

Workplace Wellbeing Framework

A guide for the Work of the GWI Workplace Wellbeing Initiative



September 2026

Workplace Wellbeing Initiative Framework Purpose and Value

WHY this framework matters

A multidimensional challenge

Employers are navigating burnout, disconnection, mental health risks, and changing expectations around work

A fragmented landscape

Wellbeing is too often treated only as a perk, stand-alone programs, or individual responsibility

A needed shift

This framework provides a holistic structure for advancing workplace wellbeing as strategic, systemic, and human-first

WHAT the framework provides

Shared Structure

A central organizing model for WWI’s collective work

Common Language

A way to align contributors, collaborators, and global audiences

Activation Pathway

Pillars, enablers, maturity guidance, tools, examples, and measurement approaches

HOW to use this framework

Assess current state

Identify strengths, and gaps across workplace wellbeing

Align stakeholders

Create shared priorities, language, and ownership

Guide action

Use the framework: pillars, enablers and measures to shape a work plan

Track Progress

Monitor impact and adjust strategies and plans based on outcomes and feedback

Mission Statement: The Workplace Wellbeing Initiative is dedicated to advancing workplace wellbeing as a strategic driver of human sustainability, organizational resilience, and long-term performance across the globe.

What is Workplace Wellbeing?



Workplace wellbeing refers to the overall state of how people experience work, shaped by the conditions, systems, and relationships within an organization.



It encompasses multiple dimensions of health, and is influenced by how work is designed, how people are led, and how organizations operate.



It operates at both the individual level (how people feel and function each day) and the organizational level (how work is designed and led to shape those experiences), connected by culture - the shared norms and everyday behaviors that determine whether structures and practices are actually experienced as intended. Workplace wellbeing is not the responsibility of individuals alone; it is influenced by organizational structures and practices that protect against harm and actively promote engagement, connection, purpose, and sustainable performance.



At its core, workplace wellbeing reflects the extent to which organizations enable human sustainability, supporting individuals' health, dignity, and capacity to thrive and perform over time.

Why Workplace Wellbeing Matters

Workplace wellbeing directly shapes both human and business performance.



What poor conditions drive

- Excessive workload
- Low autonomy
- Increased injuries
- Lack of support
- Low job security
- Diminished health and wellbeing



These lead to

burnout, disengagement, turnover, absenteeism, presentism, lower productivity



GALLUP

\$10T

Productivity lost due to poorly managed employee engagement



WHO

\$1T

Global economic cost of lost productivity per year related to depression and anxiety



DELOITTE

\$6.26

In lost productivity for every \$1.33 not invested in workforce mental health



McKINSEY

-17%

global GDP lost annually to poor health and reduced workforce participation



Workplace wellbeing is not a peripheral benefit – it is a core driver of human sustainability.

By prioritizing workforce health and capacity over time, they reduce risk, strengthen resilience, and achieve sustained performance.



Workplace wellbeing is a strategic imperative for attracting talent, maintaining productivity, and building organizations that thrive long term.

Improving workforce health globally could unlock \$11.7 trillion in economic value ⁽¹⁾

Source: Gallup, State of the Global Workplace Report, 2026; WHO, Guidelines on Mental Health at Work, 2022; Deloitte, Poor Mental Health Costs UK Employers, 2024.

Deloitte figure converted from GBP at ~1.33 USD/GBP (Jul 2026). McKinsey Health Institute: The Health of Nations 2026 (1) World Economic Forum & McKinsey Health Institute, Thriving Workplaces Report, 2025.

Workplace Wellbeing Pillars

The influencers and conditions that shape wellbeing outcomes

LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

The leadership behaviors, values, and cultural norms that shape trust, psychological safety, fairness and how people experience work every day.

Includes:

- Leadership behavior and relational competence
- Inclusive leadership and cultural integrity
- Psychological safety and trust
- Psychosocial risk prevention

CONNECTION AND BELONGING

The quality of relationships, inclusion, and social support that enable people to feel valued, respected, and a sense of belonging at work.

Includes:

- Peer support and team cohesion
- Inclusion and belonging
- Recognition and appreciation
- Relational safety

WORK DESIGN AND CAPACITY

How work is structured including roles, workload, autonomy, flexibility, and resources to ensure it is clear and sustainable.

Includes:

- Role clarity, good work, and job fit
- Workload management and equitable task distribution
- Cognitive/emotional demand management

HEALTH AND CAPABILITY

The physical, mental, and emotional health, energy, and resilience that enable people to perform effectively and sustain their capacity.

