HRtelligence

WEBINAR OVERVIEW

Employee Well-Being Strategies

February 8, 2023

Intro/Setting the Stage
- Our Nation's Current Workplace Landscape
- Employee Well-being and Mental Health in the Workplace
- Why Mental Health Needs to be a Top Priority in the Workplace

Employee Well-Being and Mental Health
- What is Employee Well-being?
- Essentials for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being (US Surgeon General Framework)

Developing Employee Well-Being Strategies
- Emotional Well-being – Protection from Harm
- Physical Well-Being - Protection from Harm
- Social Well Being - Connection & Community
- Social Well-Being - Work-Life Harmony
- Social/Financial Well-Being - Mattering at Work
- Financial Well-Being
- Emotional/Financial Well-Being - Opportunity for Growth

Current Examples of Well-Being Strategies
- Atlassian
- Syncrony
- American Express
- EY
- First American Financial

WEBINAR OUTLINE

I. Intro/Setting the Stage

A. Our Nation's Current Workplace Landscape

Recent studies suggest…

- 76%of U.S. workers reported at least one symptom of a mental health condition.
  Source: Mind Share Partners' 2021 Mental Health at Work Report
- 84% of respondents said their workplace conditions had contributed to at least one mental health challenge.
  Source: Mind Share Partners' 2021 Mental Health at Work Report
- 81% of workers reported that they will be looking for workplaces that support mental health in the future.
  Source: APA's 2022 Work and Well-being Survey results

Notes: Many employees are suffering from mental health issues related to stress and burn out. An overwhelming 84% of respondents reported at least one workplace factor that negatively impacted their mental health. When looking across all respondents, the most common factor was emotionally draining (e.g., stressful, overwhelming, boring, or monotonous) work. This was closely followed by work-life balance.

The other workplace factors that most notably worsened since the pandemic were poor communication practices and a low sense of connection to or support from one's colleagues or manager, perhaps unsurprising in a predominantly remote workforce. The workaholism that characterizes much of U.S. culture has only been exacerbated by the challenges of the pandemic, leading to increased employee burnout.

B. Employee Well-Being and Mental Health in the Workplace

- Given increased public awareness surrounding mental health and the corresponding legal trends, employers should evaluate their current infrastructure, including, but not limited to, providing support for employees

with mental health conditions and reviewing processes and policies to address any claims raised.

C. Why Mental Health Needs to be a Top Priority in the Workplace

- U.S. surgeon general cites APA research in new guidance around strengthening workplace well-being.

- Spotlighting the role of mental health in the workplace, the U.S. surgeon general issued <u>new guidance</u> outlining how long working hours, limited autonomy, and low wages aren't just driving a U.S. labor shortage, but may actually be at the heart of the nation's mental health crisis.

- **Mental health issues can have an impact on:**
    o Job performance
    o Productivity
    o Work engagement and communication
    o Physical capability and daily functioning

- **Employers benefit from supporting mental health at work.**

Workers who felt supported with their mental health overall were 26% less likely to report at least one symptom of a mental health condition in the past year.

A happy, healthy workforce is good for employees and the bottom line.

Notes: Our workplaces play a significant role in our lives. Work affects both our physical and mental well-being — in good ways and bad. Developing policies and practices supporting the mental health and well-being of all workers costs money, time, and energy. But evidence published by APA shows that the cost of failing to support employees' psychological well-being is often far higher.

<u>APA's Striving for Mental Health in the Workplace initiative</u>, launched in May 2022, found employees with high levels of stress are more likely to miss work or to show lower engagement and commitment while at work, which can negatively affect an organization's bottom line. <u>https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/workplace-mental-health-well-being.pdf</u>

II. Employee Well-being and Mental Health

A. What is Employee Well-Being?

Emotional Well-being
- Awareness and understanding a person has about their emotions

- Ability able to cope with challenges throughout life
- Ability to deal with change or uncertainty

Physical Well-being
- Ability to maintain a healthy quality of life that allows a person to get the most out of their daily activities without undue fatigue or physical stress

Financial Well-being
- State of being where a person can fully meet current and ongoing financial obligations, can feel secure in their financial future and be able to make choices that allow them to enjoy life

Social Well-being
- An end state in which basic human needs are met
- Ability to coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities for advancement

