

# Workplace Wellbeing

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**mccrindle**

Produced by McCrindle for Reventure Ltd.



a future  
that **works**



**Reventure Ltd** is a not-for-profit organisation designed as a think-tank to undertake research and stimulate public debate and solutions about workplace matters.



**Converge International** was established in Australia in the 1960s to provide a range of specialist human resource services.

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## Executive Summary



# Introduction

Is workplace wellbeing a passing fad or here to stay? One-quarter of Australian workers believe the focus on wellbeing in the workplace is increasing and one in five workers are willing to sacrifice a promotion in order to obtain better wellbeing in the workplace.

**Workplace Wellbeing** surveyed over 1,000 Australian workers in an unprecedented study on the essence of workplace wellbeing.

This report sheds some much-needed light on current worker perceptions and expectations of wellbeing, where the responsibility for wellbeing lies, and the effectiveness of wellbeing programs.

This emphasis on wellbeing has gripped Australian workplaces. As a result, many organisations have begun implementing wellbeing strategies and programs in the hope that wellbeing is actively addressed and delivered within the workplace.

A more concerted effort to genuinely understand what employee wellbeing means to Australian workplaces is key before strategies are implemented. Wellbeing is not a buzzword to attach to any new HR strategy, but rather it requires careful consideration, factoring in worker's evolving needs in our rapidly-changing work landscape.

This is Reventure Ltd's sixth report as part of our national campaign, **a future that works**, which aims to provide practical workplace solutions in response to increasing rates of employee turnover and dissatisfaction around the nation.

**Dr Lindsay McMillan OAM**



## Dr Lindsay McMillan OAM

Dr Lindsay McMillan OAM is a leading Australian academic, thought leader and social commentator in the field of human resources and the complexities of the modern workplace.

As the Managing Director of Reventure Ltd, Dr McMillan is charged with undertaking research, raising public debate, and helping to renew workplaces for the future.

He is a regular researcher, author and presenter in Australia and internationally.

For decades, he has led social enterprises and an international human resources company, as well as serving in non-executive director and chair roles with boards. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

It is this practical experience in a range of leadership roles that drives Dr McMillan to work with CEOs and their workplaces to strive for greater job satisfaction, true meaning and purpose, and optimal performance.

Dr McMillan holds a Doctor of Health Services (Psychology), a Master of Education and a Bachelor of Health Administration.

He is a recipient of an OAM for services to Australians with disabilities through a range of health organisations and employee assistance programs. He is a Churchill Fellow and a recipient of a Rotary International Foundation Fellowship.





## About the campaign

*a future that works* is a national workplace renewal campaign launched by Reventure Ltd in response to our research finding that nearly half the Australian workforce will be looking for a new job in the next year.

The campaign is aimed at providing solutions and practical guides so that workplaces can more actively engage with modern challenges and become healthier, happier and more engaged with better cultures and higher levels of commitment and productivity.

When you JOIN THE CALL FOR CHANGE you will be engaging in the latest research, helping to raise the level of national debate on workplace matters, and be an advocate for the future.

JOIN THE CALL FOR CHANGE and renew your workplace at [www.afuturethatworks.org.au](http://www.afuturethatworks.org.au).





# Overview

## Defining Wellbeing

**77%** Wellbeing revolves around the concept of **'healthiness'**.

**73%** Wellbeing revolves around the concept of **'happiness'**.

**44%** Wellbeing revolves around the concept of **'peace'**.



## Current State of Workplace Wellbeing

In order to obtain **better wellbeing** in the workplace, **21%** of workers are **willing to sacrifice promotions**.

**One quarter**

of Australian workers believe the **focus on wellbeing in the workplace is increasing**.



## Drivers of Wellbeing

**51%** believe **unrealistic workload expectations** have the **greatest negative impact** on wellbeing in the workplace.

**61%** identify **high team morale** as the **greatest indicator** of employee wellbeing.

## Workplace Wellbeing Programs

Around **three-quarters (74%)** of workers believe wellbeing programs are worth the time and money.

**Two in five** Australian workers (**42%**) see employee **wellbeing programs** as **important** when job searching.

## Responsibility for Wellbeing

**Two in five** workers (**40%**) believe **employers understand** how to **improve wellbeing** in the workplace.

**85%** of workers believe **employers should create an environment** that proactively **addresses stress** in the workplace.

# Survey Demographics

This study consisted of a nationally representative survey of :

**1,005** employed Australian adults

This report is a collation of data gained through a quantitative survey conducted through an online panel. The survey was in the field in **April 2017**.

The sample included the following employment status:

- **56%** full time workers
- **28%** part time workers
- **8%** self-employed / independent contractors

## Segmentation throughout the report

**G Generational insights:** The age definitions for the generation names used throughout the report are as follows:

- Generation Z: 7-22 year olds
- Generation Y: 23-37 year olds
- Generation X: 38-52 year olds
- Baby Boomers: 53-71 year olds
- Builders: 72+ year olds

Segment name	Percentage of Australian workers
<b>E Employer vs employee insights</b>	
Employers	38%
Employees	62%
<b>S Sleep insights</b>	
Satisfied sleepers (very/somewhat)	62%
Dissatisfied sleepers (very/somewhat)	38%
<b>Stress insights</b>	
Stressed workers (extremely/very)	27%
Not at all stressed workers	27%
<b>Wellbeing program</b>	
Workplace has a wellbeing program	43%
Workplace does not have a wellbeing program	57%
<b>Extent employee wellbeing is taken into account when making business decisions</b>	
Workers whose wellbeing is considered in business decisions	48%
Workers whose wellbeing is not considered in business decisions	52%

Additional details on survey demographics can be found in the appendix section.





Defining Wellbeing

## Defining Wellbeing

Two in five Australian workers (42%) define wellbeing as 'when I have found balance across my physical, mental, social and spiritual life'. One in three (33%) see it as 'when I feel physically and mentally fit and well'. Just 13% see it as 'when I have found inner peace', and a further 12% 'when my desires for house/income/success are met'.

### Which of the following statements best describes your definition of wellbeing?

When I have found balance across my physical, mental, social and spiritual life	42%
When I feel physical and mentally fit and well	33%
When I have found inner peace	13%
When my desires for house/income/success are met	12%

## Perceptions of Wellbeing

The top words associated with wellbeing deal with levels of personal contentment and satisfaction in life. The words least likely to be associated with wellbeing are more around outputs. These include work performance (5%), engagement (6%), competent (6%) and productivity (7%).

### Which of the following words do you most associate with wellbeing?

Healthiness	77%
Happiness	73%
Peaceful	44%
Content	35%
Fulfilled	33%



**Generational insights:** Baby Boomers are more likely to associate being 'content' with wellbeing than Generation Y (42% cf. 30%).





**What three words or concepts first come to mind when you think of wellbeing?**

When unprompted, the words or concepts that first come to mind when thinking of wellbeing are happiness, health, fitness, mental health and family.



Words that are larger and bolder, indicate those that were written more frequently by respondents.

## Personal Wellbeing

Over half of Australian workers see rest and relaxation/reflection time (57%), healthy friendships (53%) and financial security (52%) as most important in ensuring high levels of personal wellbeing. These concepts cover the themes of creating space in an individual's personal world, relationships and security.

More than two in five Australian workers (44%) see a 'sense of meaning' as being important. A 'fulfilling job' (34%) is lower on the priority list for Australian workers, coming in ninth place.



