

Leadership and advocacy

01

1 Creating a wellbeing strategy

Introduction

Employee wellbeing can be one of those organizational development initiatives that is seen as a ‘nice to do’ activity, not requiring real investment, and without any clear business case to support it. It is often seen as a ‘fluffy’ human resources (HR) activity, which is managed by a senior HR representative. However, there are some clear business benefits and it is extremely useful to demonstrate your commitment to wellbeing in the form of a strategy document that confirms your intent, sets your goals and clarifies responsibilities.

Promoting wellbeing

The publication of a strategy document will demonstrate the intent of an organization to promote wellbeing through its employment practices and its employee benefits packages. In a 2016 report, Great Place to Work stated that wellbeing is a key driver for employee engagement for many ‘employers of choice’ and reported that the number of employers offering wellbeing strategies is increasing, with half growing their activity in the previous 12 months. In order to stay competitive as an employer of choice in an increasingly active marketplace, employers need to consider their wellbeing strategy as part of their way of working and their benefits package.

Approach

Embedding wellbeing into your business strategy

Your wellbeing strategy should not be a standalone, but should be an integrated part of your overall strategy setting and business planning processes. It should align with – and complement – your strategic vision, and you

should certainly make sure that neither conflicts with or pulls in a different direction to the other, or even sounds contradictory. The wellbeing strategy should support what your organization is aiming to do and, importantly, how it intends to do it. There should also be alignment between the wellbeing strategy and the core values of the organization. Incongruence between the two will result in either one or the other not being met.

Strategy content

Your wellbeing strategy should include your statements on the following.

Vision and goals Set out your vision for employee wellbeing in your organization, and a small number of key goals that will contribute towards the delivery of that strategy. Your vision should be inspirational but achievable, and should cover a breadth of wellbeing issues, including career, mental, physical and financial wellbeing. The vision might also set out the key benefits that the wellbeing strategy is expected to bring, not only to employees, but also to customers or other key stakeholders.

Defining wellbeing You should take the opportunity within your strategy document to define what wellbeing means for your business. You might include some of the categories that are included in this book, and provide some idea of the scope that you will cover for each one.

Responsibilities The strategy document should set out who in the organization has overall responsibility for employee wellbeing, any the associated responsibilities of others, including the board, senior leadership team members, and specialist functions. In particular, it should include the wellbeing responsibilities of

- the chief executive officer (CEO);
- senior executive leadership team;
- people managers;
- individuals.

Committees and action groups Describe any committees or action groups that will be established to ensure ongoing commitment to and implementation of the wellbeing strategy. These might include governance groups to monitor budgets, review progress and compliance, and take overall responsibility for the strategy, and smaller more local focus groups, who

may contribute to putting plans in place, generating ideas, and evaluating progress in their own local environment.

Describing a programme The strategy may also go so far as to identify key streams for a wellbeing programme, defining at high level the focus for each of them. For example, streams could include:

- career and development;
- physical/mental wellbeing;
- social and community;
- financial wellbeing;
- health promotion;
- occupational health and safety.

Resources The strategy should also detail the resources that are allocated to the delivery of the wellbeing strategy – which may include any allocated budget, available resources such as premises that might be used, specialist expertise and access to services such as occupational health and employee assistance programmes.

In addition, the strategy may make connections and dependencies to relevant policy statements or strategies, including health, safety and environment, social responsibility and employee engagement.

Evaluation and review The strategy statement should indicate how employee wellbeing will be evaluated using key performance indicators and business metrics.

Measures might include statements relating to employee engagement scores about wellbeing and employer responsibility, as well as people metrics about absence, days lost to mental health or other absences, participation in initiatives and programmes, grievances raised, etc. In addition, there may be an opportunity to consider other business measures (which may be more indirectly connected to wellbeing) such as productivity, customer service ratings, quality measures, etc.

