



The Culture Connection

Workforce Wellbeing and Organizational Success
in Times of Uncertainty

Introduction

What It Means to Build — and Nurture — a Culture of Wellbeing

One of the most important things you can do for your organization is to build — and nurture — an effective workforce culture. Definitions of workforce culture range from *the personality of your company* and *the beliefs and behaviors that determine how a company's employees and management interact* to *a guide for decision-making*. It's also said that company culture picks up where the employee handbook leaves off.

But an effective workforce culture means so much more, especially at a time when employees have been weathering ongoing crises — a global pandemic and civil unrest — and are experiencing unprecedented levels of anxiety, stress, and even trauma.

At the best and worst of times, culture is what enables employees to thrive. It attracts, supports, and retains employees. **It says, “We care!”** It builds community. It's what creates a sense of purpose, belonging, and balance, and makes your employees want to bring their whole selves work. It's what inspires them to go “above and beyond” and contribute wholeheartedly to your shared success, even (or especially) when the going gets tough.

Today, an effective workforce culture fosters wellbeing — it supports the development of healthy habits inside and outside of the office and makes the workplace a healthier, happier, more inclusive place. Equally critical, **a culture of wellbeing gives employees permission to take care of themselves** — actually encourages them toward self care — and creates an environment of honesty, safety, and trust. This, in turn, leads to lower rates of absenteeism and presenteeism (when a physical or mental condition prevents an employee from being fully productive at work) and, ultimately, it supports better bottom-line results.

People often believe that company culture is something that “just happens” through a happy accident of personalities, but we will show you that it is something you can actively develop and nurture. This ebook shares **insights into how to build and nurture a workforce culture of wellbeing**, so your entire workforce can enjoy a healthier, more productive employee experience and drive organizational success.

Making the Business Case for Wellbeing Culture

What's Good for Us as Workers is Good for Our Business

Wellbeing is now front and center as a business imperative for industry-leading, high-performance, socially-conscious companies. The writing is on the wall: if you create the type of environment employees want to work in, and provide a human workplace that focuses on the employee's whole self, people will want to work for you. You'll also end up with healthier employees who take fewer sick days and show up to work "ready to go!"

Senior leadership teams know that they need an amazing culture to attract, retain, and nurture a diverse talent base — it's simply essential to results. Since 1998, the companies on the Fortune '100 Best Companies to Work For' list have consistently outperformed the S&P 500 stock index by a ratio of almost two to one.

Culture Connection: the Road to Wellbeing

The conversation around culture has changed dramatically over the decades and is picking up speed. Going to work for a company used to mean signing on for 30+ years with

the promise of a steady paycheck and a pension. But in the 2020s, millennials make up the largest share of the workforce, with Gen Z behind them, and they're shifting the balance of power while spinning the culture dialogue on its head.

They're demanding more from prospective employers. Beyond more money and career advancement, they want support achieving sustainable wellbeing. They need to know that their company will help them live a better life within a world they're shaping into a better place.

See? A culture of wellbeing is the incentive employees are looking for.

Culture is Today's Competitive Currency

An employee-centric culture puts a premium on wellbeing — and if your workforce isn't aligned around the same health and wellness values that resonate with top talent, you risk losing the battles of attraction and retention. That's why building a culture of wellbeing is so essential. Fortunately, your workforce wants an amazing culture and you can start creating this culture today. It's an initiative everyone wants to get behind and support — and now's the time to make it happen.



51.5%

Over half of employers anticipate major changes to culture as a result of the pandemic.

[i4CP](#)



> 1/3

More than one-third of employers are challenged with maintaining company culture during the pandemic.

[SHRM](#)



72%

72% of companies with an established culture of health view their health and wellness programs as important to their overall business strategy vs. 11% of unestablished companies.

[Optum](#)

How to Build a Culture of Wellbeing

Listen, Link, and Live: Building Your Culture of Wellbeing

Constantly evolving with room to grow, a company culture is a living, breathing entity. It's comprised of people, whose ideas, feelings, and actions carry out the company's vision, mission, and values. Making room for wellbeing in the culture is as natural as providing ongoing educational opportunities. It requires some thoughtful messaging to get your teams excited, as well as access to basic tools, but you'll get out of your culture what you put in. Change may happen slowly, but wellbeing will find its place.

1 **Listen.** *If you listen to your employees you'll learn what they value in a workplace.*

Creating a culture takes everyone's ongoing input and participation. The best way to engage employees is to know them and understand what's important to them. Then, you'll be able to develop benefits programs and communications that resonate with what wellbeing means to them and how they want to pursue it.

Think about ways that your employees can give you feedback. Start by nesting your curiosity into things you're already doing. For example, add a 5-question survey to the end of your annual employee reviews or ask front-line managers to pose a targeted question at each of their weekly department meetings.

LISTENING IN ACTION: SURVEY MONKEY

Survey Monkey conducts a quarterly employee satisfaction and culture survey to find out "what's going on." But even more importantly, they listen to their employees every day, asking them little things like, "What coffee brand should we put in the kitchen?" and big things like, "What health benefits matter most to you and your family?"