Includes:

- Physical and mental health programs and resources
- Access to support (EAP, professional care)
- Crisis readiness and pathways
- Preventative health screenings
- Stigma reduction

PURPOSE AND AGENCY

The sense of meaning people derive from their work and their ability to influence and co-design the conditions of their work and their experience.

Includes:

- Organizational values aligned with individual purpose
- Autonomy, control, and flexible arrangements
- Energy aligned, personalized work-styles that support recovery

SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

The physical and environmental conditions that protect people from harm and provide a safe and inclusive workspace.

Includes:

- Ergonomic design, physical safety, and inclusive facilities
- Environmental quality (light, noise, air)
- Access to nature
- Rest and recovery spaces

FINANCIAL WELLBEING

The financial stability, security, and confidence people have to meet their needs, manage financial stress and plan for the future.

Includes:

- Fair, timely, and transparent pay
- Job security and stability
- Access to financial wellbeing tools
- Equity in benefits and compensation
- Financial self-efficacy

PERSONAL GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

Access to learning, development, and career pathways that enable people to build skills, accomplishment, and remain future-ready

Includes:

- Leadership development programs
- Career pathway mapping
- AI and Digital upskilling
- Future of Work Readiness
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Certification Program support

Workplace Wellbeing Support Enablers and System Levers

The mechanisms that help organizations create and sustain those conditions

Enabler / Lever	About	Includes
Wellbeing literacy & shared understanding	<i>The language, awareness and mindset needed to recognize, value, and support wellbeing at work.</i>	• Common definitions of workplace wellbeing across the organisation • Internal storytelling and role-modelling • Understanding of the interdependence between wellbeing and performance • Destigmatisation of mental health and vulnerability • Education on psychosocial risks and systemic drivers • Employee education, learning, growth
Leadership & manager capability	<i>The skills and confidence of leaders and people managers to model, enable and protect wellbeing.</i>	• Coaching, relational, and emotional intelligence skills • Capacity to hold wellbeing-oriented conversations • Incentives, KPIs, or support aligned to wellbeing goals • Modelling healthy behaviors and boundary-setting
Systems, access & infrastructure	<i>The systems, policies and pathways that make wellbeing supports visible, timely, and effective.</i>	• EAPs, wellbeing platforms, peer support systems • Benefits, leave policies, health resources • Wellbeing hubs, communication channels, onboarding touchpoints • Accessibility for diverse employee needs (e.g. neurodiverse, remote, culturally specific) • Clear escalation or referral pathways
Measurement, feedback & evaluation	<i>The tools and processes used to track wellbeing and guide meaningful action.</i>	• Measurement frameworks aligned to the wellbeing pillars • Regular listening mechanisms (surveys, check-ins, qualitative data) • Pulse tools and longitudinal tracking • Feedback loops that link data to ongoing improvement
Alignment with organizational mission, values, & strategy	<i>The integration of wellbeing into the fabric of how an organisation thinks, plans, and grows.</i>	• Alignment with ESG, DEI, talent and sustainability strategies • Wellbeing goals embedded in strategic plans • Senior-level sponsorship and board awareness • Resourcing, budget and team structure to deliver wellbeing consistently • Change readiness and internal narrative-building
Governance, resourcing & accountability	<i>The leadership structures, decision rights, resources, reporting mechanisms and feedback channels that enable prioritization, implementation and sustained organizational</i>	• Accountability systems for leadership, teams, and individuals • Grassroots employee groups that inform decision making • Governance such as board sponsorship, role clarity, dedicated resources, policy ownership, reporting structures, and decision frameworks

Workplace Wellbeing Resources and Tools

New Economic Foundation (NEF) Report on Wellbeing at Work

https://new-economicsf.files.svdcdn.com/production/files/71c1bb59a2ce151df7_8am6bqr2q.pdf

World Wellbeing Movement - Work Wellbeing Playbook

<https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/global-wellness-institute-blog/2025/12/15/world-wellbeing-movement-identifies-drivers-and-strategies-to-promote-workforce-wellbeing/>

Wellbeing Lead Academy: A Practical Guide to Mentally Healthy Workplaces

<https://wellbeingleadacademy.uk/mentally-healthy-workplace-culture-ebook>

HERO Health and Wellbeing Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer

<https://hero-health.org/hero-scorecard/>

Workplace Wellbeing Initiative of the Global Wellness Institute: Workplace Wellbeing Recommended Reading List

<https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/global-wellness-institute-blog/2025/11/13/exploring-the-many-dimensions-of-workplace-wellbeing-a-recommended-reading-list/>