Make sure that your strategy document is easily understood and written in plain, jargon-free English, suited to the culture of the organization and adaptable should your business change, and lastly, but most importantly, that it is communicated to all relevant people – employees, the board, customers and stakeholders, and particularly to the suppliers of any products or services that connect to wellbeing.

Outcomes

Having a strategy does not ensure that wellbeing is prioritized and cared for within your organization, but it will make your strategic intent transparent, and as a result, the appropriate parties can be held to account for budget allocation, for delivery and for action.

Measuring impact

As above, the publication of a strategy itself does not result in changes in attitudes or behaviours alone, and so the evaluation has to be at a more individual, programme or initiative level. However, it can be useful to benchmark the defined strategy with other organizations, and consider what is 'best practice', in line or missing from the strategy and intent.

It is also useful to seek feedback on the strategy from across the organization – at all levels and in all functions and locations, to validate whether it meets the wellbeing needs, and whether it is seen as practical and value-added.

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2 Workplace wellbeing assessments

Introduction

Having a strategy and intent around employee wellbeing is a great start to kick off a programme of initiatives if you have been able to develop one, but it is useful to know how well your organization currently is at promoting and enabling wellbeing at work, and be able to assess the gap between that and where you want to be.

Completing a wellbeing assessment of your workplace and your work and employment practices will provide you with that gap analysis. It may be appropriate to invite an external assessor into your organization to carry out an independent assessment, and to provide recommendations for your wellbeing programme, but where budget is not available to do so carrying out your own internal audit will be a really great starting point, provided it covers all the key areas of importance, is done transparently and that there is genuine intent to make a positive difference.

The following information provides guidelines about how to conduct an assessment, and provides an initial template for you to consider, but this will need to be adjusted to be relevant to your business, your priorities and your wellbeing strategy.

Promoting wellbeing

Sixty-one per cent of employers are more reactive than proactive in their approach to wellbeing, according to a CIPD report (2016). Completing an assessment provides the opportunity to consider what changes need to be made in the workplace – both to start positive actions towards wellbeing and also to stop actions or behaviours that might negatively impact it – and what could be introduced to add value and choice to a wellbeing initiative. This allows organizations to take a proactive stance, identifying preventative strategies, but also to accommodate reaction to wellbeing issues, by establishing infrastructure, process and capability to manage issues as they arise.

Approach

Independent assessment

There are many organizations that can complete an independent workplace assessment for you to assess your current levels of alignment to health and wellbeing initiatives, highlighting potential risks and opportunities for your

organization, and recommending clear actions. Whilst these will require some investment, there is a clear benefit in an independent perspective from an organization that is specialist in health, safety and wellbeing – they may identify areas to address that you wouldn't naturally consider as important, valuable or even useful, and it is likely that they will be able to offer solutions and interventions for your organization with great expertise and experience behind them, albeit at additional cost.

Self-assessment

The self-assessment route is cost effective, but is likely to be more limited in its value, primarily because you are reviewing your own organization, your initiatives and your employees, but also because it is unlikely that the person completing the assessment, and those reviewing the outcomes, are specialists in the area of wellbeing. However, the self-assessment route does demonstrate that as an organization you want to know and understand your current wellbeing status and how to change that.

Selecting assessors

First, you should give some thought to how long it might take (which will depend on the size of your organization, the scope of the audit and the depth of the approach). Consider, too, whether assessors need any specific skills or knowledge to complete the assessment – for example, are they simply reviewing documents and known practice, or are they being asked to interview employees and managers as part of the assessment? You may want them to do some external research and benchmarking, to find out what experts in the field are recommending, and what other organizations are doing. And finally, be clear about the expectations you have of the assessor – for example, that they need to be honest in reporting their findings, they need to make recommendations and to present those to a leadership team, and they will become ambassadors or similar for wellbeing in your organization.