**Generational insights:** Generation Y is two times more likely than Baby Boomers to believe success is important to ensuring high levels of wellbeing (36% cf.16%). Baby Boomers, however, are more likely to see financial security as important (60% cf. 54% Gen X, 48% Gen Y).



**Employer vs employee insights:** Healthy friendships are more important to employees than employers when it comes to ensuring high levels of personal wellbeing (57% cf. 47%).

### What do you see as being most important to ensure high levels of personal wellbeing?

Rest and relaxation/reflection time	57%
Healthy friendships	53%
Financial security	52%
Regular exercise	47%
Nutrition	45%
Sense of meaning	44%
Making positive contributions to the lives of others	36%
Security in housing situation	35%
Fulfilling job	34%
Success	26%
Being in a romantic relationship	24%





# Current State of Workplace Wellbeing



## Life Satisfaction

Australian workers are most satisfied in their:

**78%** Relationships

**75%** Work/life integration

**75%** Personal fulfillment

Australian workers are most dissatisfied in their:

**39%** Financial situation

**38%** Sleep patterns

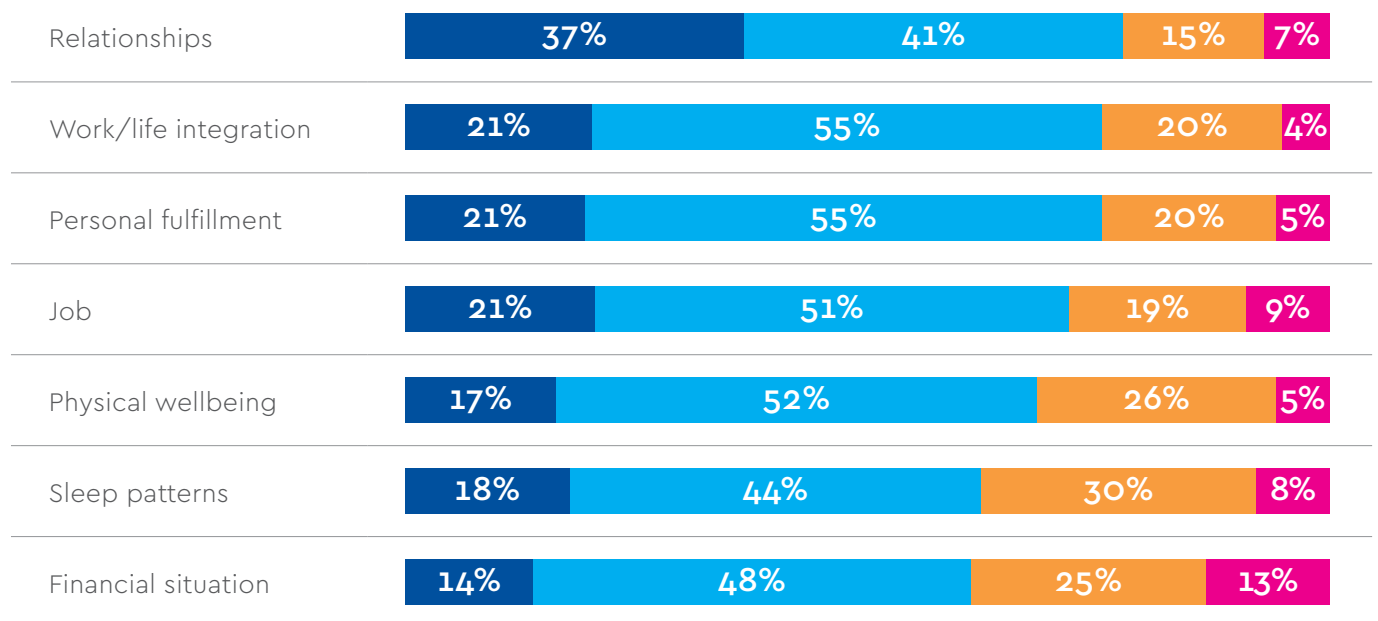
**31%** Physical wellbeing



**Sleep insights:** Satisfied sleepers are more satisfied in all areas of their lives, than dissatisfied sleepers. Particularly in their physical wellbeing (83% cf. 44% dissatisfied sleepers) and their job (82% cf. 55%).

Workers who have a workplace wellbeing program are more satisfied in their lives than workers without a workplace wellbeing program. In particular, their financial situation (70% cf. 55%), and their job (79% cf. 66%).

How satisfied do you currently feel in the following areas of your life?



Very satisfied
  Somewhat satisfied
  Somewhat dissatisfied
  Very dissatisfied



One in four Australian workers (25%) definitely feel as though they 'have a sense of meaning' in their life. Half (51%) somewhat feel as though they have a 'sense of meaning', whilst 24% do not feel as though they 'have a sense of meaning' in their life.



**Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are more likely than satisfied sleepers to feel as though their life has no sense of meaning (40% cf. 15%).

## Job Satisfaction

Almost half of Australian workers will look for a new job in the next 12 months (48%). One in three (30%) will probably not look for a new job, and 22% will definitely not look for a new job in the next 12 months.



**Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are slightly more likely than satisfied sleepers to look for a new job in the next 12 months (54% cf. 45%).

Australian workers who are stressed (extremely/very) about their work are 2.5 times more likely to look for a new job in the next 12 months than workers who are not at all stressed about work (73% cf. 28%).

Two in five Australian workers (41%) are concerned (very/somewhat) about the impact artificial intelligence is having on their current and future work. Almost two in five (38%) are 'not really concerned', whilst 22% are not at all concerned.

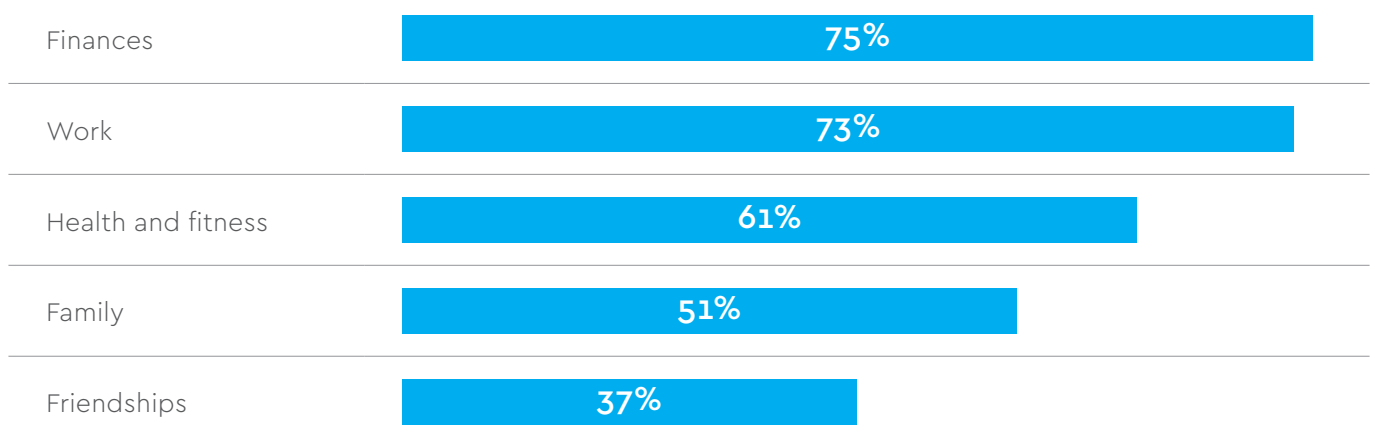


## Stress

Australian workers are most likely to be stressed about finances (75%), work (73%), and health and fitness (61%). Interestingly, finances and physical wellbeing are the areas of life Australian workers are also most dissatisfied with (39% and 31% respectively).

