

Where are you on the workplace wellbeing journey? – 3 ways to explore

- Explore five challenges that organisations face and overcome to promote workplace wellbeing (below left)
- Identify whether you have a ‘fair weather’ wellbeing approach and learn how to change that (below right)
- Be inspired by what others are already doing to apply key principles for workplace wellbeing (overleaf)

Potential challenges (and learning from how other businesses have overcome them)



Investing time

Research suggests that improving employee wellbeing can help improve productivity. Yet for some it feels hard to find the time. Why?

It may be because you don't yet have a clear vision and plan of what wellbeing could do for your business ...



Visioning and planning

Visioning and planning can help. Avoid wasting time on scattergun ‘busy’ or superficial activities which don't provide sustainable change.

Check if you are active across all of the five key ways to promote wellbeing shown overleaf. Also, do you know your workforce?



Understanding the workforce

Managers often feel they have to be seen to ‘know and do’. But finding the right wellbeing approach will require ‘listening’ and ‘asking’ too.

If you worry about ‘preaching’ or see low take-up of your current activities, this could be the challenge to address first.



Learning how to manage people

Many managers are promoted on their technical skill, forgetting that a key part of their role is to manage people. It's time to address this.

Good people management needs role-models and encouragement from the very top of businesses. Why not invest in some training?



Changing organisational culture

The organisations that overcome the challenges above often have an open door culture, they experiment, try new things and they learn.

All businesses find the time to work on what they value. What do you value? What sort of business do you want to be?

Taking wellbeing further

Check for these signs



To avoid a ‘fair weather only’ approach, check if any of these classic challenges apply to your business. For a sustainable wellbeing approach, it's time to work on good management, quality job design and fostering good relationships.

Triggers for action:

- Lower level managers resist allocating time to staff training and people management.
- Short-term pressures make strong demands on employees.
- You realise you are relying long-term on too few dedicated and passionate employees.
- Senior managers do not offer good role-models for work-life balance and supportive management.
- The organisation is attempting to introduce new technology.
- The business has recently grown or is about to grow.

What are other businesses doing? Here are some examples of what SMEs and larger businesses are doing to promote employee wellbeing. Principles underlying good practice are shown below each column. What is your business doing in each of these five areas of good practice? What could you do?

	Health/wellness promotion	'Help if you're struggling'	Good relationships	Good managers	High quality jobs
Small and medium-sized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHS health checks - NHS flyers - Piggybacking national campaigns (smoking, stress, sleeping etc.) - Cycling / walking outings - Actions to address the working environment – safe, clean, pleasant - Inspirational talks - Resilience and / or mindfulness courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cards and posters on the support available in-house - Approachable people - Ad hoc signposting: NHS, charities and counselling - Occupational health - Mental health first aiders - Part-subsidised physiotherapy - Part- or wholly-subsidised counselling - Private medical insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spaces to interact (e.g. staff rooms, canteens) - Parties / nights out - Christmas or milestone event balls / dinners - Opportunities to take part in charity fundraising - Conversations over table tennis / games - Continuous improvement meetings/ discussions across departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability via walking the office / shop floor regularly - Offering praise and being interested - Recruiting managers for attitude and ethos - Providing external line manager training (e.g. ILM, CMI, ECITB) - Training managers as trainers - Open door culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job-related training - Appraisals around training, wellbeing and demands - No zero hours contracts - Coaching - Using free external engagement surveys to identify issues - Development courses - Encouraging rest and refresh (e.g. via taking all holiday and breaks)
Larger businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health checks - Wellbeing days / weeks - Cycle to work schemes, running clubs, gym discounts and challenges - Courses (stress, dementia, debt, mindfulness) - Healthy food canteens - National campaigns like 'Time to change' - Actions to address the working environment - Space for external providers to provide massage or other therapies - Contemplative space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR teams – open door - Employee Assistance Programmes (confidential, externally-provided telephone / online advice) - Internal intranet info sites - Wellbeing information as part of the induction - Occupational health - Subsidised counselling - Subsidised physiotherapy - Mental health first aiders - Absence management procedures - Private medical insurance - Income protection scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spaces to interact (with free tea and coffee, TVs, music and other perks) - Christmas party budget - Business milestone events - Charity of the year programme to vote for and raise funds together - Paid volunteering days (1 or 2 per year per person) - Away days / Team cohesiveness training - Monthly communications packages designed for line managers to deliver - Mediation-trained staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior management availability and example - Internal line manager / leadership training - Absence management and rapport-building training - MIND / Time to Change training on mental health - Recruiting managers for attitude, ethos and people management experience - Manager guidelines on respect, praise, feedback - Role-modelling - 360° leadership analysis - Open door culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Job-related training from a dedicated training budget - Supportive appraisals around work life balance, roles and development - Encouraging staff to use discretion (e.g. no scripts) - Paying the living wage - Internal and external mentoring and coaching - Using engagement surveys / focus groups / forums to identify issues and act - Flexible working options - Public commitments to wellbeing: plan / vision
Principles	<p>Raising awareness</p> <p>Preventing problems</p> <p>Learning together</p>	<p>Identifying issues early</p> <p>Being supportive</p> <p>Signposting to help</p>	<p>Communicating</p> <p>Knowing each other better</p> <p>Sharing purpose</p>	<p>Asking and listening</p> <p>Role-modelling</p> <p>Valuing people skills</p>	<p>Designing quality jobs</p> <p>Developing people</p> <p>Getting the basics right</p>