It might be appropriate for a member of your leadership team or a senior manager to do it, but the outcomes may be more widely appreciated if you were to ask an employee representative (or union representative if you have them) to carry it out for you. Creating a small, cross-functional and multi-level team of assessors might share the workload, and bring different perspectives and knowledge to the audit too.

For a reassessment after 6 or 12 months, it might be beneficial to use a fresh assessor or assessment team.

What to assess

The following questions or statements provide a useful set of prompts for your own wellbeing self-assessment, but rather than simply copy them, you should review them and ensure that they are appropriate, or appropriately worded for your organization. That is not to say that you need to remove questions where you don't think you will 'pass' – quite the opposite. However, there may be some questions that don't feel appropriate for a small organization, or for certain types of industry.

The question set provided below is structured in line with the contents of this book and covers key categories of leadership, individual development, recognition, involvement, mental wellbeing, physical wellbeing, balance, social wellbeing, community, environment and financial wellbeing, and concludes with a review of relevant policies and procedures.

Leadership This section of assessment seeks to identify whether the leaders in your organization are advocates and sponsors of wellbeing, and have the necessary capabilities to lead effectively.

Example questions:

- 1 Is there a wellbeing strategy in place?
- 2 When was the last wellbeing assessment carried out?
- 3 Who is the most senior sponsor for wellbeing in the company?
- 4 Do employees perceive that the organization is concerned about their wellbeing?
- 5 Is there a wellbeing committee?
- 6 Are wellbeing champions visible and accessible around the organization?
- 7 Have all senior leaders attended a leadership development programme?
- 8 Is there a development programme for employees progressing into people management roles?

Individual development This section of the assessment looks at the company's approach to career development and training for individuals.

Example questions:

- 1 Does the performance review include discussions about future career development and training?
- 2 Does the company provide informal opportunities for learning (eg in house seminars, e-learning, etc)?

- 3 Is there a training budget?
- 4 Does the company encourage job shadowing, job swaps, etc?
- 5 Is there a mentoring scheme in place?

Recognition This section of the assessment considers the company's attitude and approach to employee recognition.

Example questions:

- 1 Is there a performance management process in place in the company?
- 2 How often are people participating in performance discussions with their manager?
- 3 What is the perception of how performance is managed?
- 4 What approaches are used for informal recognition (eg bonus scheme, small token awards, etc)?
- 5 Are those approaches consistently applied across the organization?

Involvement This section of the assessment will review the opportunities for and extent of employee involvement.

Example questions:

- 1 Does the company provide opportunities for employees to make suggestions or improvements to ways of working?
- 2 Is there an employee representative group or committee at which ideas or concerns can be shared?
- 3 How well does the company prepare employees to react positively to change?
- 4 Does the company measure employee engagement? Does it take action as a result?

Mental wellbeing This section of the assessment will review the steps taken by the company to promote and enable positive mental health.

Example questions:

- 1 Do employees have access to a confidential employee assistance helpline?
- 2 Is there an occupational health service provision that employees can access?
- 3 Are managers trained to spot the signs of stress in employees?

- 4 Have there been any complaints of bullying or harassment at work? How were they managed?
- 5 Does the company actively promote mindfulness programmes in the workplace?

Physical wellbeing This section of the assessment will review the steps taken by the company to promote and enable physical health.

Example questions:

- 1 Does the company encourage participation in physical activity or exercise during the working day? How does it do that?
- 2 Are there any fitness facilities or classes on site?
- 3 Do managers conduct return to work interviews with employees who have been absent?
- 4 Are healthy food and drink options available for employees on site?
- 5 Are any healthy food and drink options provided free of charge?
- 6 Does the company provide subsidized gym membership?
- 7 Does the company do anything else to promote physical health?
- 8 If employees have to travel internationally for work, are they offered health advice before travelling?

Balance This section of the assessment will consider the ways in which the company supports a healthy balance between work and other priorities.

