

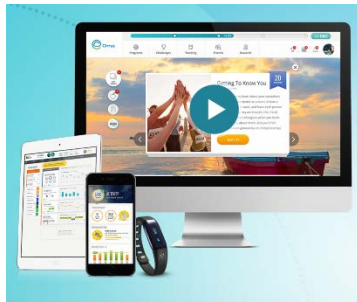
Workplace Wellness

Survey: Wellbeing and engagement top priorities for employers



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<http://www.mobihealthnews.com/content/survey-wellbeing-and-engagement-top-priorities-employers>



Employee wellbeing and engagement programs are becoming more of a top priority for employers, although just how to integrate them into a work culture isn't always clear, according to a recent survey from wellness and engagement company [Virgin Pulse](#).

Among a pool of 600 human resources and benefits leaders, the survey found 78 percent of respondents believe wellbeing is a key component of their business strategy, and 87 percent of respondents said they currently do or plan to invest in employee wellbeing as a part of their employee engagement strategy. Almost all – 97 percent – agree that wellbeing positively influence engagement.

“In general, employees feel engaged when they are invested in their company’s future and culture, feel like their jobs give them a sense of purpose and have great relationships with their co-workers,” the survey authors write. “Health and wellbeing – physical, mental, financial and emotional – also affect employee engagement, and the majority of organizations realize that connection.”

Since high stress levels – both at home and in the workplace – and compromised physical or emotional health can adversely affect employee engagement and productivity, employers are increasingly valuing programs that target wellbeing and engagement, the survey found, citing US employer losses at \$30 billion per year in lost productivity due to sick days and absenteeism.

While 88 percent of respondents recognize the value of wellness and engagement programs, however, there isn't a consensus on which type of programs to offer and how. Just 29 percent of respondents said they have either put a specific engagement program in place to fit specific needs of their company, or offered an integrated solution that links to an overall organization strategy. Forty-one percent say they are still in the initial stages of even defining employee engagement.

So what is preventing that? The survey found the problem may lie within the organizational structure of companies, from workplace cultures that are resistant to change to budgetary limitations. Nearly half

(48 percent) of respondents said this resistance to change is the main impediment to implementing a workplace wellness and engagement program.

Then, there is the issue of participation from employees. Incentives help, the survey authors said, and while they may come in the form of punitive measures for non participation, “incentives are currently trending more toward carrot than stick, as organizations find that rewards drive participation more than punishments do.”

That being said, report found, incentives alone do not increase employee engagement, so organizations should be monitoring the programs and measuring outcomes as they progress.

“Before designing programs to increase employee engagement, organizations must first acknowledge that employee wellbeing, workplace culture and engagement all connect and influence each other,” the report concludes. “Positive work culture depends on committed and healthy employees. When one area is lagging, the other two will suffer.”