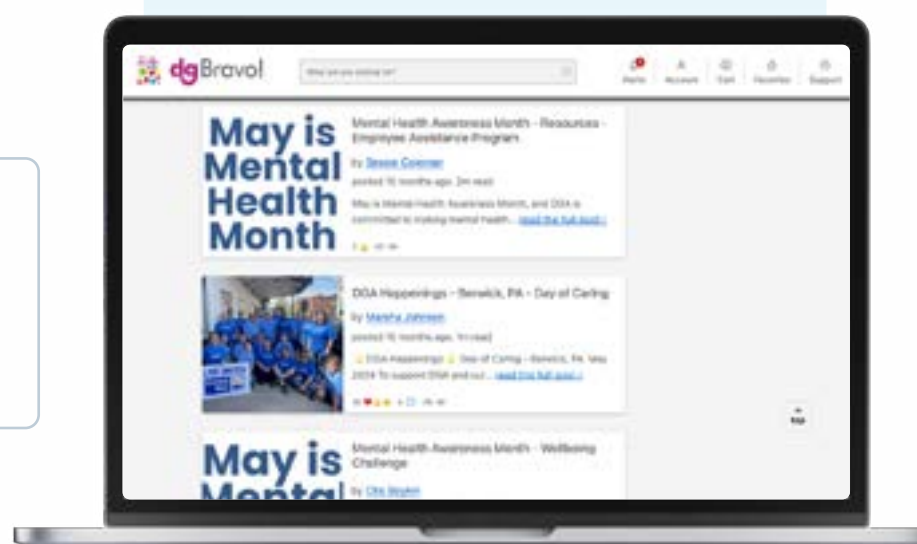


Employees who do not feel recognized are twice as likely to say they'll quit in the next year.

## Wellbeing in the workplace includes community, health and work-life balance

Our survey showed that more than one-third (35%) of employees say encouraging a healthy work-life balance would enhance their wellbeing. In fact, 35% of employees want to see their managers model work-life balance. Among the activities with the greatest positive impact on work wellbeing, people list spending time with friends and family (27%), exercise and healthy eating (26%), and not working long or extra hours (26%). Creating a culture that values and models wellness can utterly change the work environment.

**Modeling wellbeing is important to Design Group Americas. During May, Mental Health Awareness Month, they featured weekly communications on their platform DG Bravo! The blog posts include stories from key leaders sharing challenges and strategies they – or their families – used to improve their mental health and wellbeing. This practice opened up conversations about mental wellbeing and encouraged employees to take care of themselves.**



<sup>5</sup>Gallup

<sup>6</sup>Gallup

<sup>7</sup>Gallup

## People are still looking for flexible work arrangements

According to the American Psychological Association, “perhaps more important than *where* people work is where they *want* to work.”<sup>8</sup> The return-to-office remains a hot topic across the world, and while opinions still vary widely on the best scenario, research continues to show that flexibility is a key driver of wellbeing. Around a third of employees would like flexible work arrangements. As we evolve the working model, one thing remains true: If you make people come to the office, you should expect some people to leave, and you also must ensure the experience is well worth going in for.

Globally and in the U.S., employees who had more control over their working patterns and could decide where and how to work felt significantly more appreciated than those who almost never had this type of control (70 vs 57.9).<sup>9</sup>

More Control	Less Control
70	57.9

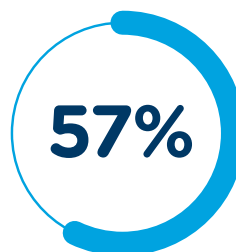
## Employees are open to discussing their wellbeing in the workplace

Like any relationship, open and transparent organizations can find and fix issues early, before they grow into dissatisfaction, burnout, stress leave or resignation. And in fact, employees are quite comfortable talking about wellbeing at work. Of course, this comfort will depend on whether it's physical wellbeing (66%), mental wellbeing (57%), or financial wellbeing (48%), so managers will need to

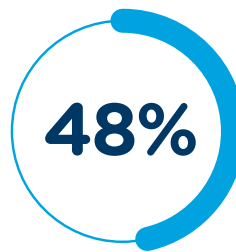
gauge each employee's level of openness. For example, younger employees tend to be more comfortable talking about financial wellbeing at work than older employees. Inversely, younger employees are less likely to want to talk about their mental wellbeing than those that are older.



of employees are comfortable talking about their **physical wellbeing** at work (63% in 2024)



of employees are comfortable talking about their **mental wellbeing** at work (53% in 2024)



of employees are comfortable talking about their **financial wellbeing** at work (41% in 2024)



<sup>8</sup> APA, 2024

<sup>9</sup> The Appreciation Index, 2024

## Employers: Here's what employees want

Top 10 ways employers can enhance employee wellbeing in the workplace		
#1	Provide a pay raise or bonus	53%
#2	Encourage a healthy work-life balance	35%
#3	Provide flexible work arrangements	32%
#4	Recognize and reward employees for their contributions	32%
#5	Set realistic expectations for my role / responsibilities	28%
#6	Offer opportunities for skill development and training	24%
#7	Promote mental health support programs	22%
#8	Foster a culture of open communication and transparency	21%
#9	Offer an employee discount program	19%
#10	Offer financial education workshops and training session	16%

## Managers: Here's what employees want

Top 8 ways managers can enhance employee wellbeing in the workplace		
#1	Provide clear goals and expectations	40%
#2	Ensure fair and equitable workload distribution	36%
#3	Model a work-life balance	35%
#4	Offer regular feedback and recognition	34%
#5	Encourage professional growth opportunities	31%
#6	Listen to concerns and address them promptly	28%
#7	Offer flexible work arrangements	28%
#8	Foster a positive and inclusive work culture	27%



# Removing barriers to success

**Supporting employee wellbeing helps drive up feelings of appreciation, creating happier people and more productive, efficient workplaces. The most effective way for companies to consistently support the full range of employee wellbeing needs – financial, physical, mental and emotional – is to offer an employee experience and wellbeing platform so employees can privately access what they need, when they need it.**

These digital collaboration spaces provide a foundation for wellbeing, giving employees of all levels access to resources like personalized strategies, expert content, online exercise classes, activity challenges, goal tracking through wearables and community tools to share and connect over wellbeing activities.

A myriad of options supports holistic wellbeing for all of your employees, no matter their position, location, preferences or fitness level. Making this rich environment available to all employees supports managers in their aim to enhance team wellbeing and improve company culture.

Concentrating on employee wellbeing can help companies survive and thrive in chaotic economic and political times. Because engaged employees tend to spend time thinking about how their organizations can improve performance and efficiency, engagement can lead to the growth and evolution of your organization, which can in turn lead to more engaged employees.

## About Reward Gateway | Edenred

Reward Gateway | Edenred helps companies engage, motivate and retain people — every day, all over the world.

Our unified employee engagement hub provides the best of recognition, reward, wellbeing, surveys, benefits and discounts that support talent acquisition, retention and values-driven growth.

Get in touch with us to learn more about Reward Gateway | Edenred solutions.

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