

# Wellbeing Works Report: What Employees Want



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COVID has led to alarming situations like 76% of employees experiencing worker burnout. <sup>1</sup> With scared, distracted and unproductive workers, there is a clear need for employer-sponsored wellbeing programs to help them get back on track.

Despite this increased demand, employers continue to face challenges around employee health and wellbeing: low engagement, an overabundance of solutions to choose from, and despite best efforts, a continued increase in healthcare costs. With the definition of health expanding beyond physical health to also include financial, mental and social health, employers are waking up to the fact that fitness trackers or annual health risk assessments are not enough.

There has been a lot of discussion on how best to engage employees, but less time has been spent on understanding what they actually want. To find out, Welltok went directly to the source and surveyed 1,000 employees across the U.S.\*

## This report unveils

- ✓ Employees' top wellbeing priorities (it's not what you think)
- ✓ Why your programs may be missing the mark (get up close and personal)
- ✓ How stress is affecting your employees (it's time to take a stand)
- ✓ New ways to motivate employees (cash isn't king)





# Key findings

## **Total Wellbeing is Totally Essential**

More than 60% of employees are seeking support from their employer for all aspects of health, with financial health being their #1 priority. While there is consensus on the desire for total wellbeing support (physical, financial, emotional and social), what people need varies based on age, gender, marital status, health status and motivation. This is why it's essential employers provide individualized programming to truly have an impact.

## **Help Me, Help Myself**

People want (and expect) their employer to help them achieve their personal wellbeing goals. Companies are starting to make the effort, but only 16% of employees strongly agree that they know where to find all the health and wellbeing resources available to them. Additionally, 56% of employees have received irrelevant support, wasting time and money. Employers must address these challenges by making it easy for employees to find and use programs.

## **The Struggle is Real**

Employers are failing the stress test. Over 50% of Millennials have seriously considered switching jobs due to workplace stress, and while employers are taking notice, only 33% of respondents say their employers offer stress management programs to them. This underscores the importance of effectively providing the right support to the right individual when and where it is needed, or risk greater employee burnout and turnover.

## **Swing and a Miss**

56% of employees say the health and wellbeing programs offered by their employers are irrelevant, wasting company time and money. Delivering more personalized programming would motivate over 80% of employees to participate more, along with a variety of non-cash incentives like paid time off and massages (both stress relievers, too!).

# Total wellbeing is totally essential

The findings from this survey could not be more clear: the definition of health has evolved beyond physical health. COVID-19 underscored this evolution, with the pandemic having a significant impact on all aspects of health, including financial, mental and social health too. Over 60% of workers felt it is important for companies to offer health and wellbeing resources that support total wellbeing, a number that has surely increased since the pandemic began.

When ranking health and wellbeing priorities, financial stability and positive relationships ranked higher than physical activity. And while most consumers were fairly consistent in their rankings of priorities, a deeper dive revealed notable differences by demographics. For example, Midwesterners are most concerned about controlling an existing health condition, lower income workers care most about finding a higher purpose, and childless households don't feel they get enough physical activity. Surprisingly, non-married employees struggle more with managing stress levels.

## Variations in desired support

### Social Connections

Urban dwellers 60%

Suburban dwellers 42%

### Emotional Support

Married employees 68%

Unmarried employees 58%

### Financial Health Support

Workers with children at home 72%

Workers with no children at home 59%

# Help me, help myself

People want (and expect) their employer to help them achieve their personal wellbeing goals. Interestingly, almost 6 in 10 (58%) full-time working Americans feel that their direct manager supports their efforts to improve or maintain their wellbeing (e.g., time off for a doctor's appointment, encourage lunchtime yoga). Yet company-wide initiatives seem to be falling short.

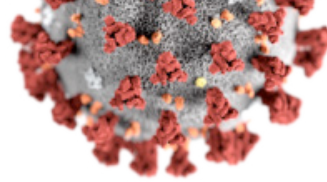
In most cases, people can't find their company's wellbeing resources, with only 16% strongly agreeing that they know where to find all the health and wellbeing resources available to them. Additionally, 56% of employees say they have received resources that are not relevant to them. Employers can overcome this by providing access to all programming in a single, easy-to-use platform that leverages machine learning and advanced analytics to personalize the experience.

As consumerism continues to make its way into healthcare, employees also want multiple ways to access resources, when and where they need

them. Nearly 70% of respondents have to some degree increased their use of technology over the past couple of years to manage or support their health (internet resources, mobile applications, monitoring/tracking devices, etc.), reinforcing the appetite for digital-based health programming. Using technology, like mobile apps, AI-powered chatbots, or text messaging can make it easy for employers to meet these consumer demands at scale, without breaking the bank.