B. U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being

What are the Essentials for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being?
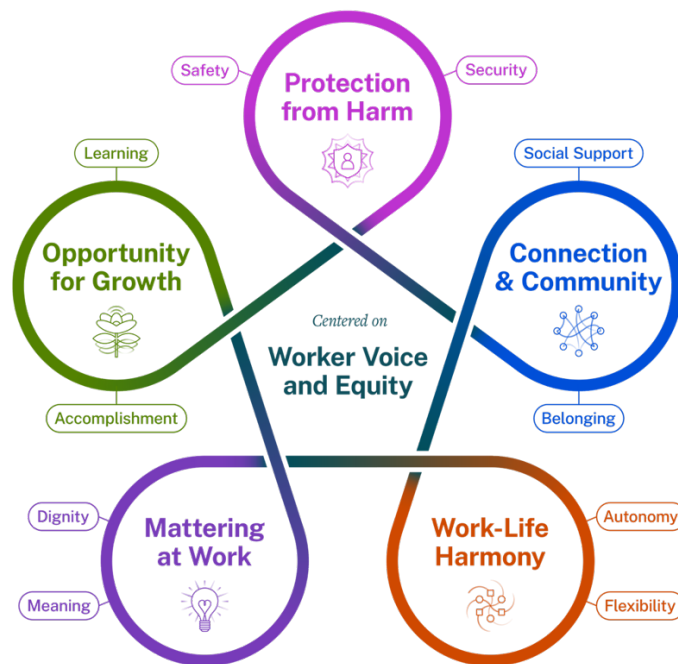
1. **Protection from Harm: Safety and Security**

Creating the conditions for physical and psychological safety is a critical foundation for ensuring workplace mental health and well-being. This Essential rests on two human needs: safety and security.

Safety is protecting all workers from physical and non-physical harm, including injury, illness, discrimination, bullying, and harassment.

Security is ensuring all workers feel secure financially and in their job future.

2. Connection and Community: Social Support and Belonging

Fostering positive social interactions and relationships in the workplace supports worker well-being. This Essential rests on two human needs: social support and belonging.

Social Support is having the networks and relationships that can offer physical and psychological help and can mitigate feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Belonging is the feeling of being an accepted member of a group.

3. Work-Life Harmony: Autonomy and Flexibility

Professional and personal roles can together create work and non-work conflicts. The ability to integrate work and non-work demands, for all workers, rests on the human needs of autonomy and flexibility.

Autonomy is how much control a worker has over when, where, and how they do their work.

Flexibility is ability of workers to work when and where is best for them.

4. Mattering at Work: Dignity and Meaning

People want to know that they matter to those around them and that their work matters. Knowing you matter has been shown to lower stress, while feeling like you do not can raise the risk for depression. This Essential rests on the human needs of dignity and meaning.

Dignity is the sense of being respected and valued.

Meaning in the workplace can refer to the sense of broader purpose and significance of one's work.

5. Opportunity for Growth: Learning and Accomplishment

When organizations create more opportunities for workers to accomplish goals based on their skills and growth, workers become more optimistic about their abilities and more enthusiastic about contributing to the organization. This Essential rests on the human needs of learning and a sense of accomplishment.

Learning is the process of acquiring new skills and knowledge in the workplace.

Accomplishment is the outcome of meeting goals and having an impact.

III. Developing Well-Being Strategies

Creating a plan with all workers to enact these components can help reimagine workplaces as engines of well-being.

What Trends are out?
- On-site fitness classes
- Health fairs
- Free healthy food/stocked kitchens
- Biometric screenings
- On-site clinics

Notes: Employers are moving away from benefits that require one-on-one interactions or being in the office. They're finding new and different ways to provide these same wellness goals, but remotely. And often they're more affordable.

A. Emotional Well-being – Protection from Harm
- Normalize and support mental health
  - Implement an organization-wide behavioral health strategy and action plan.
  - Provide training and education and support for mental health issues
  - Accommodation processes
  - EAP plans and benefits
- Prioritize workplace physical and psychological safety
- Enable adequate rest and focus on mindfulness - meditation, yoga, Tai Chi

- Support activities that foster stress management and resilience – e.g., walking or outdoor meetings

Notes: Promote "mentally healthy" culture: encourage autonomy, establish boundaries, and create norms around communications and responsiveness.