Friendships (62%) and family (49%) are the areas of life Australians are least stressed by. This is consistent with the finding that relationships are the area of life Australian workers are most satisfied with (78%).

### How stressed do you feel in the following aspects of your life?



**Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are more likely than satisfied sleepers to be stressed (extremely/very) about:

- Finances (42% cf. 25%)
- Work (37% cf. 21%)
- Health and fitness (24% cf. 14%).



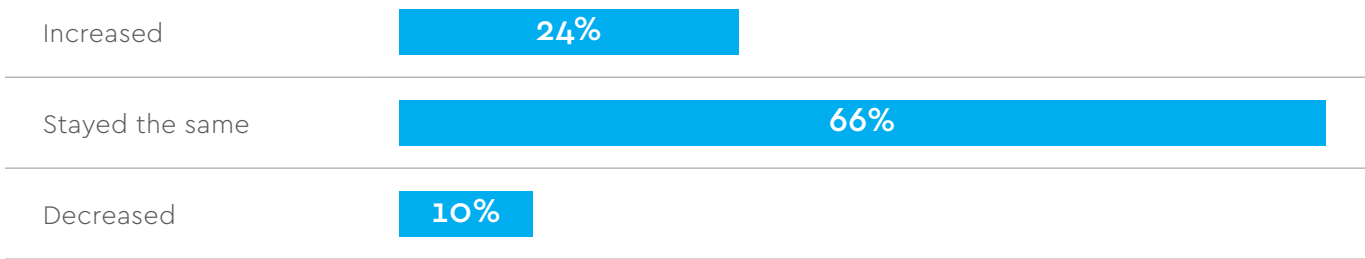
**Employer vs employee insights:** Employers are more stressed in all areas of life than employees. Work (34%) and finances (34%) are the areas that provide employers with the greatest stress (extremely/very).



**Generational insights:** Generation Y is more stressed in all areas of their life than Generation X and Baby Boomers. The areas of greatest stress for Generation Y are consistent with Australian workers, finances (37%), work (33%) and health and fitness (23%).

# Role of Wellbeing

Over the past 12 months how has your workplace's focus on wellbeing changed?



**E** **Employer vs employee insights:** Employers are more likely than employees to indicate their workplace focus on wellbeing has increased (significantly/somewhat) over the last 12 months (33% cf. 20%).

One in four Australian workers (25%) would sacrifice company perks for better wellbeing in their workplace. One in five would sacrifice a promotion (21%) or a pay rise (19%). Stressed workers would more readily sacrifice company perks (28%) and a pay rise (27%) for better wellbeing in their workplace.

The level to which employee wellbeing is taken into consideration when making business decisions varies across different organisations. More than one in ten Australian workers (12%) believe business decisions are made in the best interest of the wellbeing of employees. More than one in three (36%) believe employee wellbeing is taken into consideration.

Half of Australian workers (52%) believe decisions are made with the interests of the business in mind, more so than the impact on employee wellbeing.

**E** **Employer vs employee insights:** Employers are more likely than employees to indicate employee wellbeing is taken into consideration (greatly/somewhat) when making business decisions (64% cf. 39%).

**G** **Generational insights:** Generation Y is more likely than the older generations to believe their wellbeing is taken into account when making business decisions (59% cf. 39% Gen X, 40% Baby Boomers).

**S** **Sleep insights:** Six in ten dissatisfied sleepers believe business decisions are made for the benefit of the business rather than taking into account employee wellbeing (62% cf. 46% satisfied sleepers).

Almost three-quarters of workers with a wellbeing program in their workplace (72%) believe their wellbeing is taken into consideration compared to one in three (30%) workers who do not have a workplace wellbeing program.



# Drivers of Wellbeing



## Drivers of Wellbeing

The elements most contributing to wellbeing in the workplace are:

**44%** A pleasant work environment

**36%** Flexible working hours

**36%** Realistic work expectations

Each of these elements deals with the day-to-day work environment more so than the bonuses or perks a company may provide. A higher salary package, however, is important for more than one in four Australian workers (27%).

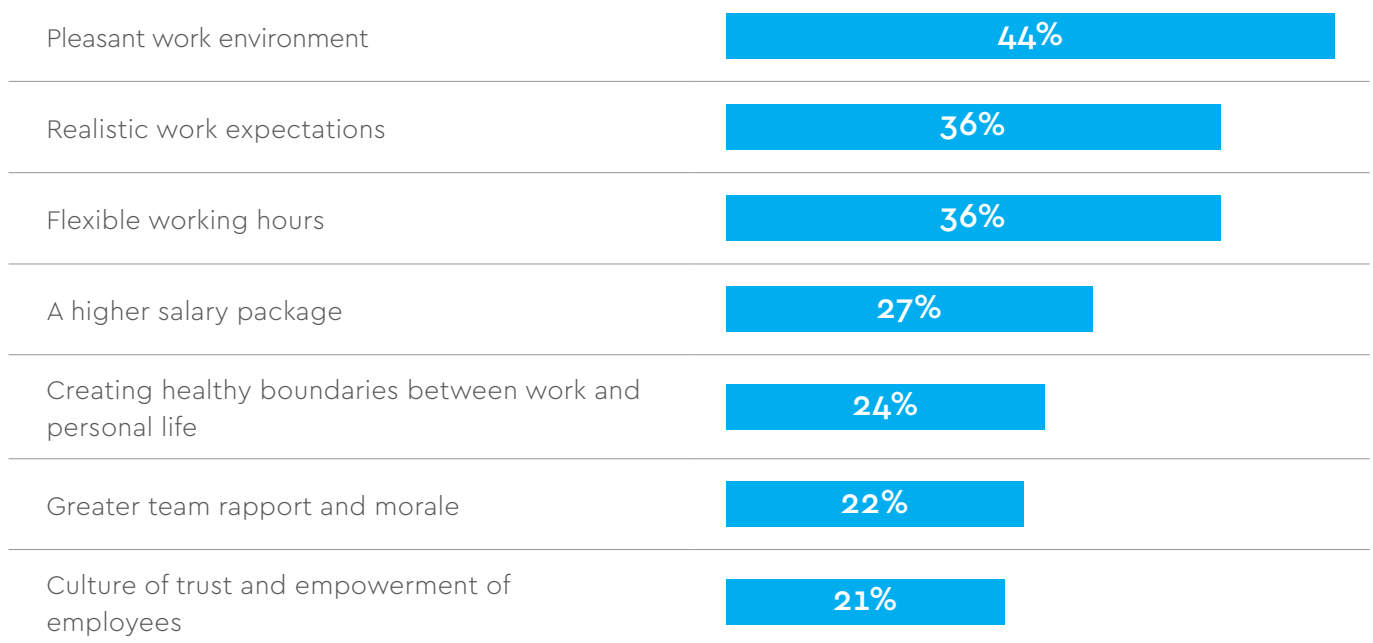
These elements of importance are consistent across employers, employees, and stressed workers.



**Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are more likely than satisfied sleepers to indicate that a higher salary package (32% cf. 24%) and 'more efficient management' (20% cf. 15%) contribute most to wellbeing in the workplace.