Example questions:

- 1 Are employees able to work from home if necessary?
- 2 Do employees have access to the appropriate technology to enable them to work from home?
- 3 Is there flexibility of working hours and working patterns?
- 4 Is there an emergency leave policy? How well is it utilized/supported?
- 5 What are the company's expectations about people working outside of normal hours?
- 6 Typically, are people working excessive hours?

Social This section of the assessment will look to how the company provides opportunities for social interaction and connection at work.

Example questions:

- 1 Is there music or a television in the workplace?
- 2 Are there any social groups or committees established in the workplace?
- 3 How often does the company organize social events?
- 4 Are there any special interest or hobby groups set up in the company?

Community This section of the assessment will consider the company's internal communications, external networks and involvement with community initiatives and programmes.

Example questions:

- 1 Is there a communication strategy or plan?
- 2 Are there regular employee briefings?
- 3 Are employees encouraged to network internally?
- 4 Are employees encouraged to network externally?
- 5 Is the company associated with any charities? Does the company offer volunteering opportunities or volunteer days?
- 6 Does the company encourage participation in national charity events (eg Children in Need, Comic Relief, Macmillan Coffee Morning, etc)?
- 7 Does the company operate a matched giving scheme for charity fundraising?
- 8 Does the company encourage 'give as you earn'?

Environment This section of the assessment will review the working environment, and how it supports wellbeing.

Example questions:

- 1 Does the working environment have natural light and fresh air?
- 2 Are there break-out areas or informal spaces where people can access natural light and fresh air?
- 3 Does the working environment have spaces where people can work quietly, privately and alone if necessary?
- 4 Does the working environment have spaces where teams can collaborate well together – shared environments, white boards, etc?
- 5 Does the workplace have a rest area where people can remove themselves from their work?

- 6 Does the workplace have any recreation space?
- 7 Is the workplace a safe working environment? Are hazards identified and managed?
- 8 Does the company offer workspace assessments, with flexibility on the provision of desk type, screen size, chairs, etc?
- 9 Is the environment accessible for people with physical disabilities?
- 10 Does the workplace include plants and flowers?

Financial This section of the assessment considers the level of support offered by the company to ensure financial wellbeing is promoted.

Example questions:

- 1 Does the company offer a flexible benefits package?
- 2 Does the company offer benefits that are considered to promote wellbeing (eg gym discounts, private health, etc)?
- 3 Does the company offer long-term incentives (eg share schemes)?
- 4 Does the company offer support for people preparing for retirement?
- 5 Are any company loan schemes offered (eg to support employees who want to invest in their further education, or for season tickets, etc)?

Policies and procedures This section of the assessment invites a review of the company's policies and procedures, to ensure that appropriate policies are a) in place and b) take account of, and that they refer to wellbeing matters.

The following policies should be in place – and their content should be reviewed to ensure alignment to, and support of, wellbeing at work:

- absence – sickness and other absences;
- annual leave;
- discipline;
- equal opportunities policy;
- family leave policies;
- grievance;
- harassment and bullying;
- health and safety;
- maternity;
- statutory flexible working.

In addition, you may have selected to introduce some of the following that should also be reviewed as part of the assessment:

- bereavement;
- capability and performance;
- carer or emergency leave;
- code of conduct;
- corporate social responsibility;
- diversity policy;
- dress code;
- drugs or alcohol;
- flexible working and flexibility;
- performance review;
- redundancy;
- training and development;
- volunteering;
- whistleblowing.

Indicators This section of the assessment looks for business metrics and performance indicators that could help to evaluate wellbeing in the workplace – some may have a direct connection, others may be more indirect. Consider indicators such as:

- absence statistics;
- employee turnover;
- accidents;
- grievances or complaints;
- occupational health referrals;
- exit interview insights;
- employee survey results;
- productivity;
- quality;
- customer service.