B. Physical Well-Being - Protection from Harm

- Programs that target specific conditions for high-cost cases such as maternity, diabetes and depression
- Promoting the use of mobile apps for physical well-being
- Disease management
- On-demand fitness classes
- Gym membership reimbursement
- Physician engagement (annual physical)
- Telemedicine
- Hosting a dance party, going hiking or biking in the area, or even starting a race contest

C. Social Well Being - Connection & Community
- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging and connection
- Leaders should be encouraged to model "healthy behaviors."
- Operationalize DEIA* norms, policies, and programs
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork
- Ongoing, deeper one-on-one conversations between managers and direct reports as well as between colleagues.

Notes: A culture of connection is key — from regular check-ins — to healthy working relationships — to meaningful interactions among teams. Employers should provide organization-wide opportunities for connection and also promote these ongoing, deeper one-on-one conversations between managers and direct reports as well as between colleagues.

Having conversations between managers and direct reports to articulate individual working styles and preferences supports inclusion. Incorporate inclusion and diversity priorities in benefits program design.

D. Social Well-Being - Work-Life Harmony
- Examine onsite perks to support new work arrangements.
- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time - no email after hours, focused work time, and no-meeting days, more flexible internal deadlines

E. Social/Financial Well-Being - Mattering at Work
- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

F. Financial Well-Being
- Setting objectives and tracking financial well-being programs at pivotal financial decision points such as new family, young children and first-time home buying
- Assessing financial well-being programs for consistency with inclusion and diversity values

G. Emotional/Financial Well-Being - Opportunity for Growth
- Offer quality training, education, and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

Notes:
https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/five-essentials-workplace-mental-health-well-being.pdf

IV. Current Examples of Well-Being Strategies

A. Microsoft Moves to DTO (Discretionary Time Off)

"How, when, and where employees do their jobs has dramatically changed and DTO aligns with more flexible ways of working."

- Microsoft implemented unlimited paid time off for salaried employees **,** citing flexibility benefits
- Microsoft will still offer 10 corporate holidays alongside the unlimited PTO — termed "Discretionary Time Off," or DTO — as well as leaves of absence; sick and mental health time off; jury duty time off; and bereavement leave.

Notes:

- *Microsoft began implementing unlimited paid time off for salaried employees in the U.S. on Monday, a company spokesperson confirmed in an email to HR Dive.*
- *According to an internal memo, Microsoft will still offer 10 corporate holidays alongside the unlimited PTO — termed "Discretionary Time Off," or DTO — as well as leaves of absence; sick and mental health time off; jury duty time off; and bereavement leave. Employees with unused vacation balances from the company's previous framework will receive a payout in April 2023.*
- *"How, when, and where employees do their jobs has dramatically changed and DTO aligns with more flexible ways of working," the spokesperson said.*

https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/benefits/pages/microsoft-is-moving-to-unlimited-time-off.aspx

B. Onboarding at Atlassian

At Atlassian, every new hire is asked to write an intro blog to share with the entire company. This introduction gives new employees the opportunity to detail their role, interests and motivations.

In addition, all new hires are introduced to the entire company at the weekly Global Town Hall and are assigned a work friend through Atlassian's Buddy Program who can help with questions, introductions and more.

Notes: Starting off on the right foot is a crucial component at the outset of an employee's well-being journey. An empowering, formalized introduction process can jumpstart a new hire's integration and set the foundation for connection and camaraderie with their colleagues and managers alike.

C. Coaching at Synchrony

At Synchrony, the company relies on well-being coaches who partner with employees to create a personalized wellness strategy based on strengths and values.

Notes: Working with one of the coaches is a positive, rewarding and motivating experience that can help an employee define and work towards their unique goals – offering a safe space to discuss their specific needs. One-on-one well-being coaches also provide support to people leaders navigating difficult conversations with their teams.

D. Building awareness at American Express

At American Express, the company created a new campaign in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month: "Here for You. Here for Each Other."

Throughout the month, the company held webinars and shared tools such as talking points for senior leaders, all aimed at ensuring colleagues understand that it's okay not to be okay, and it's okay to ask for help.

American Express company counselors made themselves available for group counseling sessions with teams who wanted to a create a safe space for discussing whatever was top of mind.