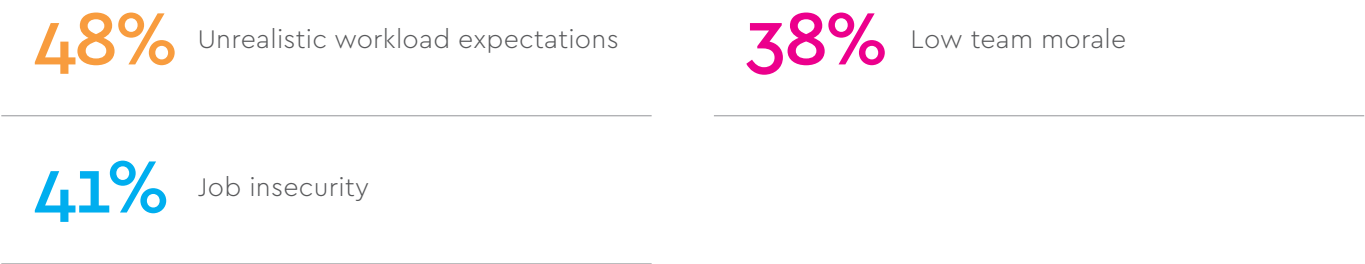
The most influential element on wellbeing in the workplace for stressed workers is realistic work expectations (39%).

**Which of the following elements do you think would contribute most to wellbeing in the workplace?**



## Barriers to Wellbeing

The elements Australian workers believe have the most negative impact on wellbeing in the workplace are:

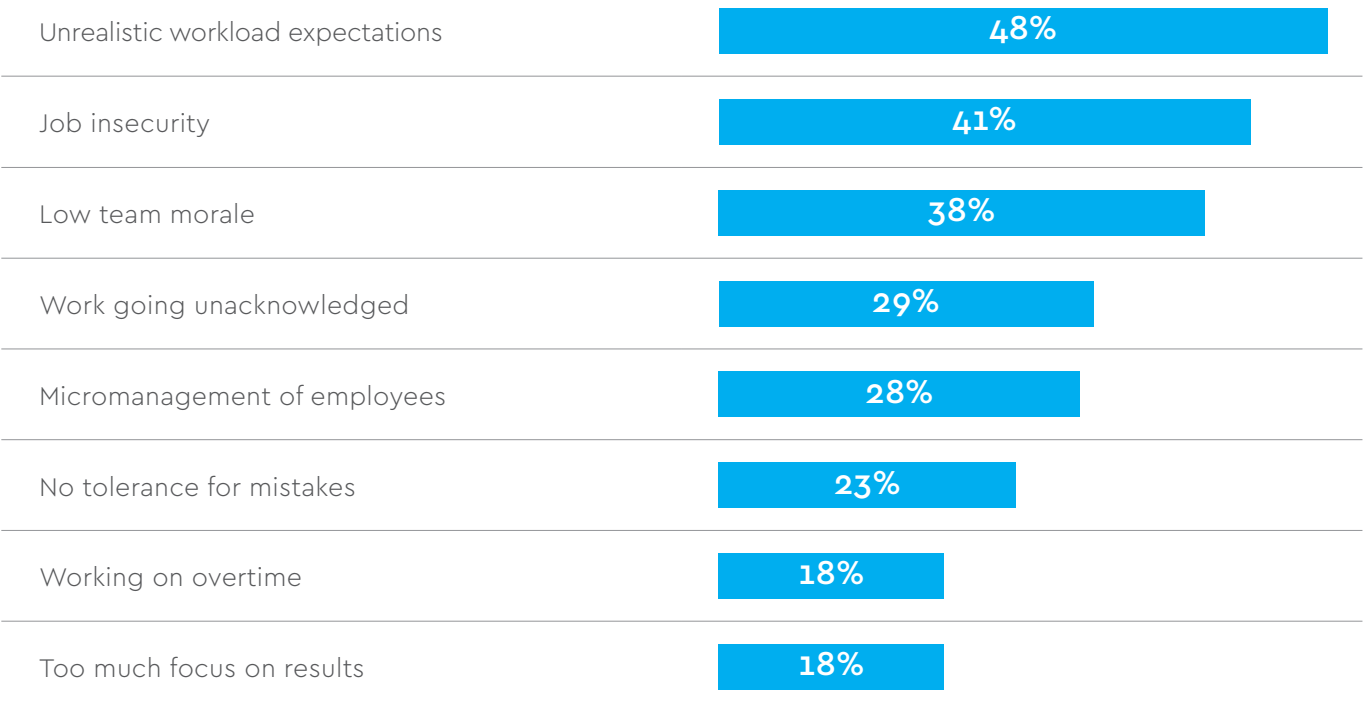


E

**Employer vs employee insights:** The elements that have the most negative impact on wellbeing in the workplace are consistent across employers and employees. Employees, however, see a greater impact of low team morale than employers (42% cf. 31%).

Workers who do not feel their wellbeing is considered when making business decisions are more likely than workers who feel their wellbeing is considered to indicate micromanagement of employees as a negative impact on wellbeing (33% cf. 24%).

### Which of the following elements do you believe have the most negative impact on wellbeing in the workplace?



## Promoting Wellbeing

Australian workers see realistic work expectations (92%) as most important (very/somewhat) for promoting wellbeing in the workplace. Followed by flexible working hours (83%) and 'encouraging work/life integration' (82%).

**E Employer vs employee insights:** Employers are more likely than employees to see a culture of engagement (85% cf. 80%) and team building activities (67% cf. 58%) as important (very/somewhat) for promoting wellbeing in the workplace.

How important do you see the following for promoting wellbeing in the workplace?

Realistic work expectations	92%
Flexible working hours	83%
Encouraging work/life integration	82%
Culture of engagement	82%
Pay rise/perks/promotions	81%
Team building activities	61%





## Key Indicators

The key indicators of employee wellbeing are:

**61%** High team morale

**52%** Low staff turnover

**52%** Employee loyalty

**46%** High productivity

Employee engagement, although less of a priority, is seen as important by more than two in five Australian workers (45%).

Wellbeing is a feeling or a sense as much as it is the flow on effects in worker's lives. The top two indicators involve a worker's feelings or senses, whereas the second two deal more with activity and output of a worker.

The top three indicators of employee wellbeing are consistent across employers and employees; they are however statistically different.



**Generational insights:** Baby Boomers and Generation X's key indicators of wellbeing are consistent with Australian workers. Generation Y workers, however, differ in their top three. The greatest indicators are still high team morale (56%) and low staff turnover (48%). It is followed however by high productivity (47%).



# Workplace Wellbeing Programs



# Prevalence

More than two in five Australian workers (43%) have a wellbeing program running in their workplace. Almost one in four Australian workers' (23%) wellbeing programs have been running for more than three years. One in five (20%) have been running less than two years.

More than half of Australian workers (57%) do not have a wellbeing program running in their place of work.

G

**Generational insights:** Generation Y is more likely to be working in workplaces where wellbeing programs have been running for three years or more (27% cf. 23% Gen X, 20% Baby Boomers). Baby Boomers, however, are more likely to be in workplaces without a wellbeing program (68% cf. 59% Gen X, 48% Gen Y).

S

**Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are more likely than satisfied sleepers to be in workplaces without a wellbeing program (61% cf. 54%).

Workers who do not feel their wellbeing is considered when business decisions are made are twice as likely to not have a wellbeing program in their workplace than workers who feel their wellbeing is considered in business decisions (77% cf. 35%).