Only  
**16%** strongly agree that they know  
where to find health and  
wellbeing resources



# Engaging employees through COVID-19

COVID-19 changed the way employees worked. Some office workers became full-time remote employees, while frontline and essential workers kept traditional schedules and adapted new guidelines to keep them safe on the job. With workers afraid, distracted and stressed, they needed employers to help them get back on track.

Because COVID-19 impacts all aspects of individual health, having a total wellbeing program proved to be an advantage. Employers with established platforms made it easy for workers to find COVID-19 related information by putting it all in one central place. Further, multi-channel communications

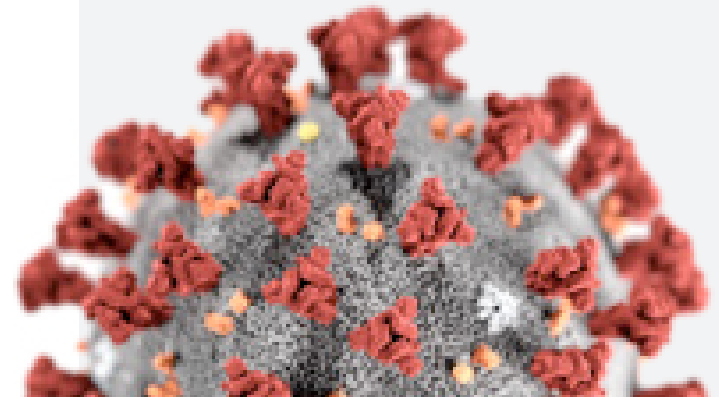
promoted engagement by using preferred communications channels to deliver messages that would stand out. Data from the first half of 2020 show that employees want and valued COVID-19 programming that addressed the multiple facets of wellbeing affected by the pandemic, with significantly high completion rates.

As the situation evolves it is expected that the need for a total wellbeing platform and wellbeing programming for all aspects of health will continue to grow.

**90%** of employers are addressing financial and economic SDOH as part of their health and wellbeing strategy<sup>2</sup>

## Sample COVID-19 Programs and Completion Rates

- 94% What you need to know about the Coronavirus
- 83% Stay healthy while working from home
- 83% Protect yourself and others
- 78% Dealing with uncertainty by meQuilibrium
- 78% What to do if you have COVID-19
- 75% How market volatility affects your retirement by Prudential



# Employee Stress: The Struggle is Real

Sixty-four percent of employees say they feel stressed at work, especially women and middle-aged workers. While not all stress is bad, long-term stress can affect an individual's health. This survey exposed that one-third of all working Americans say that work stress is negatively impacting their life and that they have seriously considered changing their work situation due to stress (35%). Millennials, the fastest

growing employee population, are the greatest flight risk - over 50% have seriously considered switching their work situation due to stress. Even though 65% of employed Americans say they believe companies should be responsible for helping their employees manage or reduce workplace stress, only 30% believe that their employer offers them tools and resources to help them reduce work stress.

## The Pandemic is Adding to the Challenge

**46%** of U.S. workers say they are struggling to maintain their mental wellbeing<sup>3</sup>

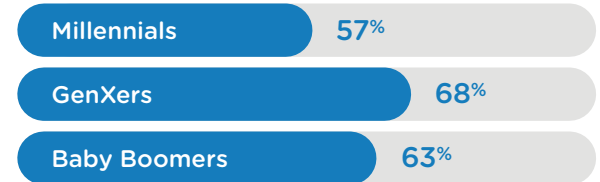
**76%** of employees are experiencing worker burnout<sup>4</sup>

## Variations in Employee Stress Levels

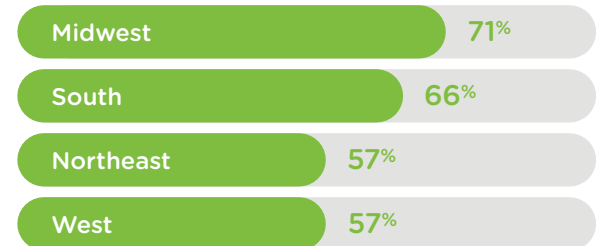
### Gender



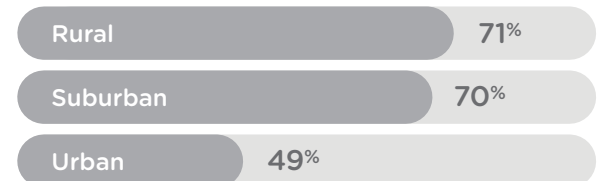
### Age



### Region



### Residential Area

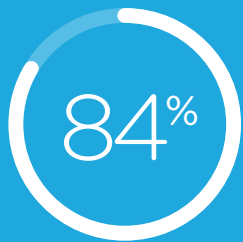


# Are you talking to me?

## The case for personalization

More than 80% of respondents believe everyone at their company is offered the same resources, regardless of individual needs and goals. Furthermore, 56% of workers have received irrelevant support, which wastes both time and money. The majority would increase participation if they received more relevant health and wellbeing programs and resources (only 8% strongly disagreed), exposing a significant opportunity to drive more engagement with a personalized approach.

