

# EMPLOYEE RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING

*How targeted initiatives  
can build a culture of empowerment*



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# EMPLOYEE RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING

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Today's economy requires companies and workforces to quickly adapt to and overcome unpredictable difficulty and changes. More than ever before, the mental health and emotional skills of employees are key to both individual and corporate long-term success. Here's how employee wellbeing and resilience can benefit organizations – and what executives can do to support and empower their teams.

## WHY SHOULD WELLBEING BE IMPORTANT FOR YOUR COMPANY?

Establishing a healthy work environment does not only build the trust of employees: It creates an empowering, strong corporate culture. High employee wellbeing increases productivity and engagement while at the same time improving job satisfaction and retention rates. Supporting employee wellbeing helps to prevent stress, lower staff sickness levels and boost corporate performance.

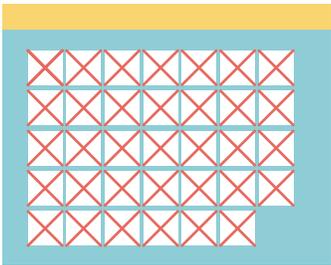
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## FOCUSING MENTAL HEALTH

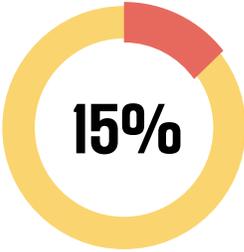
Besides physical illness and injuries, stress and mental ill-health are amongst the main causes for short- and long-term absence at work. Research shows that mental health has become the main focus of employee wellbeing – a development fueled by the unprecedented individual and collective challenges of the coronavirus pandemic: In 2020, 57% of British organizations focused on the mental health of their employees to a large extent, compared to 41% in the previous year. Mental health is therefore roughly twice as often the main focus of corporate efforts for employee wellbeing as physical health (25%) or social relationships (29%)\*.

\*Source: CIPD. (2021) Health and wellbeing at work survey 2021. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

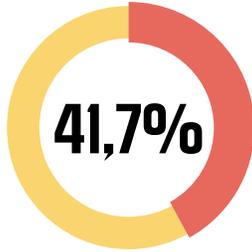
## HOW MENTAL ILL-HEALTH AFFECTS OUR WORK LIFE



34 days: average length of sick leave because of mental ill-health



15%: percentage of sick leave days because of mental ill-health



41,7%: percentage of people retiring early because of mental ill-health

Source: Statista, 2019; Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund, 2020

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## THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BEING WELL AND RESILIENT

Physical and mental wellbeing and resilience are inseparably connected to each other. The way people react and adapt to stress, changes and hardships can affect their health in various ways: Dealing with high stress levels with little resilience skills can cause conditions like insomnia, anxiety and depression. Vice versa, a good physical and mental health can make it easier for body and mind to adapt to changes and react with a high level of resilience.

## WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Psychological resilience is the ability to cope with and recover from changes, stress and hardships. Resilient people have developed mental and emotional abilities and healthy coping skills to face and handle difficulties without long-term negative consequences or even in a way that fosters strength and growth. These capabilities and processes can be learned and trained. While our work environments become more and more fast-paced and complex, resilience becomes one of the most important soft skills for employees.

## RESILIENT PEOPLE ARE MORE...

- ... stress-resistant
- ... steadfast
- ... robust
- ... adaptive
- ... flexible
- ... confident
- ... optimistic

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## FACTORS THAT DEMAND RESILIENCE OF EMPLOYEES

- pressure and stress from high workloads and impending deadlines
- permanent availability
- maintaining good work relationships, fitting into the team
- uncertainty about the future, e.g. through fixed-term contracts
- unexpected changes, e.g. the coronavirus pandemic
- corporate measures, e.g. restructuring or cost-saving measures
- non-work factors, e.g. health or family issues

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As the health landscape continues to evolve rapidly, wellbeing strategies need to continually adapt to provide the holistic, relevant healthcare people need and deserve.

– Angela Sherwood, Simplyhealth

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## HOW TO CREATE EFFECTIVE INITIATIVES

There are several ways to take care of employee wellbeing, from free gym memberships for physical fitness to coachings or workshops to improve soft and hard skills. But the only way to achieve significant and lasting success for both the organization and the employees is to create long-term initiatives that are integrated into everyday business and the corporate culture and embraced by leadership. This includes further training and awareness building for executives as well as programs that allow employees to participate in shaping their work environment and realizing their full potential.