## Does your workplace have a clearly defined and written strategy on wellbeing?

Yes, I understand what the strategy is, and see it applied in my workplace	13%
Yes, I know what the strategy is, but I don't often see it applied in my workplace	28%
No, my workplace does not have a wellbeing strategy that I know of	59%

Insights into workers who have a workplace wellbeing program show almost three-quarters of Australian workers who have a workplace wellbeing program (73%) know or understand their workplace wellbeing strategy (cf. 16% workers without a wellbeing program).

E

**Employer vs employee insights:** Employees are more likely than employers to indicate that their workplace does not have a wellbeing strategy that they are aware of (67% cf. 46%). Employers, however, are more likely to be aware of workplace wellbeing strategies (54% cf. 33%).

Four in five workers who do not feel their wellbeing is considered when making business decisions are unaware of their workplace having a wellbeing strategy (80% cf. 37% worker wellbeing considered in business decisions).



## Components

The most common components of workplace wellbeing are:

**37%**

Flexible  
working hours

**22%**

Management  
of workloads

**19%**

Team  
building activities

Workers who are not at all stressed about their work are more likely to have flexible working hours (42% cf. 30%) and management of workloads (29% cf. 18%) than stressed workers.



**Sleep insights:** Satisfied sleepers are more likely than dissatisfied sleepers to have management of workloads as a component occurring in their workplaces (24% cf. 18%).

What components of wellbeing programs are currently running in your workplace?

Flexible working hours	37%
Management of workloads	22%
Team building activities	19%
Encouraging and modeling work/life integration	15%
Lunchtime activities	11%
Gym memberships	11%
Healthy lifestyle seminars	9%
Health and nutrition seminars	8%
Corporate massage	7%

## Responsibility

Human resources (31%) is most commonly responsible for executing the wellbeing program in the Australian workplace. Followed by executive/senior management team (16%) and the wellbeing team (11%).

Australian workers who do not have a wellbeing program running in their workplace expect workplace wellbeing programs to be run by human resources (20%) or the executive/senior management team (17%).

## Impact

From those 43% of Australian workers who have a workplace wellbeing program, workplace wellbeing programs are generally having a positive impact.

### The areas of greatest positive impact are:

**48%** Productivity

**46%** Performance

**45%** Sense of being valued as an employee

### The areas of least positive impact are:

**31%** Healthy sleep patterns

**36%** Stress levels

**38%** Physical health

**E** **Employer vs employee insights:** Employees who have a workplace wellbeing program identify the greatest positive impact of wellbeing programs as an increased (greatly/somewhat) 'sense of being valued as an employee' (44%). The greatest impact for employers with a wellbeing program, however, is increased (greatly/somewhat) productivity (53%).

**S** **Sleep insights:** Satisfied sleepers who have a wellbeing program are more likely than dissatisfied sleepers with a wellbeing program to identify the improvement of healthy sleep patterns due to the workplace wellbeing program (37% cf. 21%).

### Employers see workplace wellbeing programs as having the greatest positive impact on employees':

**52%** Productivity

**49%** Relationships

**52%** Performance

One in five employers (21%) indicated levels of absenteeism have decreased. A further 19% believe stress levels have decreased due to their work wellbeing program.

## Challenges

The greatest challenge to engaging employees in a wellbeing program is seen as a lack of time (47%). This is consistent across both employers and employees (43% and 50% respectively). Costs (40%) and lack of employer buy-in (34%) are the next greatest challenges to engagement.

**E Employer vs employee insights:** Employees are more likely than employers to indicate that one of the greatest challenges is a lack of employer buy-in (38% cf. 25%).

Workers with a wellbeing program indicate the lack of time (49%) and costs (42%) as the greatest challenges to engaging employees. Workers without a wellbeing program, however, suggest a lack of time (46%), and lack of employer buy-in (39%), and costs (39%) are the greatest challenges. Workers who do not feel their wellbeing is considered when business decisions are made say the greatest challenge to engaging employees in a wellbeing program is a lack of employer buy-in (46%).

### What do you see as the biggest challenges to engaging employees in a wellbeing program?

Lack of time	47%
Costs	40%
Lack of employer buy in	34%
Lack of resources	25%
Lack of employee buy in	25%
Demands of my current role and responsibilities	22%

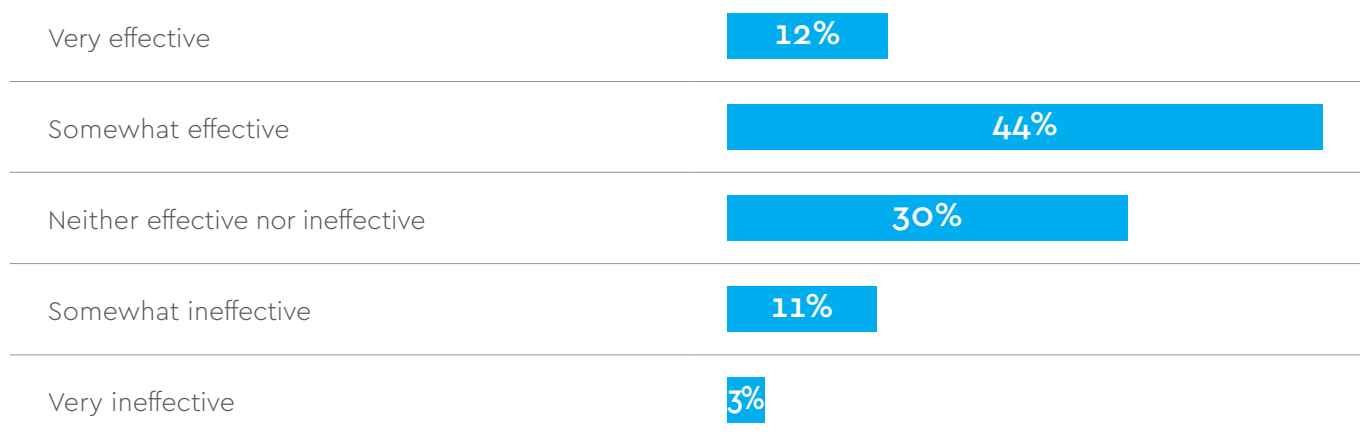
## Effectiveness

More than half of Australian workers (56%) see the wellbeing program offered in their workplace as effective. Three in ten (30%) believe it is 'neither effective nor ineffective', whilst 14% see their workplace wellbeing program as ineffective.

More than half of employers with a wellbeing program in their workplace say it is effective (58%).

Almost three-quarters of Australian workers (74%) believe wellbeing programs are worth the time and money, as they increase (significantly/somewhat) the productivity, engagement and morale of employees.