2 **Link.** *If you link your company's mission to what your employees value, you'll provide that sense of purpose they're looking for.*

Once you connect with employees and understand what they want, you can better define your true mission and link your culture to your shared purpose. Employees need to feel that they intuitively understand the connection between your culture, your company's mission, and their role in carrying it out.

Think about how you can get your "insides" and "outsides" to match — how can employees start walking the talk? Maybe there are ways to insert company culture into your daily workflows or special events. One-on-one meetings can be taken to the walking path or happy hour can turn into a volunteer opportunity.

LINKING IN ACTION: PINTEREST

Pinterest's company mission is to help people *discover the things they love and inspire them to go do those things in their daily lives.* That's why the company hosts "Knit-Con," an annual 2-day event in which employees teach each other cool skills that they know, from hula dancing to wine tasting to coding. It's a highly engaging and really fun way to connect employees back to their company's purpose.



3 *Live. It's not enough to listen and talk about purpose if you don't live your values in your policies and your actions.*

It's been said that "culture is what happens when senior executives aren't in the room." But what if senior executives *are* in the room — or video conference, as it were — participating in a culture they've helped to create? That's the idea here. Values aren't just posters you put up on the wall. Living the values will result in the product and the service that will delight and sustain your employees and your customers.

Think of ways your company executives can lead by example. Maybe they can kick off a meeting with a stretch break or deep breathing session. Perhaps they share stories about their own pursuit of wellbeing.

LIVING IN ACTION: EBAY

Devin Wenig, eBay CEO, who has informally adopted the title of Chief Culture Officer, is the perfect example of a leader who's walking the talk. Devin believes incredible companies have great culture. Since day one as CEO, not only has he demonstrated the company's values through his leadership style, but he also holds his management teams accountable for supporting cultural goals and for defining who eBay is from the inside out.

How to Nurture a Culture of Wellbeing

Nurturing an Amazing Culture of Wellbeing

Once your workforce is aligned around the values, attitudes, and behaviors that support a healthy work environment and celebrate the “whole” employee, you’re on your way to reaping the benefits of a culture of wellbeing: happy, engaged, productive employees who feel safe, included, and cared for.

Yet achieving a culture of wellbeing isn’t a destination. It’s an endless journey of listening, linking, and living — together. Here are best practices for continuously strengthening your wellbeing culture.

Cascade Wellbeing from the Top

Conventional wisdom contends that effective leadership helps create the organizational results we seek. And nothing can take the place of C-Suite sponsorship — and, as we’ve explored, their active participation — when it comes to shaping an amazing culture.

But it’s not always easy to get executive buy-in to change, even if your new approach is practically guaranteed to significantly improve the employee experience. That’s ok — because at first, all you need is just one executive “hero” to champion your wellbeing culture initiatives. This individual can positively influence other leaders and help get the entire management team on board.

In fact, many companies, like eBay, link their cultural goals to managers’ MBOs, creating accountability while driving measurable results tied to employee engagement, retention, attendance, and productivity metrics.

With managers given the tools and incentives to promote wellbeing among employees, the net result is a workforce that builds connections around wellbeing. This is where the “rubber meets the road” and employees become ambassadors for wellbeing and keep the culture infused with the fuel it needs to thrive.

“

Be curious about what employees need, instead of assuming you know what they want. We go straight to the source and listen. Then we can shape the employee experience rather than guessing.

Becky Cantieri

Chief People Officer, Survey Monkey

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Help employees craft their own programs for wellness and benefits. It lets them create an experience that reflects their journey, and gives them a deeper sense of belonging.

Pat Wadors

CHRO, ServiceNow

“

When people go to work, they shouldn’t have to leave their hearts at home.

Betty Bender

Author, *It’s All in Your Head*

Support, Reward, and Motivate with a Holistic Wellbeing Program

The best way to promote and reinforce workforce wellbeing — to really bring it to life — is through a formal benefits program. As we've discussed, today's top talent considers wellbeing benefits as more than "perks," especially when they know their programs are designed to make their lives better as opposed to being used as tracking or surveillance tools for the employer.

Wellbeing programs are an essential part of bringing purpose, belonging, and balance into the employee experience. And practically nothing proclaims "we care for our workforce" more clearly than offering HR-sponsored, employee-centric wellbeing resources and activities that are customized for your diverse and dispersed employee base.

This means offering holistic programs that incorporate all aspects of an employee's health: fitness, mental health, sleep, nutrition, and financial wellbeing. Wellbeing

promotions, events, activities, and "challenges" should be offered concurrently, so every employee can find something that interests them. As part of their corporate wellbeing program, one of the world's largest media and entertainment companies offers each of their 160,000+ employees the opportunity to participate in one of four companywide wellbeing challenges: Yoga, Mindfulness, Nutrition, or Exercise. This way, everyone can decide for themselves what's most enjoyable for them, whether they're learning how to cook healthier meals or practicing advanced yoga poses.