Communicate outcomes

Take the time to communicate the key findings of the assessment to your employees. This is important – if you have told them you are doing it, but don't share the outcomes, the process will lose credibility and people will become suspicious about your reasons for not sharing. So be honest and transparent about your findings, and talk about the recommendations that you will adopt, and why.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the wellbeing assessment should be threefold:

- 1 Current status:** The assessment will provide you with an as-is snapshot of the organization's approach or attitude towards employee wellbeing. Depending on the approach you have taken to the assessment, some outcomes may be factual and data driven, others may be drawn out of perception or anecdotal evidence. Either way, this provides a view of the current approach.
- 2 Direction:** The assessment should seek to confirm the company's intent to raise the profile of wellbeing. This could be taken from a strategy document, and/or values and goals of the organization and its employer proposition. However, the statement of intent could also be sought as part of the assessment, through discussion with senior leaders. The assessment findings should reiterate the company's intent.
- 3 Action plans:** Finally, with a current status and an intent clarified, the assessment can deliver a gap analysis, and provide some recommendations and action plans to enable the organization to close that gap.

Measuring impact

There are two key ways in which the impact of the wellbeing assessment can be evaluated.

First is the impact of completing the assessment. It may be valuable to gather feedback from those involved about employees' and managers' overall views about wellbeing, the attitude towards it in the company, and the reactions to the assessment taking place. This will give a high-level anecdotal view of whether people feel it is valuable and valued.

Second, the impact of the assessment itself should be evaluated. Having taken a view of current practice and set some actions in place, their

implementation should be considered. You might want to review how many of the recommendations were implemented, and where they were not, why not? Where actions were implemented, what impact have they had on well-being at work? Seek out anecdotal evidence of the impacts (what feedback are you hearing, what are people saying about it) and support it with any relevant business metrics (eg absence data, productivity data).

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3 Developing a wellbeing programme

Introduction

With a strategy in place to set and commit to a vision for employee wellbeing, and an assessment completed to understand the gaps, leaders should be able to put in place a wellbeing programme that seeks to meet the needs of both the business and its employees. However, this programme is not dependent on the strategy – it should be aligned, and send the messages to employees about the organization's commitment – but if a strategy is not developed, or if an assessment has not been completed, a programme still can be.

The programme should demonstrate the tactical execution of the intent to deliver wellbeing in the organization, acting as a programme of events or initiatives that work towards the achievement of the wellbeing vision.

The wellbeing programme is a significant output from your strategy and/or assessment process, and will be seen as a clear commitment by the organization to delivering its vision. As such, there needs to be careful consideration given to the content, and the leadership and financial commitment that are required to fulfil its promises.

Promoting wellbeing

Employees will want to see that the company not only has intent, but demonstrates that intent through concrete actions to deliver wellbeing. They will have more confidence and trust by seeing actions planned and delivered than from the rhetoric alone, so being able to develop and communicate an action plan is likely to secure more engagement to the wellbeing strategy and/or programme. The delivery against those actions builds trust, as employees see commitments being followed through, which in turn garners further support for contributing to and participating in wellbeing initiatives.

Approach

The wellbeing programme is your action plan that will deliver your wellbeing strategy or intent. As such, it should be clear about what will be delivered, who is responsible for making it happen, the timeline, budget and resources needed, and, where you are able to, a statement about how you will evaluate it. Some of the content in this book will be useful in the creation of the programme.

Be sure that if you put something into the programme, you are willing and able to work hard to make it effective. To publicly state that you'll implement something and not do it, or to stop doing something part way through because it costs too much money, will have a significant impact on how employees perceive the leadership of the organization, and its commitment to and concern for the employees' wellbeing. The recommendation is to start small, focus on initiatives with low or no cost and evaluate and commit to them if there is commitment from employees. For any initiative with an unpredictable uptake or value, communicate it as a pilot or trial programme, but be clear about how you will evaluate its future (ie is it dependent on cost, take-up, etc?).

As well as establishing actions as a result of an assessment, you could also involve teams or focus groups to generate new ideas and suggestions.

