



# THE SCIENCE OF CARE

## Research Overview

New research from the Limeade Institute shows that organizational care is related to engagement, well-being, inclusion, intent to stay and more.

To the employee, organizational support is all about how a company expresses care — how the employer looks after and provides for the needs of employees.

In this new research, the Limeade Institute analyzed perceptions of care and what it means for the employee experience — from how it impacts stress levels to likelihood to recommend. The trends in participant responses show that **the value of care is measurable** through the better people results it's linked to.

Ultimately, this study brings the idea of care into the spotlight — the data shows that it's more than a benefit or perk, it's fundamental to an employee's trust in and connection to their organization. And it's inextricably related to the employee outcomes that ultimately drive better business results. A great employee experience depends on an organization's support every step of the way, and care is the key.



## RESEARCH DETAILS

### OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH SAMPLE

We administered a Care Survey online using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to examine employee perceptions of organizational care. After screening for participant criteria and data quality, the final sample consisted of 354 individuals. All participants were employed at least full or part time (90.1% indicated they worked more than 30 hours a week, while 9.9% indicated they worked less than 30 hours per week). 56.2% of the sample identified as men, 42.9% as women, and 0.8% identified as non-binary or a third gender.

The sample was predominantly White (65.5%), followed by American Indian or Alaska Native (18.9%) and Black or African-American (11.58%) individuals. About 2.0% identified with two or more races, while less than 1% identified as Latinx (0.14%) or Asian (0.03%). The majority of participants were aged between 25 and 35 (50.3%), followed by ages 36 to 45 (25.4%), 18 to 24 (13.0%), and 46 and up (11.0%).

63.3% of participants were individual level contributors, 31.1% were people managers, and 4.2% were directors or above. Most of the sample worked for smaller organizations with 37.3% working at an organization of 51 to 499 individuals and 26.0% working at an organization of one to 50 individuals. 20.1% worked for an organization with 500 to 4,999 individuals and 15.8% worked for an organization with 5,000 plus individuals.



## METHOD AND RESULTS

A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine care group differences on a variety of outcomes. These analyses allow us to determine if there are differences between groups (i.e., those who feel their organization cares, those who feel neutral and those who feel their organization does not care) on each variable of interest. Please see Figures 1-4 for visuals of the outcomes by the three care groups described below.

The ANOVA statistical test requires several assumptions including normality, independence and homogeneity of variances. Though our sample met the assumption of independence, the data did not demonstrate normality and Levene's tests for homogeneity of variances were violated. Based on these violations, along with the fact that the data were ordinal and that cell sizes were unequal, we used Kruskal-Wallis tests to examine differences in each variable as a function of group membership. The Kruskal-Wallis test is the non-parametric version of the one-way ANOVA when assumptions are violated.

## CARE GROUP

Participants who responded "strongly agree" or "agree" to the item, "I feel like my organization cares about me," were placed in the "does care" group, those who responded "neither disagree or agree" were placed in the "neutral" group and those who responded "strongly disagree" or "disagree" were placed in the "does not care" group. Multiple pairwise comparisons were conducted to determine where differences between groups truly lie (e.g., between those who perceive care and those who are neutral vs. those who perceive care and those who do not). See Figure 1 for a distribution of responses to this item.

## KEY FINDINGS

### INTENT TO STAY

First, we examined group differences on participants' intent to stay with their organization. The Kruskal-Wallis test was significant ( $H(2)=66.75, p<.01$ ) indicating that there are differences among care groups in their intent to stay. Follow-up pairwise comparisons indicated that those who feel their organization cares have a significantly stronger intent to stay than those who feel neutral ( $\chi^2=62.74, p<.01$ ) or that their organization does not care ( $\chi^2=113.75, p<.01$ ). These findings suggest that **when employees feel that their organizations care about them, they intend to stay at that organization for a significantly longer period of time.**



## LIKELIHOOD TO RECOMMEND

Next, groups were compared on how likely they would be to recommend their organization as a great place to work. Kruskal-Wallis results indicated significant differences existed among groups ( $H(2)=158.98, p<.01$ ) and specifically that participants who felt their organizations care were significantly more likely to recommend their organization as a great place to work than those who were neutral ( $\chi^2=-80.82, p<.01$ ) or who felt their organization does not care ( $\chi^2=-175.15, p<.01$ ). These findings suggest that **organizations who make their employees feel cared for are more likely to be recommended as a great place to work.**

## STRESS AND ENGAGEMENT

Participants were also compared on stress, engagement, well-being, burnout and inclusion. In regard to stress, significant differences did exist among groups ( $H(2)=66.75, p<.01$ ). Pairwise comparisons indicated that those who feel their organization does care were significantly less stressed than those who feel their organization does not care ( $\chi^2=87.46, p<.01$ ), but not than those who felt neutral ( $\chi^2=-27.78, p=.17$ ). Significant differences also existed between groups on engagement ( $H(2)=-84.07, p<.01$ ), where **those who felt their organization cared were significantly more engaged than those who felt their organization did not care** ( $\chi^2=-113.88, p<.01$ ). **This indicates that when employees feel their organization cares, they experience less stress and are substantially more engaged.**