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## FOUR WAYS OF BOOSTING RESILIENCE

The American Psychological Association has identified four core components to increase resilience through behaviors, thoughts and actions:

- **Connections:** surrounding yourself with empathetic and understanding people that support you and validate your feelings
- **Wellness:** taking care of your physical wellbeing to make it easier for your body to adapt to stress; avoiding negative outlets like alcohol and practicing mindfulness to focus on the things that make you hopeful and grateful
- **Healthy thinking:** identifying irrational, worst-case thoughts; accepting that you cannot affect certain circumstances but the way you handle them; learning from experiences of the past; practicing self-forgiveness and -compassion
- **Meaning:** finding a sense of purpose through volunteering or regularly setting aside some time to proactively work towards realistic goals

Source: American Psychological Association, 2012

Organizations can support these processes in a multitude of ways – e.g. organizing employee resource groups, offering free fitness or yoga classes, setting up corporate volunteering programs or providing access to mental health services like counseling or mental health screening.



Enhancing mental toughness, highlighting and honing strengths, and fostering strong relationships are core competencies for any successful manager.

– Martin Seligman, pioneer of positive psychology



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## ESTABLISHING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

As failure is an almost inevitable part of work, it is important to create a supportive work environment built on empathy, understanding and constructive criticism (nonviolent communication) to encourage employees to not give up. By appointing appropriately trained and educated managers as contact persons and “first responders”, companies can provide their employees with someone to directly address their questions, problems and concerns at and, if necessary, consider further steps of action.

However, a lot of times, handling the mental wellbeing of employees exceeds internal corporate resources. Therapists can help with individual challenges while mentorship programs can efficiently guide both executives and employees on their shared journey towards getting to know each other, educating themselves and building a trusting, supportive relationship.

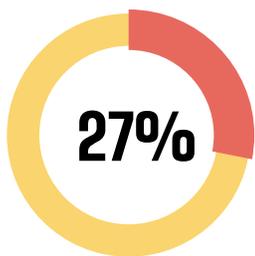
## HOW DIGITAL MENTORING CAN HELP YOU BOOST EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

With the help of our digital mentoring solutions, organizations are able to determine which areas of their corporate culture have development potential and need optimization. We provide our mentors and mentees with the necessary tools and methods to create a positive, healthy and empowering work environment together.

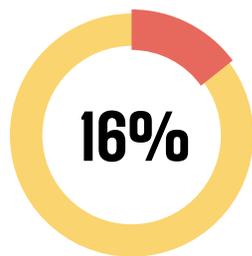
Through exchanging perspectives and experiences as well as sharing skills and knowledge, our mentors and mentees can learn a lot about themselves and their opposites. Our mentorships provide a space where employees can feel seen, accepted and appreciated which will result in a strong and positive corporate culture.

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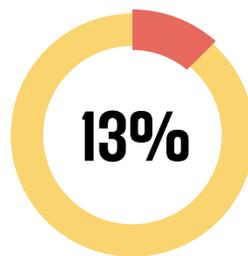
## THE SOCIAL FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES TO CHANGE THEIR JOBS



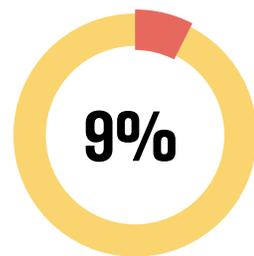
work climate



relation to superiors



corporate culture



relation to colleagues

Source: Avantgarde Experts, 2019

## EMPLOYEE WELLBEING AND INCLUSIVITY

We help companies build a diverse and inclusive workforce. Since employees belonging to marginalized communities can face a multitude of additional difficulties that can negatively affect their mental health – from lack of representation to microaggressions and unconscious bias – our mentorships can be a helpful tool of support and integration. Mentoring programs verifiably boost minority representation at the management level by 9% to 24% and improve promotion and retention rates for minorities and women by 15% to 38% as compared to non-mentored employees\*.

\*Source: Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations/Forbes, 2019

## CASE EXAMPLE

Through our digital mentoring solutions tailored to empower young female professionals, Fujitsu saw an 8% increase in retention amongst the mentee group. 91% of the mentees are more motivated to take on leadership roles while 82% of the participants reported an impact of the program on the overall gender balance. On top of that, 76% of the mentors are more satisfied with their jobs as well.



# WATCH OUR PRODUCT DEMO HERE!

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