

Healthy returns: What the future of wellbeing means for your business



Insights from our latest 'Perspectives by Bupa Global' event

Workplace wellbeing is now one of the biggest determinants of productivity, performance, and profitability.

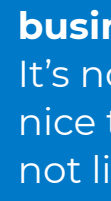
Workplace wellbeing is evolving rapidly. Expectations are changing, and businesses need to think about how they can adapt their wellbeing programmes to meet employee needs.

The global pandemic reminded us how fragile our health can be, demonstrating the impacts wellbeing has on productivity in real-time. As a result, flexible working and caring for employees' health became 'business as usual', and workplace wellbeing rocketed up the organisational agenda.

This wellbeing revolution is built on a solid foundation that has been growing for years, with links between physical and mental health and business performance recognised for some time.

Today, employees also recognise its value, and are prioritising workplaces that offer comprehensive wellbeing programmes, mental health support and a healthy work-life balance.

With this in mind, many organisations are reviewing their wellbeing propositions to ensure they are relevant and future focused. And the most successful businesses will be those that rise to the challenge.

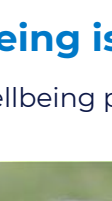


Wellbeing is actually part of a successful, well-functioning business in 2024. It's no longer a nice to have – it's not liberal and progressive. It's part of a successful organisation, whatever that might look like for you as an employer."

— GETHIN NADIN
CHIEF INNOVATION OFFICER, BENEFEX



Employees who feel supported in their health and wellbeing are more engaged, motivated and loyal to their organisations.ⁱ



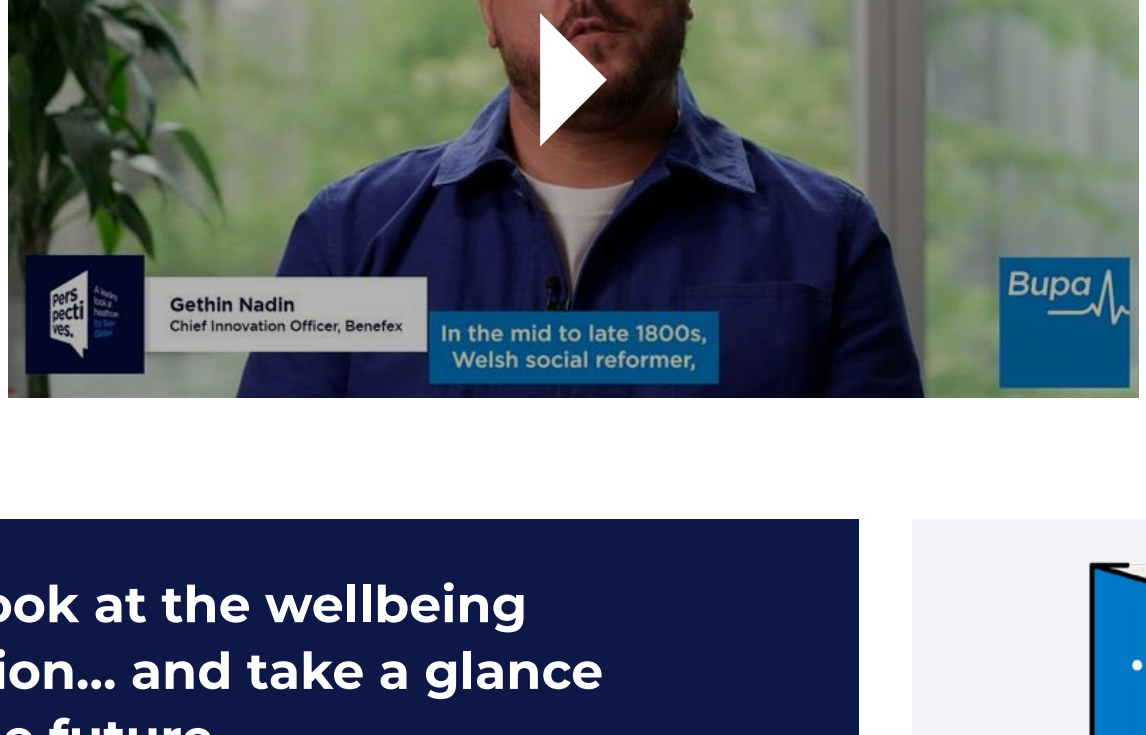
Improved wellbeing leads to lower absenteeism and presenteeism, reducing the costs associated with lost productivity and employee turnover.ⁱⁱ



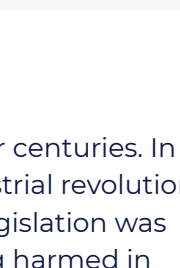
Employees with a high level of wellbeing and happiness are more innovative and creative in the workplace.ⁱⁱⁱ

Workplace wellbeing isn't a new concept

We can trace examples of wellbeing programmes back to the 1800s.