Keeping employees engaged in a wellbeing program (in any benefits program, for that matter) requires some degree of fun — or they won't stick with it. Employees need to *want* to participate and see results that motivate them to come back for more. Enabling them to set up personal goals and then rewarding them with some extrinsic motivation — a gift card, some company swag, or a donation to a favorite charity for each wellness milestone reached — can quickly lead to intrinsic motivation (e.g. "I feel great!") that fuels and sustains itself.



Coach and Connect Digitally to Maximize Engagement

A big piece of the wellbeing puzzle, inside and outside of the workplace, is not only having access to both wellbeing experts and a peer community to inspire and support our efforts, but to feel a sense of connection with your employer and your colleagues. That's why for your wellbeing program to be effective — and to really take root as a driver of company culture — you need to provide the right tools for coaching and connecting your workforce to one another, even if they're living and working far apart.

In this day and age, the most effective way to empower your employees with personal wellbeing connections is through the digital realm. They're already connected, using smartphones and other devices to stay in touch with friends, family, and even coworkers over mobile apps, email, text, and social media. They might even be working from home or remote offices. And they're consuming more and more multimedia content, such as video, for information and entertainment. Is there a better way for them to engage with their workforce wellbeing program?

Thanks to 24/7, easy-to-access web-based content and tools, your employees can always be in touch with their wellbeing advocates: nutritionists, personal trainers, financial wellness coaches, and coworkers who share their goals. Consider the impact on their engagement, too. Without digital tools, they simply wouldn't be able to connect with other individuals or groups on a daily basis and they may not receive enough positive feedback, motivation, and inspiration — the things that make their wellbeing journey successful in the first place.

What's more, Josh Bersin's ongoing research examining HR professionals' response to COVID-19 found 32% of employees are craving help with work-life balance and physical wellbeing, citing requests like digital on-demand fitness options.

Employees at OurHealth, a growing organization in the corporate healthcare space, use digital trackers for their participation in workforce wellbeing challenges to not only earn their health reimbursement incentives, but to monitor their progress towards goals. And from an administrative perspective, an integrated digital tracking dashboard translates into time-savings and enhanced insights for the HR department.

Keep Wellbeing Fresh by Communicating Early and Often

It's essential to stay in front of your workforce with wellbeing messages. Even if you're thriving in a culture that's infused with wellbeing, HR needs to continually promote programs and events to keep employees (and even their families) informed and engaged in the activities that matter most to them. Importantly, these messages need to be carefully crafted and delivered with the right cadence and content so they're relevant to each employee. Communications should be created...

- In a variety of formats (e.g. video, SMS, on paper) to attract attention and interest
- Over a range of channels (e.g. email, company intranet, postcards) to encourage engagement at the right time and place
- With differentiated messaging (e.g. "here's a stretch for back pain," "try this 5-minute meditation") to target individuals with resources they're most likely to enjoy

You don't have to "go" any of this alone. Count on your workforce wellbeing solution vendors to help you design programs and get personalized messages to each and every one of your employees. And take a cue from your marketing department: work with a wellbeing campaign "editorial calendar" to organize your communications so you don't miss a beat.

Schools Insurance Group, in fact, uses an annual calendar to plan events, challenges, and communications for their wellbeing program. This helps their HR team keep key messages and dates in front of employees, while giving their workforce an ever-changing range of wellbeing topics and challenges to engage with throughout the year.

An effective workforce culture helps define your employee experience and deliver results. When your workforce is aligned on wellbeing — great things can and do happen!

Grokker

See What You're Missing

A recent Deloitte Human Capital Trends Report reveals that while 84% of organizations feel wellbeing is important — only 49% are ready to take action. That's what makes holistic and easy-to-use workplace benefit offerings so critical. It takes a truly modern solution — one that employees will love and that's easy for HR to administer — to drive adoption, engagement, and results.

Grokker's patented solution offers what no ordinary wellness platform can: thousands of proprietary HD videos available globally on any device supported by a community where employees engage with experts and motivate each other.

Whether you're launching a new wellbeing initiative or augmenting an existing platform with Grokker's exclusive content, our flexible solution will inspire your employees and deliver results.

Your virtual wellbeing team

Let Grokker's support team do the heavy lifting and take the work out of workplace wellness by guiding you from planning to launch and into your future:



Fast and effective launches – Get your programs and promotions up and running quickly without internal IT or other technical resources



Dedicated customer service – Our customer success team works with you throughout the year to make sure that your wellbeing program caters to your whole workforce and inspires your teams on their wellbeing journey



Personalized annual wellness calendar – We'll deliver monthly programs tailored specifically to your workforce a year in advance



Communications to employees – Our Communications Toolkit makes it easy with fresh monthly emails and blog posts written from you to your workforce



Challenge and incentive planning and execution – From gamification and competition to rewards and reminders, we'll plan and execute a full suite of motivational activities designed to positively encourage your employees to take action and inspire them to make real change



Onsite presence – We'll join you onsite at wellness fairs and other internal events to raise awareness, promote your program's benefits, and drive participation



Send us a question
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Talk to our team
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