## WELL-BEING AND BURNOUT

Significant differences existed between groups in well-being ( $H(2)=74.19, p<.01$ ), as well as burnout ( $H(2)=48.90, p<.01$ ). Specifically, those who felt their organization cares had significantly higher well-being ( $\chi^2=-109.65, p<.01$ ) and lower burnout ( $\chi^2=100.31, p<.01$ ) than those who felt their organization did not care. Further, those who felt their organization does care also experienced higher well-being than those who felt neutral ( $\chi^2=-52.93, p<.01$ ). **This demonstrates that when employees feel cared for by their organizations, they are not only less likely to feel burned out, but also experience higher and more positive well-being.**

## INCLUSION

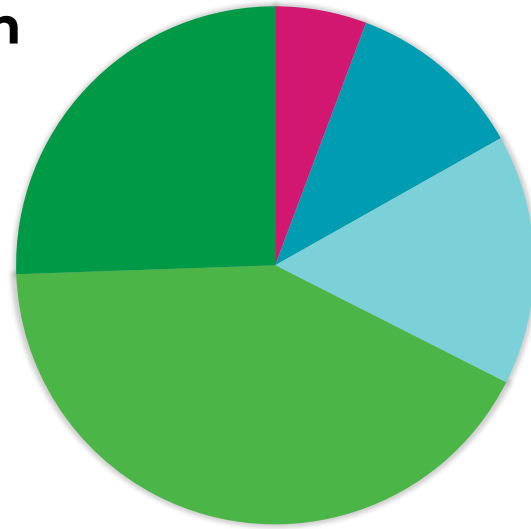
Finally, there were significant differences among groups in feeling included in their organization ( $H(2)=146.06, p<.01$ ). Those who felt their organization cares felt significantly more included than those who felt their organization does not care ( $\chi^2=-163.01, p<.01$ ) and those who felt neutral ( $\chi^2=-93.14, p<.01$ ). **This means that when organizations demonstrate care for their employees, individuals are also much more likely to feel included within their organization.**



Figure 1. Distribution of Care Item.

## I feel like my organization cares about me.

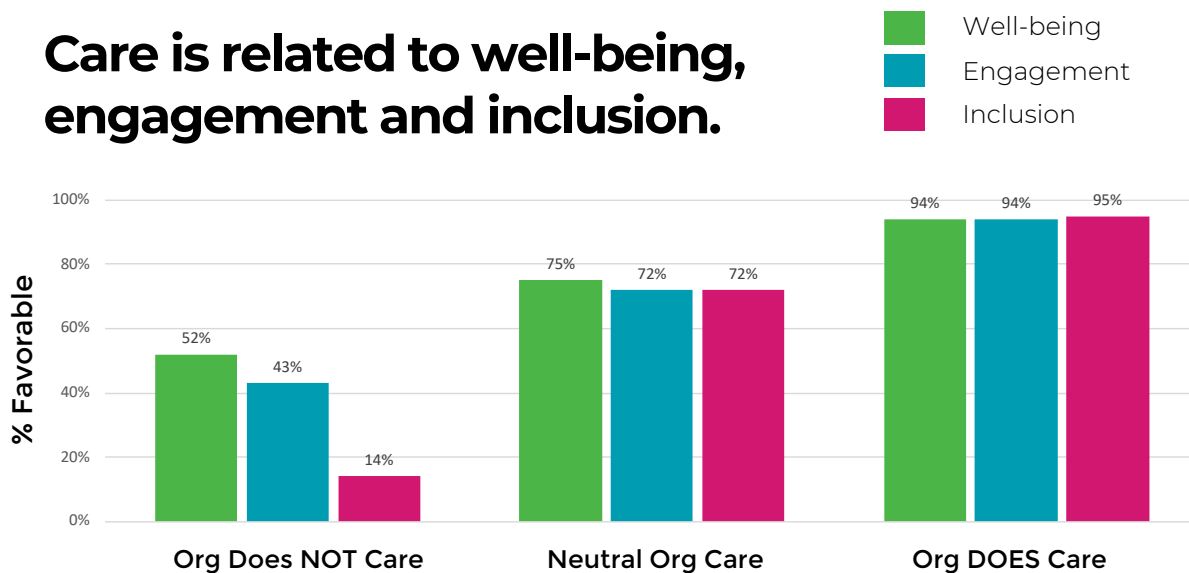
- 25% Strongly Agree
- 42% Agree
- 16% Neither Disagree or Agree
- 11% Disagree
- 6% Strongly Disagree



Limeade Institute, 2019, n=354

Figure 2. Well-being, Engagement, and Inclusion by Care Group.