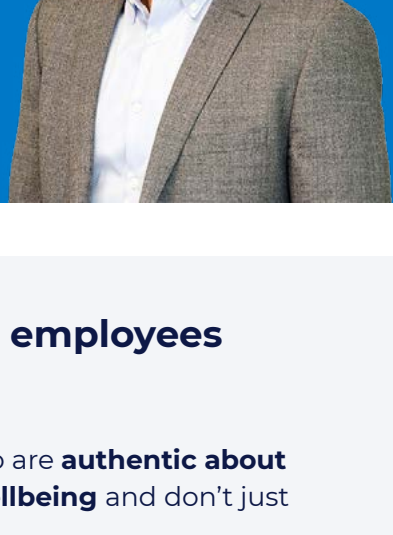


Let's look at the wellbeing evolution... and take a glance into the future



Gen Z has grown up with technology, so maintaining their digital wellbeing and making sure they interact in the real world is important... Environmental wellbeing is also super important as a lot of Gen Z are concerned about climate change and how they can impact the environment in a positive way... Plus financial wellbeing is on their minds as they seek to ensure their finances are in a good place."

— EBENEZER ADENIYI
REWARD BUSINESS PARTNER, HG CAPITAL



Wellbeing has been on a journey for centuries. In fact, we can look as far back as the industrial revolution when, due to employee activism, legislation was changed to protect staff from being harmed in hazardous locations such as factories and mines.

In the years since, various legislations have been put in place to protect employees, and the modern wellbeing proposition is a continuation of that. However, it considers how the current workplace culture impacts our health, such as the use of digital technology.

In recent years, two pivotal moments put a spotlight on mental health, namely the 2008 global financial crash and, of course, the pandemic. And today, conversations about mental health have become normalised. This has all led to a greater emphasis on creating supportive work environments, as people actively seek out employers with a comprehensive wellbeing offer.

We're currently progressing the wellbeing narrative and exploring how to implement the most effective strategies. However, we recognise that they will need to evolve even further to meet the expectations of younger generations. Gen Z, for example, want a personalised and holistic approach that encompasses not only physical and mental health, but social, financial, digital and environmental wellbeing as well.

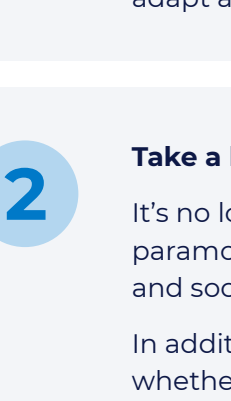
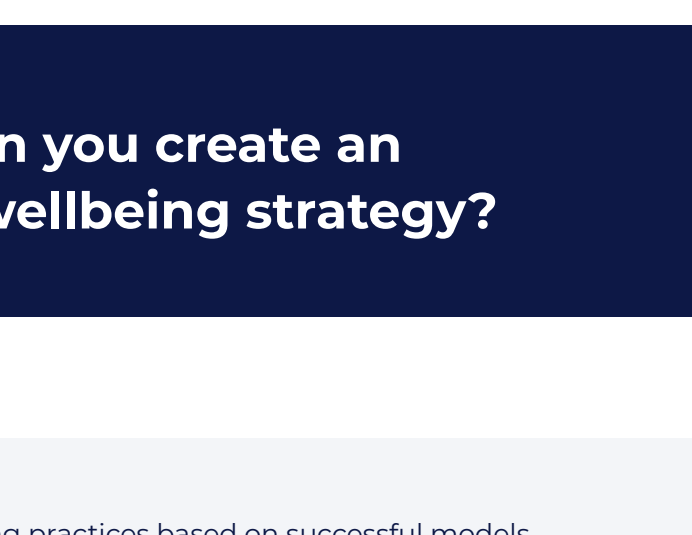
What are today's employees looking for?