Make sure that your programme offers a diverse range of initiatives, covering the breadth of the wellbeing agenda, a variety of interest areas and catering for a mix of abilities.

A template for your wellbeing programme is shown in Table 1.1. Some suggestions of the actions you could include are:

Leadership and advocacy

Define what steps your organization will take to ensure that wellbeing is understood, advocated, role modelled and actioned by your senior leaders. Your programme could include actions such as:

- wellbeing focus groups, assessments, committee meetings, etc;
- training wellbeing champions and advocates;
- training leaders in stress management, resilience and mindfulness;
- training leaders in fair, safe and legal employment practice, and ensuring that they fully understand and utilize the company's employment policies.

Career

Explain the policies, procedures, resources and support available to employees to help them develop their capabilities and progress their career. Your wellbeing programme could include actions such as:

- performance conversations;
- training all employees on how to give great constructive feedback;
- training people managers to coach;
- establishing a mentoring scheme;
- availability of training resources (eg a library, TED Talks, e-learning subscriptions etc).

Physical/mental

Describe the activities or interventions that you will introduce to support mental and physical wellbeing. Your programme could include:

- training on resilience and/or mindfulness;
- fitness activities, clubs or classes for all employees to join if they wish (eg running at lunch time, after work Pilates);
- unchtime talks from specialists (eg dietician, personal trainer, counsellors, etc);
- allocation of a quiet office space for employees to use as and when needed.

Social and community

Describe activities that you will implement to encourage more social interaction, inclusion and to allow employees to 'give back' to charities or communities. Your wellbeing programme might include:

- get involved with high profile charitable events (eg Children In Need, Comic Relief, Macmillan Coffee Mornings, etc);
- a cake sale or similar to fundraise for an employee's chosen charity;
- a Christmas party or summer barbecue;
- problem solving workshops bringing together cross-functional teams;
- internal or external networking events.

Financial

Describe any actions or initiatives that might support an employee in their financial wellbeing. Your programme may include:

- using external expertise to help employees to manage their finances;
- flexible benefits;
- give as you earn schemes.

Review

Be transparent about when and how you will review your programme. Stay open to suggestions and ideas from others for new additions to it, as well as feedback on those actions currently taking place. Regularly reviewing and changing your programme will ensure that it is kept relevant, interesting and that people remain committed to it.

Outcomes

The programme demonstrates the company's action towards its intent, and as such the outcome should be the implementation of activities and initiatives to promote wellbeing.

Measuring impact

It may be difficult to assess the impact of the programme as a whole, but the individual elements of it should be evaluated to gauge their effectiveness. Informal feedback can be sought from participants, but useful feedback can also be gained from those who choose not to participate. Understanding their reasons for not taking part may provide suggestions or ideas about future actions in which they might be more interested.

Evaluation through the use of key performance metrics might also be useful – at both a macro level and at individual action level too. The macro level evaluation might give high-level, and potentially indirect, links between the programme's launch and changes in measures such as absence, turnover and productivity.

Table 1.1 A wellbeing programme template

List your own headings in this column	What	Who	When	Budget/ resources
	Identify the initiative	State who has responsibility for making it happen	Target date or frequency	What resources are needed or committed
Eg leadership	Wellbeing Committee meeting	Chair	Quarterly	Full attendance required
Eg physical and mental	Weekly 'at desk' massage	Alex	Every Wednesday	Company will subsidise 50% cost of massage
Eg physical and mental	Netwalking – monthly internal networking club on a 5k walk	Alan	2nd Tuesday of every month at 12 noon	No cost

4 Wellbeing committees

Introduction

The wellbeing committee is the governance structure that will oversee the implementation, development and evaluation of wellbeing strategies and programmes at work. The committee should be cross-representational, and its members should take responsibility and ownership of wellbeing within the organization.