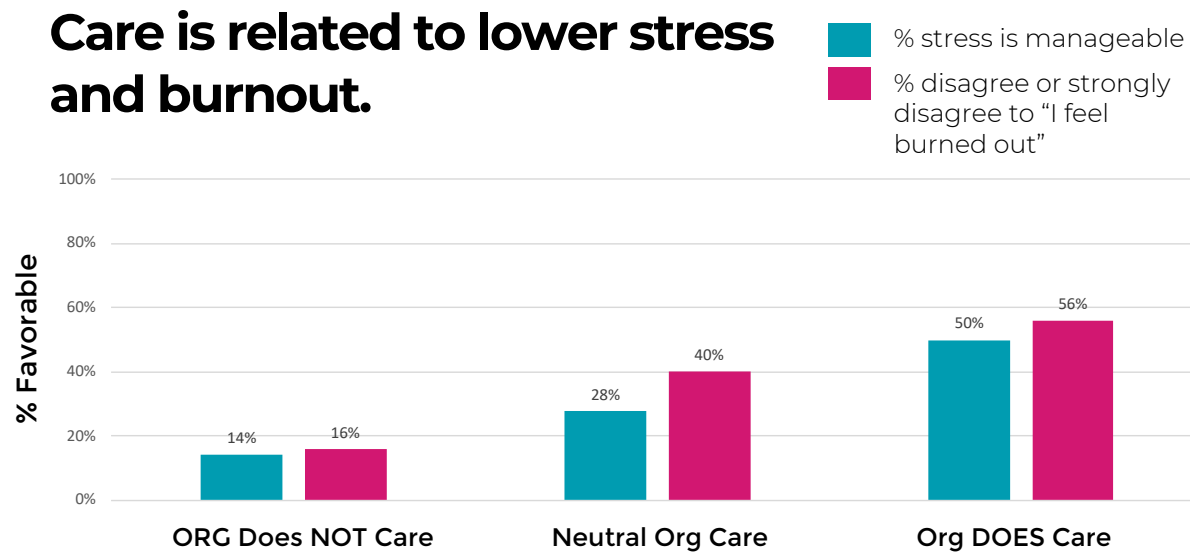
## Care is related to well-being, engagement and inclusion.



Limeade Institute, 2019, n=354

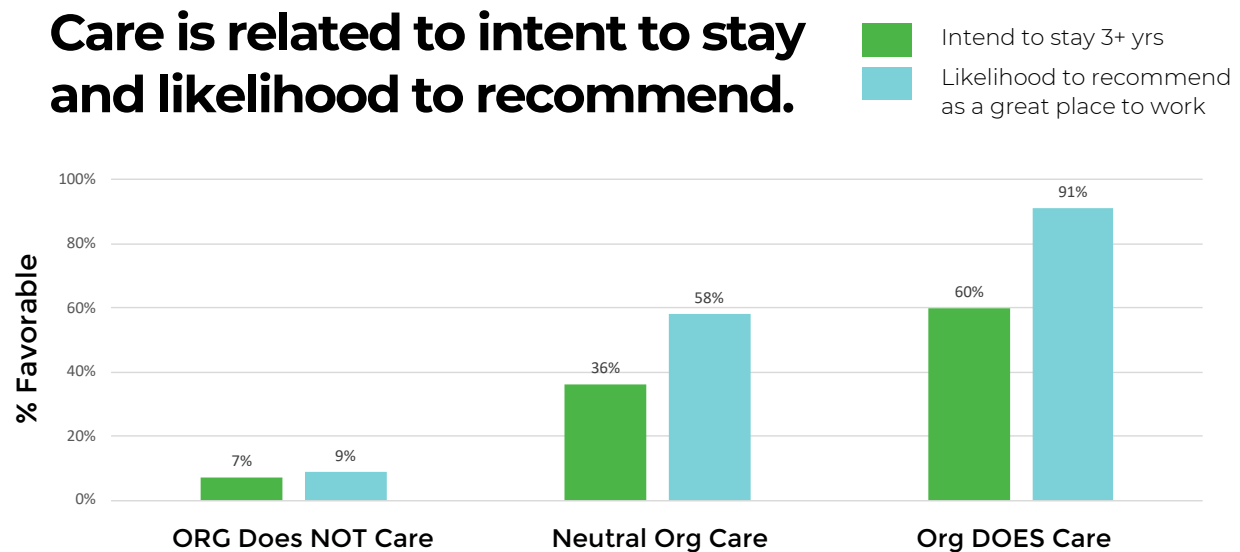


Figure 3. Stress and Burnout by Care Group.



Limeade Institute, 2019, n=354

Figure 4. Intent to Stay and Likelihood to Recommend by Care Group.



Limeade Institute, 2019, n=354