



# Busting Well-Being Myths in the Workplace

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## The State of Well-Being in the Workplace

*The pandemic has given us time to think – perhaps even too much time.*

As we assess what's truly important, it's time we reconsider our relationship with work. Amid new and complex challenges like 77% of employees fearing exposure to COVID-19 upon returning to the office – in addition to an escalating mental health crisis, increased burnout and a general lack of trust – employee well-being has been thrust into the spotlight like never before. While extreme unpredictability and the need for damage control made it difficult for organizations to adopt a well-being program during the first half of the year, we're finally starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel – and it shines bright with possibility for the future of work.

The journey to infusing well-being into the workplace begins with understanding what employee well-being is – and what it is not. We're conditioned to believe that well-being is merely a physical goal that's not only best achieved alone, but also has equitable access for all. However, this definition undercuts the significance of whole-person well-being, which includes factors of physical, emotional, financial and work well-being that contribute to feeling good and living with purpose. Adopting a program that supports whole-person well-being shows a true commitment to employee care.

At Limeade we believe that employee well-being programs can no longer be adjacent and siloed – nor can they be focused solely on health and wellness. Instead, employee well-being should be infused into the whole company, becoming a part of how employees experience work every day.

We've been proving the value of meaningful well-being innovations since 2006. Our research shows that employees who report a high sense of well-being are 38% more likely to feel engaged at work. For some of our customers, this means a 4x increase in global monthly active users by switching to Limeade.

This guide debunks major myths of well-being in the modern workplace and includes insights to help employees feel good and live with purpose.

# Supporting Employees in the Modern Workforce

Amid the rise of the Great Resignation — a trend predicting that upward of 40% of workers will leave their current employer this year — one thing has become abundantly clear: Employees are now calling the shots. As society — and the job market — gains traction, employers are left with two options: Prioritize whole-person well-being for employees or get used to seeing your job requisitions multiply.

The most effective way to prevent your employees from following suit is infusing well-being into work with a program that meets the needs of modern employees. Limeade Well-Being helps you address today's biggest concerns among employees: physical work environment, burnout, mental health and building trust by **inspiring participation with actionable communication**.

## All-in-one solution

Collect and share benefits and initiatives supporting employee well-being all in one place with Limeade Well-Being. Our powerful, built-in communications functionality is designed to increase awareness and utilization with self-service communications and notifications for all employees.

## Adapt to Remote and Hybrid Work Models

At the height of the pandemic, the full-time remote workforce reached 44% in the U.S. — up from 17% before COVID-19. Many employers are now chomping at the bit to get back into office, but they're being met with overwhelming resistance from anxious employees.

A new Limeade Institute study revealed that 100% of formerly on-site employees surveyed are stressed about going back to the workplace, citing COVID-19 exposure (77%), less flexibility (71%) and commuting to work (68%) as the main reasons.

The introduction of the hybrid work model — working remotely and in the office — allows employees to maintain schedule flexibility while also getting hours in the office each week. To ensure hybrid work is effective, it's important to **prioritize communication, safety and well-being to strengthen community and build culture**.

## Return to office stressors

**77%** OF EMPLOYEES fear exposure to COVID-19

**71%** OF EMPLOYEES believe they'll lose work schedule flexibility

**68%** OF EMPLOYEES dread the thought of having to commute to work

## Address Burnout

It's reasonable to assume that working remotely for the past year and half means employees are well rested. After all, Americans have shaved an average of 27.1 minutes off their day by skipping the commute.

The reality is that workdays have actually gotten longer. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, remote work is adding an average of 48.5 minutes to each workday, which equates to an extra 4.04 hours per week — or more than two full workdays per month.

The longer workdays have greatly contributed to burnout remaining high at 35%. While overall burnout appears to be trending downward (down from 42% in October 2020), 60% of employees still say their organization doesn't address burnout. **Utilizing insights to assess burnout risk helps managers identify when employees need time to recover, which improves morale, builds trust and drives productivity.**

## Normalize Mental Health in the Workplace

The profound impact stress and burnout have on the employee experience may seem blaringly obvious, but does everyone see it? According to [Forrester](#), 96% of CEOs say they're adequately addressing employee mental health, but only 69% of employees felt the same way.