## How effective is the wellbeing program offered at your workplace?



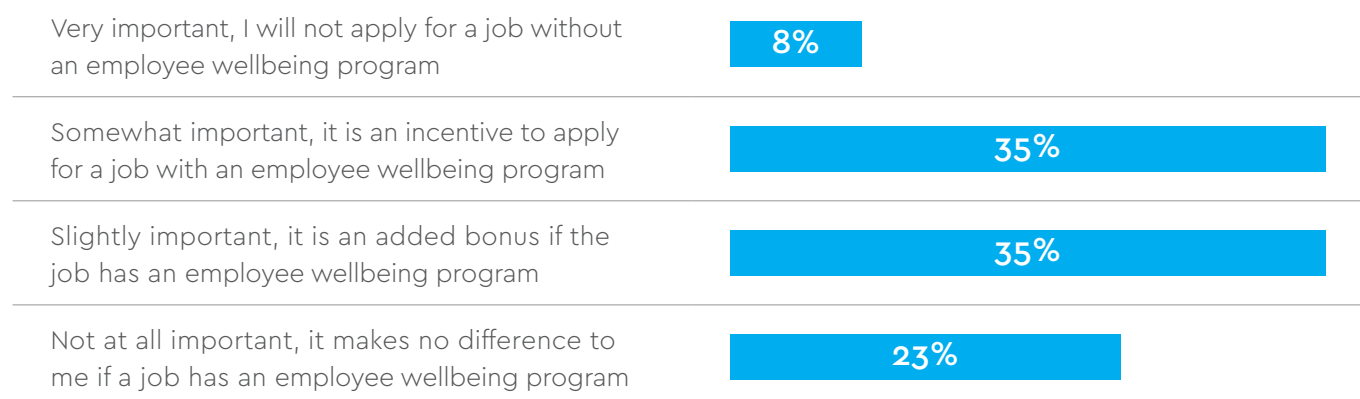
**Employer vs employee insights:** Four in five employers who have a workplace wellbeing program (84%, n= 218) believe they are worth the time and money. Whereas only two-thirds of employers without a workplace wellbeing program believe they are worth the time and money.

Workers who have a workplace wellbeing program are more supportive of workplace wellbeing programs. More than four in five (82% cf. 68 workers without a wellbeing program) believe wellbeing programs are worth the time and money, as they increase (significantly/somewhat) the productivity, engagement and morale of employees.

Employee wellbeing programs are seen as important (very/somewhat) by two in five Australian workers (42%) when job searching. Nearly one in twelve (8%) will not apply for a job without an employee wellbeing program. A third of Australian workers (35%) see a wellbeing program as an incentive to apply for a job. One in five Australian workers (23%) indicated that it makes no difference to them if a job has an employee wellbeing program or not.

Once workers have experienced a wellbeing program, it becomes a priority when job searching. Workers who have a wellbeing program are almost two times more likely to apply for a job based on its employee wellbeing program than workers looking for jobs from companies without workplace wellbeing programs (58% cf. 31%).

## When job searching, how important is it to you for a company to have an employee wellbeing program?



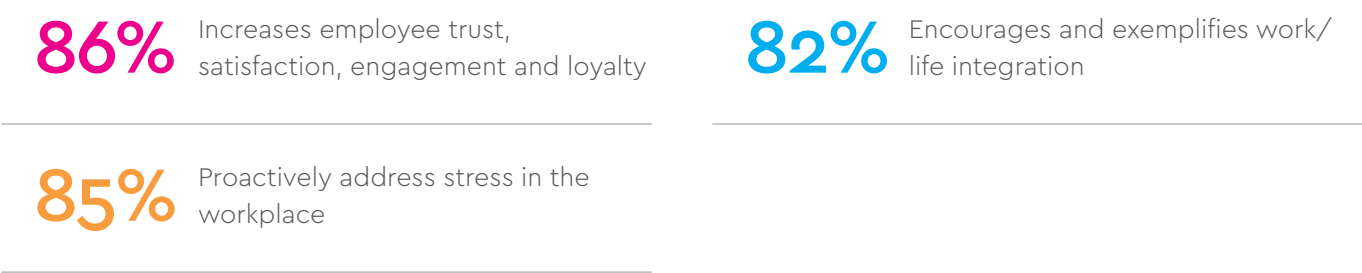




Responsibility for Wellbeing

# Workplace Culture

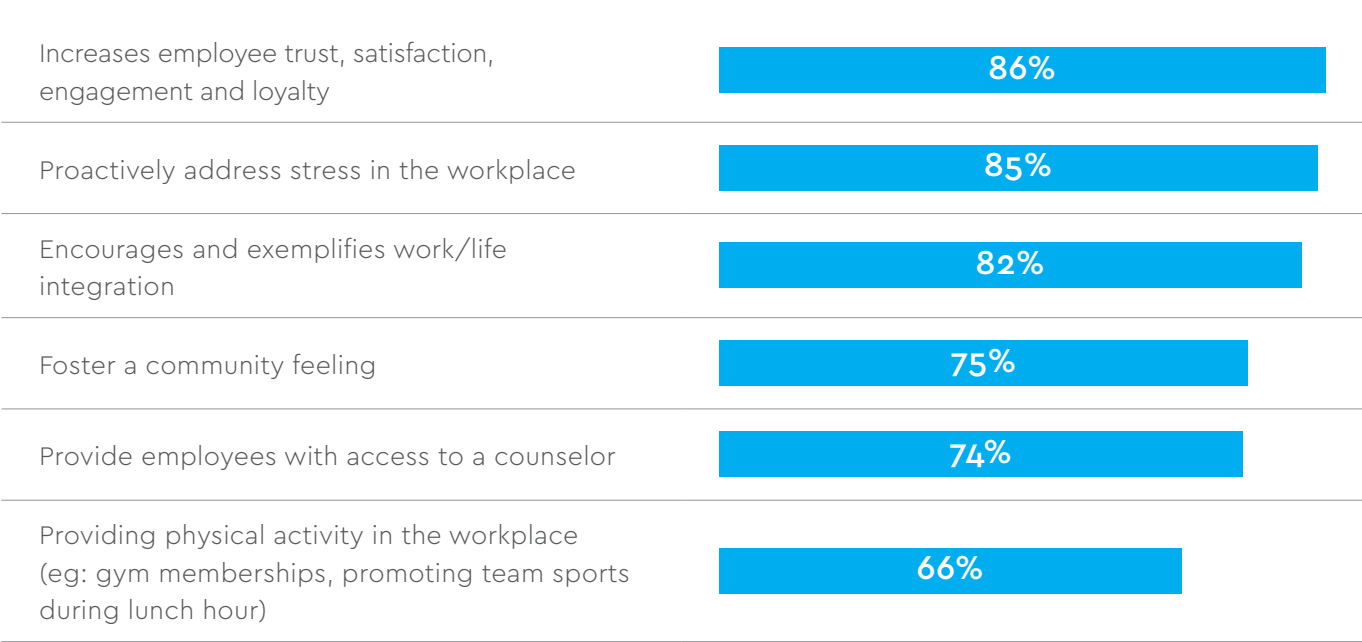
To foster wellbeing in the workplace Australian workers believe employers should create an environment that:



Opportunities for providing physical activity in the workplace, e.g. gym memberships, is the lowest priority for Australian workers (66%).

Employees have higher expectations than employers of what employers should provide to foster wellbeing in the workplace. This is for all areas except for providing opportunities for physical activity in the workplace, where employers see it of greater importance than employees (69% cf. 64%).