Promoting wellbeing

The establishment of the wellbeing committee provides the opportunity for a number of employees to get involved in setting the strategy, the plan and the advocacy for wellbeing in their workplace. In turn, that involvement is likely to increase their – and their colleagues’ – engagement with wellbeing, as it becomes a collaborative initiative, not a top-down one.

Approach

The purpose of the wellbeing committee is to drive the implementation, development and evaluation of employee wellbeing strategy, programmes and initiatives, and in order to do so effectively its objectives will broadly be as follows:

- to carry out a wellbeing strategy review and evaluation;
- to plan, implement and evaluate new ideas for wellbeing initiatives and consider any necessary changes to continuing activities;
- to review and evaluate any available benchmarking and consider any new trends or issues in the wellbeing field;
- to review feedback from employees and participants of existing activities or initiatives;
- to review the relevant metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the wellbeing strategy.

The committee constituents should be representative of the breadth and depth of the organization. There should be participants from across the hierarchy, representatives from different functions and locations. The committee should have a chair person, whose role is to set and issue the agenda and any pre-read materials, lead the meeting, encourage all participants to have

a voice, and approve the final action plan coming out of the meeting. The chairperson should not necessarily be the most senior person in the room, in fact it can be beneficial to have an employee representative to act as the chair, or an independent party.

The committee should meet on a regular basis, but the time between committee meetings should be sufficient to allow actions to have been implemented, tested and initial reviews completed. This may mean that quarterly or twice per year could be appropriate timings.

The committee should act as a funnel for ideas and information about wellbeing. The committee will learn, review and evaluate incoming data, and a key outcome will be the amendment or introduction of initiatives or actions that take account of that data. It should be seen as a forum for employees, leaders and specialists to provide insight, input and feedback.

Outcomes

The establishment of the committee ensures that there is regular review of the wellbeing programme and strategy in the organization, and that the programme is in line with external best practice, new industry insights and employee expectations, whilst still meeting the needs of the business.

Measuring impact

The effectiveness of the committee meetings should be evaluated by the participants to ensure:

- meetings are well administered (pre-read and agenda are timely, rooms are booked, invites are issued) and that there is good attendance;
- the agenda meets the committee's objectives;
- there is a good balance of internal and external insight and feedback;
- there is contribution from all participants;
- each meeting has a clear set of outcomes as a result of the discussion.

A further level of evaluation should consider the impact that the committee has on the wellbeing approach within the organization. An evaluation should consider whether the committee is actively shaping the wellbeing agenda, proactively addressing issues and trends, and responding well to employee feedback.

Figure 1.1 details a possible mandate for the committee.

Figure 1.1 A sample mandate for the wellbeing committee

Wellbeing committee

Purpose: To drive the implementation and evaluation of the employee wellbeing strategy, programmes and initiatives

Objectives

- Wellbeing strategy review and evaluation
- Planning, implementation and evaluation of new ideas and continuing activities
- Benchmarking and identifying new trends or issues
- Reviewing feedback and metrics
- Learning lessons

Input

- Wellbeing strategy
- Wellbeing assessment
- Benchmarking outcomes
- New insights
- Feedback
- Business metrics

Key agenda items

- Current programme status, feedback and review
- Include informal feedback and metrics
 - Review budget
- Share new insights and benchmarking outcomes
- Include suggestions 'from the floor'
- Brainstorm new ideas or actions
Evaluate against cost/benefit
Check programme is aligned to strategy

Output

- Revised strategy
- Updated programme of activity
- Communicate key messages to employees
- Budget adjustment/focus

Participants and roles

- Wellbeing sponsor
- Senior representatives
- H&S manager
- Occupational health
- HR
- Wellbeing champions

Reports and metrics

- Wellbeing assessment
- Activity reports
- Participant feedback reports
- Business performance metrics
- People metrics (eg absence, turnover, etc)
- Budget status

Frequency:

Quarterly

Duration:

2 hours

Location:

tbd

Time horizon:

Next 2 quarters

Focus:

Review and plan

5 **Championing wellbeing**

Introduction

Identifying supporters at all levels in the organization will be a key success factor for the employee wellbeing strategy and programme. Whilst at a senior level the strategy will define those responsible and who the key sponsors are, championing and advocating wellbeing and your organization's supporting initiatives will be important to spread positive messages, engage people in the programme, provide feedback and contributions, and secure commitment toward the initiatives and activities within it.