This same disconnect was evident when it came to actions and policies. While 94% of corporate leaders said their employees' mental health was important to them, only 31% had assessed the value of their well-being benefits in the last year. Further, 57% identified mental health as a priority, but only 14% discuss it openly.

When coupled with assessing burnout risk, normalizing discussion around mental health and well-being means that **employees have a better chance of getting the organizational support they need before reaching a crisis point.**

## Trust Your Employees

Despite the general belief that working remotely exposes employees to more distractions, a [Limeade Institute global study](#) revealed that 81% of employees reported that their productivity remained the same or increased while working remotely. And only 54% felt they had a sufficient physical workspace to help them thrive whether they worked on-site or remotely.

These findings suggest that there's an opportunity for organizations to rethink how they support employee well-being. At the core is the need for **building two-way trust and communication between organizations and their employees**, which means working together toward the best employee experience.



## Perpetuating Well-Being Myths in the Workplace

Traditional wellness in the workplace has failed. By leveraging biometric scores, weight loss goals and step counts to determine employee well-being, employers can reduce healthcare costs. However, these one-dimensional health determinants don't tell the story of the whole person.

The path to well-being is often obstructed by misinformation. Whether it's believing that well-being is solely about physical health, equally available to everyone or a solitary pursuit, many employers perpetuate these untruths because they have yet to discover what's at the heart of the well-being: well-being influencers.

Well-being influencers impact whole-person well-being through factors such as behavior, attitude or emotion, as well as more inherent factors like genetics, underlying health conditions, personality and socioeconomic status. **Organizational care and support play key roles in helping employees strengthen well-being influencers, which promote better work well-being.**

Let's explore the myths that perpetuate false narratives of well-being in the modern workplace. You'll also discover how to bring truth to the employee experience with Limeade Well-Being.



# Myth #1: Well-Being is All About Physical Health

*Stepping up your health is more than a simple physical activity. Despite being a key indicator of well-being, physical fitness doesn't go the distance for whole-person well-being.*

## So, what's the truth?



### Well-being is about more than physical health.

Running is a great way to keep emotional stress at bay, but you can't outrun it forever. Physical health influences emotional well-being, quality of life and life satisfaction — and they in turn influence physical health. In other words, physical health is only one element of whole-person well-being.



### Well-being is continuous.

Well-being isn't a sprint, it's a marathon. It requires acting with awareness and intention to gradually improve the whole person throughout life.



### Well-being isn't easy to see in people.

When it comes to well-being, there's often more than meets the eye. For example, individuals with greater sense of purpose may have higher levels of optimism, which partially contributes to increased sense of well-being.



### Well-being isn't the same as work-life balance.

It's possible to have good work-life balance and be misaligned with well-being, and vice versa. Though the two intersect, they're not reliant on each other. Organizations with caring cultures are more likely to allow employees to experience both with positivity.



**Did you know?** How you feel at home and work are more connected than you think:

**47% OF EMPLOYEES**

say problems in their personal lives affect their performance at work. (Bensinger et al, 2013)



**Tip for success:** Drive inspiration and accountability across your organization by equipping your managers and leaders with actionable tools to make company support real for every employee.

## Real Talk: A science-based approach that delivers results

Taking an expansive approach to well-being covers all the advantages and challenges of the modern workforce — like inclusion, burnout, turnover and mental and financial health. Science shows that real impact happens when peers, managers and leaders show up for each other in meaningful ways. **With Limeade Well-Being, you can customize your well-being program to meet the unique challenges of your organization with expert guidance from purpose-driven people.**



## Myth #2: Everybody Has the Same Opportunity for Well-Being

Many organizations believe that well-being is a level playing field for all employees, but it's a game changer when social determinants and identity come into play.

### So, what's the truth?



#### Well-being can impact objective data.

A [recent study](#) demonstrated that stress from high job demands can lead to poor physical and mental health, which can indicate mortality 20 years later. Despite being considered a “soft” metric that measures qualitative values, well-being can play a significant role in predicting outcomes for “hard” metrics.