- Employees who are authentic about prioritising wellbeing** and don't just talk the talk.
- Holistic wellbeing** that responds to their mental, financial and social health.
- Flexibility, personalised support,** and access to tools that help them achieve a **work-life balance**.

There is an imperative for global companies to meet these expectations. Not just for employee satisfaction, but for attracting and retaining top talent in a competitive market. Both of which have a hugely positive impact on the bottom line.

What does wellbeing mean to you?

Watch our video featuring our intermediary partners, clients and colleagues from around the world.

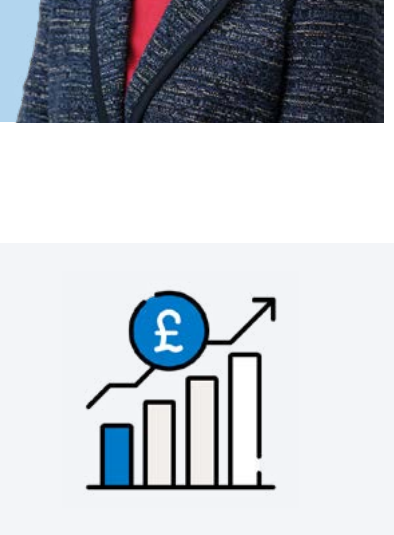


So how can you create an effective wellbeing strategy?

- Gather your data**
Insights can help you identify what people really want and value, and create wellbeing practices based on successful models. So collect staff data, talk to employees, refer to other leading companies and examine best practice. It's equally important to gather data that helps you analyse the success of your initiatives, and adapt and change them as appropriate.
- Take a holistic approach**
It's no longer enough to think about wellbeing as physical and mental health, although they're of paramount importance. Your approach also needs to meet people's financial, digital, environmental and social needs.
In addition, your offer needs to meet different demographics and levels of need, regardless of whether they're struggling or outperforming. By ensuring everyone can benefit in some way, your whole organisation will be on an upward trajectory.
- Think global, act local**
If you're an international organisation, developing a global framework that aligns with your wellbeing principles and business strategy can help ensure a consistent approach.
This might contain an overarching design principle, with content that can be tailored by individual regions in accordance with their healthcare systems.
- Consider your audience**
Make your wellbeing strategy interesting and 'brand' it in an attractive way that engages your employees and encourages participation.
Then use your digital platforms to communicate the programme and its benefits – making staff aware of what they can access and signposting them to the relevant resources.

The framework starts with, how do we want to make wellbeing part of our business? Where does it fit in terms of our business strategy? And then thinking about what's most important...Ensure you are gathering a team together that have a vested interest in this topic, and that you're supporting them...Sharing evidence is really important. And also getting together and sharing best practice. Don't underestimate the value of that. It really makes a difference."

— JULIE STEPHENS
DIRECTOR OF WELLBEING AND HEALTH AND SAFETY, BUPA



What does this all mean for the business bottom line?

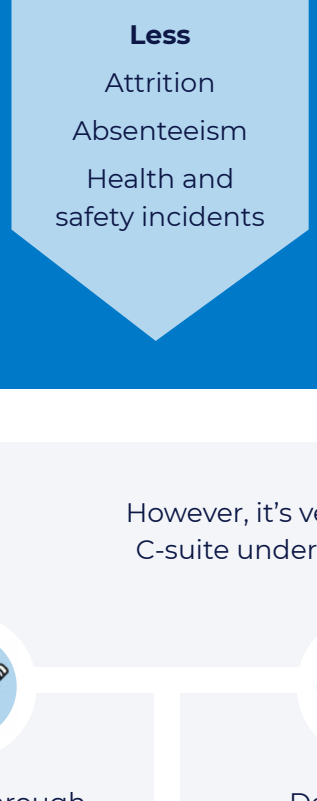


We asked our LinkedIn community about wellbeing in the workplace...^{iv}

Does your business measure the return on your investment in employee wellbeing?



Designing a wellbeing proposition that aligns with your business strategy is key to delivering a return on investment. This is key to delivering a return on investment frequently results in:



71% of organisations say they can clearly see an ROI of their health and wellbeing programme.