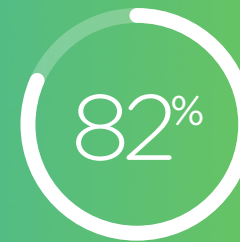
This survey confirms there are differences in the types of programs employees want and provides general direction and insights at a segment level. To be truly effective, employers need to gain deeper insights about their employees as individuals by leveraging consumer data. Consumer data can provide valuable insights into a person's social determinants of health (where a person lives or works, their education level, household composition, etc.), which largely contribute to their overall health status. Leveraging all types of data (healthcare and non-healthcare) and applying advanced analytics and machine learning better predicts who will be most receptive to what programs, and ultimately, how best to drive targeted actions. Over time, advanced analytics also provides insights about which programs are working (or not working), enabling companies to optimize their program offerings.



84% say their company offers one-size-fits-all resources



56% get irrelevant support



82% would increase participation with personalized support



# Go Beyond Engagement and Drive Actions with Purpose

Improving employee participation in wellbeing programs requires several components: understanding individual health and wellbeing goals, delivering relevant programming to support these goals, and motivating employees to take action and get rewarded.

An effective rewards program must align the right type of incentive with the targeted action. Cash rewards and insurance premium reductions are commonly used to motivate employees to complete health-related activities.

But it's not all about the money. Employees are interested in many types of incentives - extra vacation time (74%), flexible work schedule

(62%), and wellness benefits (55%) are the most popular non-traditional choices. Less attractive incentives were volunteer time, commuter benefits and lunch with company leadership.

To keep employees actively involved, companies should consider a mix of traditional awards (e.g., \$25 for a flu shot) and more creative options (e.g., extra vacation time for attending a 401k planning workshop). Additionally, rewards must also be appropriately matched to the targeted action.

## Top 10 Non-Traditional Motivators Ranked by Employees

1. Extra vacation time
2. Flexible work schedule
3. Wellness benefits (e.g. gym membership)
4. Discounts on local activities and goods
5. Raffles for large gifts (e.g., trips, iPads)
6. Sporting event tickets
7. Lottery tickets
8. Discounts on fitness equipment
9. Donate to charity of choice
10. Company gear (logo t-shirts)



# Make wellbeing work: How employers can apply these findings

This survey is a wellbeing wake-up call. Employees across the nation have spoken – fitness challenges and one-size-fits-all wellbeing programs are not what they want and need. They are seeking personalized total wellbeing support from their company to help them across all aspects of life. However, many are struggling to find available resources, and when they do, feel they are irrelevant.

Employers can improve the experience by organizing all wellbeing resources into one, easy-to-use platform. Evidence also shows that taking a more personalized approach to employee wellbeing programs benefits the bottom line, with higher employee engagement, increased productivity and reduced medical costs. This is a win-win for employees too, as they want a total wellbeing program that supports their health and improves daily living.

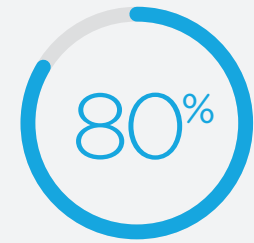


# Welltok's total wellbeing solution

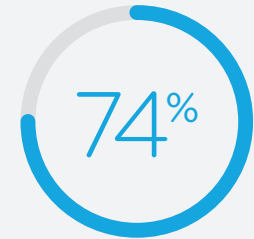
Welltok, the leading consumer activation solutions company, designed its Total Wellbeing Solution to make it easy and rewarding for employees to take control of their health, and for employers to achieve value from their wellbeing investments.

Only Welltok activates employees, while maximizing investments, by:

- Organizing resources into one seamless web/mobile experience
- Applying advanced analytics and proprietary consumer (SDOH) data to create a personalized experience for each employee
- Identifying which programs are the best investments for an employer's population,
- Helping manage the growing marketplace of wellbeing resources by curating and integrating 50+ programs featured in Welltok's Connect Partner Ecosystem
- Connecting employees with the right programs, at the right time and making it easy for employers to see actions completed
- Leveraging multi-channel communications (text, AI-powered chatbot, automated calls, direct mail and email) to drive adoption and engagement
- Creating a safe, secure and private environment that fosters trust and ensures compliance



achieve health and wellbeing goals better with platform than on their own



of Welltok users feel more loyal to their sponsor for offering a wellbeing platform

**A personalized total wellbeing program is good for your employees and your bottom line. Learn more: [activation@welltok.com](mailto:activation@welltok.com) 720.390.6331**