## Should employers provide the following in order to foster wellbeing in the workplace?



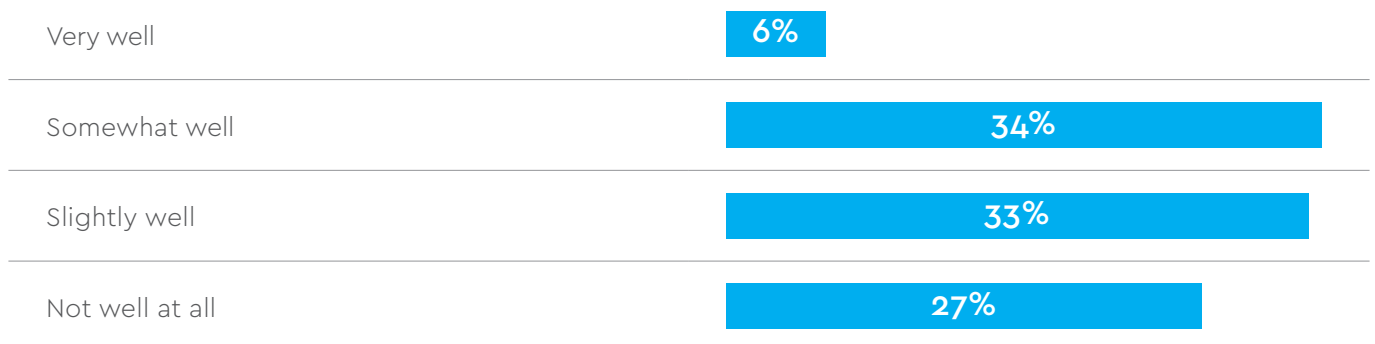
## Employer Understanding

Two in five Australian workers (40%) believe employers understand (very well/somewhat) how to improve wellbeing in the workplace. More than one in four (27%), however, believe employers do not understand the components of an effective wellbeing program and have not implemented them in the workplace.

**E Employer vs employee insights:** Not surprisingly, employers are more likely than employees to believe employers understand (very well/somewhat) how to improve wellbeing in the workplace (49% cf. 34%).

**S Sleep insights:** Dissatisfied sleepers are more likely to indicate employers have little or no understanding around what components make a wellbeing program effective, and how to apply them in the workplace (68% cf. 55%).

**To what extent do you believe employers understand how to improve wellbeing in the workplace?**



Two in five workers who do not feel their wellbeing is considered when making business decisions, believe employers do not understand what makes an effective wellbeing program (45% cf. 8% this is 5.6 times more likely than workers who feel their wellbeing is considered when business decisions are made).



## To what extent do you believe employers understand how to improve wellbeing in the workplace?

Respondents were also asked to comment on their selection to this question. Below are a selection of responses, covering a range of themes. These range from "workplace wellbeing programs are still emerging and employers are learning how to navigate this", to "employers are aware of the benefits of programs but are restricted in their implementation through costs and resources". A large number of respondents believe that employers see profits as more important than employee wellbeing.

### Wellbeing programs are still emerging:

"I believe the concept of wellbeing programs in the workplace are still an emerging concept and so many employers are not aware of their potential impact and importance."

"Employers mean well but are still getting their head around how to best implement this concept."

### Some employees felt that employers do try to look after their employees:

"All employers try to make sure their employees are well looked after."

"Employee wellbeing is something that only works if everybody participates. It is a team effort and opportunity needs to be taken to make employees lives that little bit easier."

"My employer is very caring and does have the components in place for a balanced workplace. However, it can be difficult to get the employees to buy in."

### Wellbeing in the workplace is about the manager themselves, not just the program:

"At the end of the day if your manager is not an effective or encouraging leader, then the stress still remains and morale remains low."

"It really depends on the employer. A genuine person who spends real time with their employees and understands their jobs well will do a better job at implementing effective workplace wellbeing programs."

"Many think it's about doing specific things like providing gym memberships or healthy snacks, but respect and trust is much more important for my wellbeing."

### Employers who do understand how to implement wellbeing programs are rare:

"I am very lucky to work for a local government with an excellent wellbeing program. I take advantage of what it offers and feel it definitely enhances my work life balance."

"In my workplace it is a big focus and they understand it very well. However, I know anecdotally that a lot of other companies seem to miss the mark completely."

"My employer has a well thought out wellbeing program, however I understand I am a lucky one."

### Employers see the benefits of wellbeing programs but often they are not top priority:

"I think employers understand the benefits of these programs but integrating them into the workplace often isn't a top priority."



### Employers are aware of the benefits but are restricted through time, costs and resources:

"I do not believe that the majority of employers have the time or resources necessary to focus on these wellbeing programs."

"I think most employers are aware of the need for wellbeing in the workplace, but some are unable to provide adequate programs through financial restraint."

"I think some employers (perhaps even a majority) understand components of a wellbeing program, but that a lot cannot implement a program due to the type of workplace/lack of funds/no management buy-in, or mismanage the implementation (choose to develop the wrong parts of the program for the workplace)."

### Profits are more important than employee wellbeing:

"All focus is on business and money making, not understanding the effects these business decisions have on employees."

"Company is more focused on success/revenue."

"Employees are just a resource and the human element does not even come into it."

"Employers do not care about employees until it affects their profit margin."

"Employers are usually only interested in the profit they can make and will usually only implement wellbeing programs if they feel it will benefit company profits overall."

### No Impact on Wellbeing

A large proportion of respondents have not had anything offered to them by their employer in an attempt to improve their wellbeing that has not had an impact on wellbeing. For those who have, some felt the programs provided were not sufficient to compensate to high workloads and demands. Also to attend these programs took time out of their personal world making them more stressed about their workload.

"A lot of programs to encourage work-life balance are more than offset by increasing workloads and unreasonable expectations."

"Healthy lifestyle program offered but can't find time out of my day to attend. As when I get back I am more stressed from being away and having to catch up."

The key elements of wellbeing programs that employers have offered, which have had no impact on wellbeing are:

- Messages – "10minute Massage every fortnight."
- Gym memberships.
- Bonuses – "Bonus at the end of the year."

Other responses vary from counseling courses to free lunches and yoga.





HR Solutions



## HR Solutions

Reventure Ltd's previous campaign research reports and Workplaces of Excellence interviews provide some further detail around workplace wellbeing and practical HR strategies to achieve an effective workplace culture.

The **2016 Snapshot of the Australian Workplace**, a national survey of over 1,000 workers, revealed that when it came to job priorities, workplace wellbeing was one in the top five that workers said were important to them when finding a new job, or staying in an old one.

Close to a third (29 per cent) of respondents said it was very important that the company they work at offers programs or resources to support employee wellness or wellbeing.

**CEO Insights**, which interviewed 50 leading CEOs to uncover the top ten pointers for the CEO of the future, identified wellbeing in the workplace as a priority. Future CEOs should relinquish authoritarian control, delegate to and trust in others who will work in teams and grow their resilience and wellbeing.

The attitude that CEOs have toward the word "wellbeing" itself is ambivalent. Workers consider it a nice but meaningless buzzword. CEOs were

divided on whether it was the responsibility of the workplace to provide wellbeing programs and some described such programs as "window dressing". These CEOs considered good leadership and good decision-making would be more effective in reducing employee stress.

Purpose and meaning is important to the overall wellbeing of the employee as it gives their everyday tasks importance. When it comes to wellbeing, it is important that employees have a sense of agency in how their job is crafted. It gives employees a say on their tasks and more responsibility over executing their role.

Mentoring was another way that employees could improve their workplace experience. By connecting with colleagues and mentors with complementary skills to their own, employees can enhance their perceptions of the job and carve a unique path that works for them.

It also advises employers to look into unique ways of rewarding their employees rather than financial outcomes. As outlined, workplace wellbeing is a priority for workers looking for new employment, or deciding to stay in their current job. Greater flexibility or career construction are two such measures that can serve as a reward for an employee that is performing well.

### There are six steps to build a culture of purpose and meaning:



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## Workplaces Addressing Wellbeing



### PwC

In 2015, PwC introduced "default flexibility" which allows employees to work the hours they want, where they want and how they want. In the last year, the uptake of this flexibility initiative has been significant, with more than eighty per cent of the workforce identifying themselves as having entered into some form of flexible arrangement.

This default position means employees at PwC do not have to "break the ice" on flexibility to their employers, instead the door is always open to discuss what working arrangement would work best for them during the different stages of their working life.