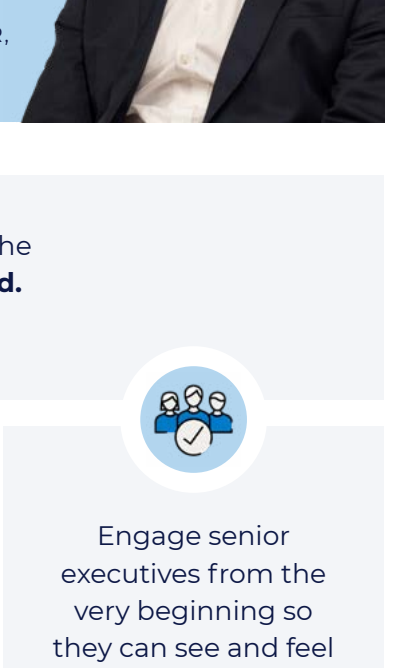
67% ranked positive employee behaviours as the top outcome of their health and wellbeing programmes.

Source – Virgin Pulse 2023 Global Survey, Workplace Health and Wellbeing Priorities

As already indicated, there's a strong correlation between employee wellbeing, productivity and business performance.^v And with 66% of the world claiming they are either 'struggling' or suffering^{vi}, it's never been more important to put effective measures in place.

Employee engagement is directly linked to productivity and it's a lead indicator, not a lag indicator. We could see our employee engagement going up and our profit went up. We could see our employee engagement going down, even when we were making a profit, and then our profit followed. Now our employee engagement is going back up again and our profit is following it."

— STEVE ILEY
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, JAGUAR LAND ROVER



However, it's very difficult to link wellbeing activities to a metric the C-suite understands. **Here are a few ways to get them on board.**



Put them through the programme first so they can cascade their support down through management and embed it within the organisation.



Design data collection into the wellbeing programme, making it easier to gather and share information.



Demonstrate the tangible impact by sharing powerful employee stories related to your wellbeing offering.

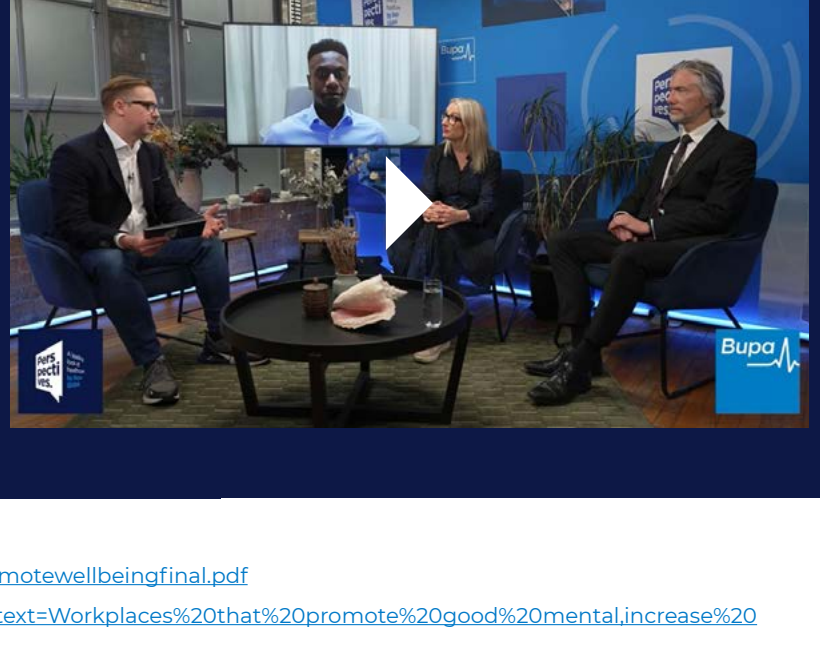


Engage senior executives from the very beginning so they can see and feel the importance of the initiative.

Interested in hearing more?

You can view the full event recording [HERE](#) and sign-up below to be the first to know about future 'Perspectives by Bupa Global' events.

[Sign up](#)



i https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4662/resource3_howtopromotewellbeingfinal.pdf

ii <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9663290/#:~:text=Workplaces%20that%20promote%20good%20mental,increase%20worker%20productivity%20%5B2%5D>

iii <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8305859/>

iv [Bupa Global LinkedIn poll April 2024](https://www.bupa.com/global/linked-in-poll-april-2024)

v <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/employee-wellbeing-productivity-and-firm-performance-evidence-18-million-employees>

vi <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/349484/state-of-the-global-workplace.aspx>