Notes: These efforts normalize the importance of self-care and reduce stigma, thus getting at the root of an obstacle to helping those in need of mental health support. Awareness and solidarity can go a long way toward supporting employees struggling with any number of personal issues.

E. Support assistance at EY

At EY, their integrated employee assistance and life management services program has been serving their professionals and their families for over 40 years. Through a 24-hour hotline and website, employees can access:

- Referrals to short- and long-term counseling services
- Health and well-being solutions
- Child- and elder-care resources and referrals
- Daily life and home services
- Dependent care
- Personal travel, and more.

Note: With the use of the hotline, employees have ease of access when it comes to taking advantage of company support. One component of supporting an employee's well-being is providing clarity on how they can seek help. It's one thing to have a program or practice to support your people, it's another to ensure they know how to use it.

F. Recognition at First American Financial

First American established their "Fantastic" recognition platform, where employees can express their appreciation to fellow colleagues who have demonstrated the core values of integrity, commitment, service, leadership and teamwork.

Managers can also acknowledge outstanding employee performance and meaningful contributions by awarding points. Each point is worth one dollar, and employees can cash them in to purchase items such as gift cards, experiences and tickets.

Notes: One crucial component of well-being that many forget is employee recognition. By validating employees' incredible work, companies can cultivate high worker morale and keep a smile on their people's faces.

G. Companywide time off at Red Hat

Red Hat established Recharge Days. These special quarterly days off were selected by associates and provide all Red Hatters the opportunity to step away from their laptops for a day of rest and renewal.

Notes: The benefit of a collective vacation day means that employees can truly remove themselves from their work and return from this break to empty inboxes. With no meetings and no emails, no one has to work twice as hard when they return to make up for the time away. A crucial component in cultivating a healthy work/life balance is how and when employees take time off. Many people struggle to use their paid vacation time, and when they do, some struggle with anxiety over the work that awaits them upon their return. Practices that ensure workers can truly unplug and enjoy their time off are crucial.

H. Financial wellness at Tanium

At Tanium, the company wants to ensure that team members have the knowledge and resources needed to make informed short-term and long-term financial decisions that benefit them and their families.

Employees can also attend regular Financial Wellness Weeks that include:

- Information sessions led by professionals
- External financial advisors
- One-on-one financial advising
- On-demand financial resources

The financial information sessions cover important topics like prioritizing your assets to build stronger financial strategies, planning for your future and managing your retirement accounts.

Notes: Among the many factors that lead to a strong sense of well-being, financial security is one that keeps many people up at night. Uncertainty surrounding finances has the potential to disrupt one's personal and professional life in profound ways.

Employees use individual financial advising sessions to discuss their overall financial picture and how to achieve financial goals.

I. Support networks at Atlantic Health System

Atlantic Health System has a Workforce Well-Being Team that integrates health care delivery through annual physicals and preventive screenings and programs to enhance healthy lifestyles.

Atlantic's Caring for the Caregiver Peer Support program connects team members with a trained peer responder when they need to talk about a particularly challenging work experience. The peer responder can help them go home after their shift and return to work the next day feeling more resilient.
Finally, the company has a Spiritual Care Department that connects team members with an Atlantic Health System chaplain who can provide a compassionate and understanding ear.

Notes: Nothing speaks to a sense of taking care of the "whole person" quite like a network of like-minded colleagues who know you and are there to support you. These programs perfectly encapsulate a holistic approach to care and employee well-being.

https://www.greatplacetowork.com/resources/blog/9-employee-well-being-programs-from-the-100-best-companies

V. HRtelligence TIPS

Employers must move from seeing mental health as an individual challenge to a collective priority and look at employees on a holistic level and think of well-being. Given all the workplace factors at play, companies can no longer compartmentalize well-being as only mental health issues and have well-being be only an individual's responsibility to address alone through self-care, mental health days, or employee benefits. In order to

make real progress and continue to have productive and healthy workplaces business leaders must Integrate and implement well-being into the core of your organizational culture.

- Design and develop well-being strategies that address emotional, physical, financial and social well-being for employees.
- Familiarize yourself with the US Surgeon General Framework on what is essential for healthy workplaces and well-being
- Develop various modes to effectively communicate well-being initiatives to your employees.
- Build awareness and connection through training and maintaining an open dialogue.
- Evaluate and obtain employee feedback on regular intervals to determine if the strategies you have implemented are working.