Some of the options taken up by employees include combinations of working different hours, reduced hours at work or working from home, either temporarily or on a permanent basis.

PwC have also changed the way employees can enjoy their public holiday – "floating public holidays" allow employees to take a public holiday on the day of their choosing.



### Coles Express

Coles Express has launched Express Steps, an innovative wellbeing program aimed at encouraging employees to improve their physical and mental health.

The Express Steps program was triggered by an internal workplace survey of over 1000 employees which found that 84 per cent of employees were not getting enough physical activity.

Through Express Steps, team members can purchase a Fitbit at a subsidised rate and become involved by competing against teams across the Coles Express business to rack up their step count and help their area to top the leader board.

As an added incentive, team members receive Flybuy points for being active participants in the program. Team members who are active every day for a month – regardless of how many steps they take – receive 2,000 points, which roughly equates to ten dollars. There are 380 Coles Express team members using their Fitbits on a regular basis.

Although there are no quick fixes, Coles Express has endeavored to make simple changes to support the wellbeing of the workforce.



### PepsiCo

"One Simple Thing" is a PepsiCo initiative that provides flexible work options for all employees, aimed at helping them balance personal responsibilities and lifestyle with work, by giving them a structured way to talk to managers about their needs.

Some examples of 'One Simple Thing' ideas include: adjusting start or finish times, extending lunch breaks, having no meetings at certain times of the day, and allocating time for professional development including researching, reading articles or attending seminars.

95% of PepsiCo employees reportedly agree that the culture of the organisation is supportive to working in a mobile and flexible way.



### Starlight Children's Foundation

In 2010, after the Global Financial Crisis the Starlight Children's Foundation wanted to re-ignite passion for their mission in their team members.

Get Connected is a whole of workplace program that requires all employees – including the executive team to work in a Starlight program once every quarter or four times every year. The program was a success because it showed team members their work was contributing to a valuable purpose.



### Arts Centre Melbourne

In February 2017, Arts Centre Melbourne launched an industry-wide initiative aimed at improving the mental health of Victorian performing arts workers.

The pilot program, called the Arts Wellbeing Collective, provides resources to help organisations better support the mental health of their workers, focusing on both prevention and intervention.

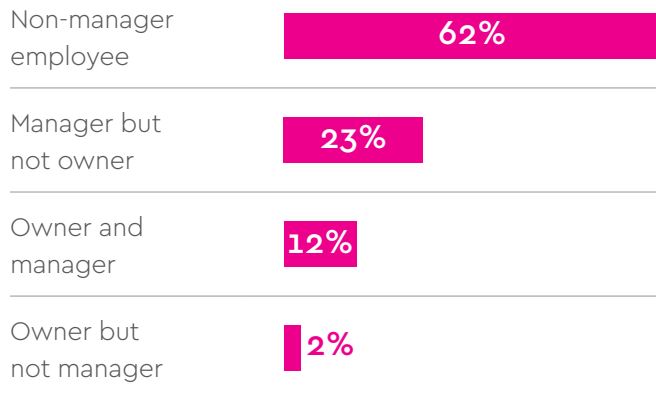
Part of the success of the initiative has been its custom fit for the industry. Currently in development is a tour management kit that addresses key challenges of workers who travel for extended periods of time for tours or short festivals. Challenges include eating healthy, getting adequate sleep, taking regular breaks and managing extreme emotional highs and lows.



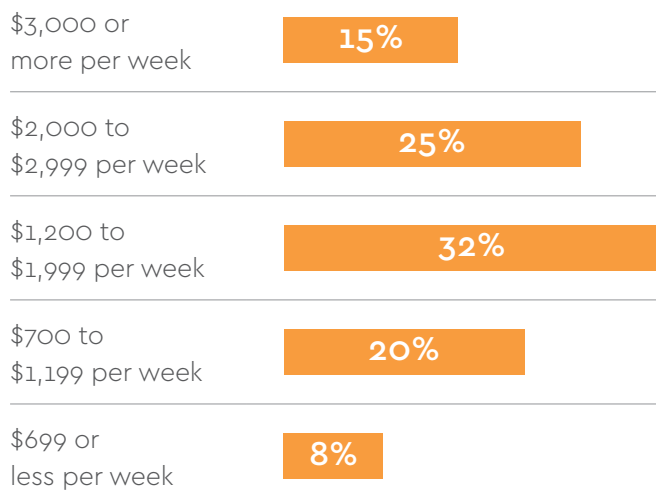
## Appendix: Survey Demographics

## Survey Demographics

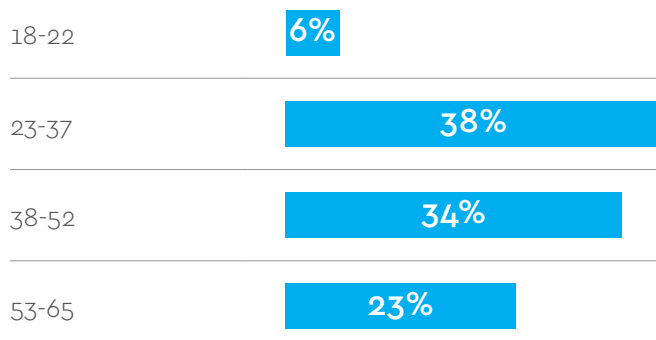
### Role in the workplace



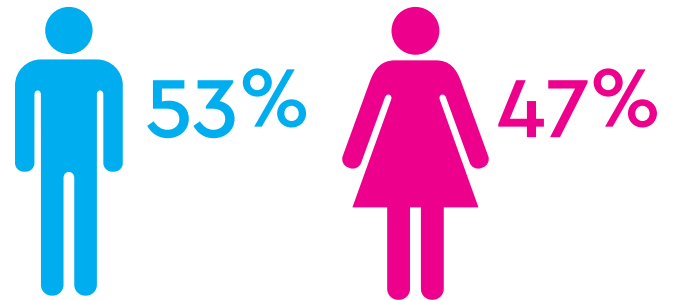
### Combined household income



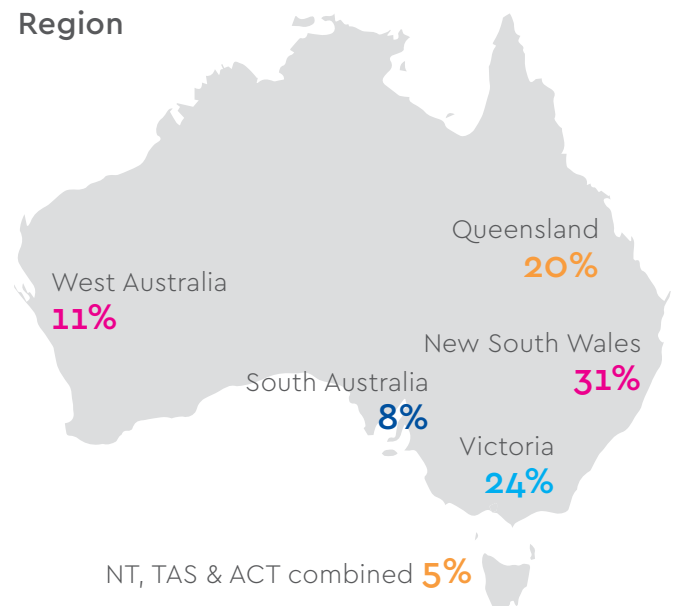
### Age



### Gender



### Region





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