#### Well-being isn't a level playing field.

Just because you're on the same team doesn't mean you have the same experiences at work — or in life. A person's relationship to influencers that determine whole-person well-being — such as organizational care and support, physical activity, mindsets, financial literacy and social support and relationships — are largely based on social determinants of health. This means that people exposed to potentially uncontrollable factors like genetics,

underlying health conditions, personality issues and socioeconomic status may be less likely to report having good physical well-being — and they may also have increased vulnerability to mental health problems.



**Did you know?** Socioeconomic status can create a well-being domino effect:

#### 37% OF HR PROFESSIONALS

agree employees miss work due to financial emergencies. (SHRM, 2014)



**Tip for success:** Increase awareness and utilization of your well-being program by using built-in communications functionality to identify employee groups that will benefit from self-service communications and notifications.

### Real Talk: *Inspire participation with actionable communication*

Social determinants and identity impact physical and emotional well-being — and they have widespread influence over all facets of individual well-being. Having the ability to collect and share all your benefits and initiatives supporting employee well-being in one place makes it easier to provide organizational care and support for all employees. **Limeade Well-Being offers all-in-one modern communication of program information and resources that make it easy for your employees to create connections that strengthen community and build culture.**



## Myth #3: Well-Being is Up to Me, and Me Alone

*Sitting on a yoga mat may help you achieve inner peace, but it won't give you the connection you need to thrive at work. There's merit to achieving goals in solitude, but well-being doesn't have to be one of them.*

### So, what's the truth?



#### Well-being isn't a solitary pursuit.

Walking the tightrope may feel like a solo act, but you still need people to hold the net below. There are several factors that influence well-being such as social, environmental and organizational health. These influencers help individuals develop mindsets that generate energy and expand our capacity to improve overall experiences and quality of life.



#### Work well-being is for everyone.

Work well-being isn't a perk that's only available to on-site workers, nor it is only for elites or those who can afford luxuries. Work well-being not only influences emotional, physical and financial well-being, but it also helps employees feel connected to their organization.



#### Organizations should make a concerted effort to positively impact employee well-being.

Employers have a vested interest in seeing their employees thrive. An organization that authentically invests in, commits to and supports employees at all levels of the organization will help employees increase job satisfaction, life satisfaction, well-being and feelings of inclusion.



**Did you know?** Taking on the world by yourself can literally make you sick:

#### STRESS CONTRIBUTES TO 50% OF ALL ILLNESS

in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000)



**Tip for success:** Discover meaningful ways to show care for your people by leveraging actionable data and insights to calculate risks for turnover and burnout.

### Real Talk: *Connect everyone with a truly global offering*

Well-being is an ongoing process influenced by what and who surrounds you – including your organization. Your organization and leaders play critical roles in establishing the type of culture you want employees to experience. **Limeade Well-Being makes it easy to deliver a modern experience that flows across devices and languages with professionally translated and localized activities and updates so everyone can get involved.**

# What You Can Do to Support Employee Well-Being

This year has been full of surprises — and high among them is the amazing resilience employees have displayed amid multiple less-than-ideal work situations. To ensure your employees can help you lead the way going forward, you'll need to support their well-being with a program that shows real care.

Understanding how your relationship with work has changed gives you the ability to begin moving beyond the myths of workplace well-being — and it all begins with prioritizing whole-person well-being. The employee experience is a powerful way to influence whole-person well-being, and it helps employees have better control over the social determinants of health they can control. The factors influencing well-being have varying degrees of overlap, and an improved employee experience rooted in care and support will likely have a trickle-down influence on other parts of an individual's life, which will in turn create a positive feedback loop that promotes better work well-being.

**Infuse well-being into work with a customized experience that inspires participation, drives utilization and enables your managers and leaders to support whole-person well-being.**

Limeade Well-Being helps you transform work into a source of positivity, energy, humanity and purpose that lets employees know you care. **Learn more about [Limeade Well-Being](#) today.**





# Limeade is an immersive employee well-being company that creates healthy employee experiences.

Limeade Institute science guides its industry-leading software and its own award-winning culture. Today, millions of users in over 100 countries use Limeade solutions to navigate the future of work.

By putting well-being at the heart of the employee experience, Limeade reduces burnout and turnover while increasing well-being and engagement – ultimately elevating business performance.

To learn more, visit [www.limeade.com](http://www.limeade.com). (ASX Listing: LME)



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