Promoting wellbeing

The placement of champions across the workplace demonstrates the organization's commitment to wellbeing, and provides accessible sources of information and insight as well as a friendly ear to offer feedback to or raise concerns. This proximity – geographically and in organizational levels – is more likely to encourage feedback from the floor that will ultimately shape the wellbeing agenda and deliver its success.

Approach

Identifying champions

Regardless of the size of your organization, identifying an individual or a group who can really connect with all employees across your business (all departments, all levels, all locations) about employee wellbeing will be valuable. They should be well connected around the organization, open and approachable to a wide range of employees.

These champions will still be engaged in their day job and the champion role is an enhancement to that. As such, you may need to account for them spending a small amount of time away from their day job so that they can give the commitment needed to be an active champion.

Provide your champions with the opportunity to learn about wellbeing, and about your strategy. Give them access to the assessment that you might have completed (or ask them to take part in the assessment in the first place) so they can understand the background, and involve them in the creation and development of your wellbeing programme. It is important to remember that you are not expecting them to act as experts, so a full training

programme is unlikely to be necessary, but some basic information on what wellbeing is, why it matters, why your organization is prioritizing it, and what you want from their role will help to set them off in a positive direction.

Communicate to others who they are and their role as champion, including what people can expect from them, and how to utilize them. Consider providing ‘Wellbeing Champion’ T-shirts or badges for the designated champions, particularly during periods where you are launching the strategy or a new initiative.

On a regular basis, ask them to provide themes and feedback to you and your management team or wellbeing committee. They’ll need to bring feedback, ideas and suggestions from across the organization, and they must have the confidence to be able to speak up about those themes to the senior managers in the business.

You might also task them with some benchmarking, to find out about current best practice, what specialist organizations, charities and health advocates are promoting or recommending, and what other companies are doing. They should use this information to provide insight to the leadership team, alongside practical but valuable recommendations. Encourage them to network with other similar wellbeing specialists and advocates, and to bring ideas back for consideration and implementation. Sending them to local or national business expos to find new service providers (eg for training, massage, gym membership, etc) could be really useful, and asking them to attend any local or national wellbeing conference, breakfast meetings, etc, could bring new insights that you might be able to use.

Recognize the efforts of your wellbeing champions, thanking them for their commitment and acknowledging that they play a key role in the wellbeing programme. It may be a letter, a bottle of wine or cinema tickets – it doesn’t have to be costly, but the gesture will no doubt be appreciated.

Outcomes

A key outcome of establishing your wellbeing champions is an improvement in communication fed informally up and down the organization. You’ll be able to use the champions to ensure effective communication of intentions, of initiatives and any outcomes, and at the same time champions will be getting feedback, suggestions and ideas to help the business with its wellbeing programme.

In addition, the organization should sense a greater level of engagement with the wellbeing strategy and programme.

Measuring impact

You should consider a number of factors in evaluating the effectiveness of the wellbeing champions.

You could consider the performance of the individual champion themselves – have they remained an advocate, talking positively about wellbeing, and providing a supportive two-way communication flow? Listen to their feedback about what works or doesn't as a champion, and work with them to make it as effective as possible. You may need to provide more resources, more information or more time – or to re-set expectations about how they balance their day-to-day role with the tasks of being a champion.

You might also consider the volume and quality of feedback received through the champions. Have the champions enabled that feedback to flow more freely, and what kind of feedback is being received? Note the themes of the feedback and how they have helped to shape the wellbeing programme, initiatives or evaluation.

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