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Employee Wellness – Importance and Impact on Employee Efficiency

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ABSTRACT

Employee wellbeing is defined as the overall mental, physical, [emotional](#), and economic health of your employees. It's influenced by various factors such as their relationships with co-workers, the decisions they make, and the tools and resources they have access to. Hours, pay, and workplace safety also have a significant impact on employee wellbeing. The overall paper is based on qualitative data where in an attempt has been made to review the importance, factors impacting, benefits available to the organization and practices adopted by the management to improve employee wellness.

From the findings and conclusion, will show higher impact on employees increased productivity, better customer retention, boosts employee talent and reducing attrition of an organization.

Introduction

In any organization, human resources (employees, contract workers) are the most critical factor that decides success or failure of any business. Efficiency of an employee/worker directly impacts productivity and profitability of any business. In today's scenario every business organization has a dedicated team in the human resource department to review the employee wellness system in the organization. The businesses dedicate resources for review, analysis and updation of employee wellness function. In addition to their own HRD inputs companies hire external consultant to carry out this review to the management so that un-biased report and analysis is available to the management for decision making.

While it will vary from person to person, employee wellbeing should average out to a level that allows for a productive and healthy workplace. Outside factors contribute to employee wellbeing too. Stress around issues such as housing, health, and family all play a role in performance at work. However, employers can acknowledge they have no control over what takes place after hours while still taking responsibility for what they can do for their employees.

Review of Literature

For the study purpose inputs available on the various websites, academic research paper published on the various websites and management textbook available have been referred also verbal guidance from HRD Department of some companies have been incorporated.

Objectives of Study -

1. To understand and explain the concept of employee wellness and its importance
2. To determine Factors impacting employee wellness
3. To understand Benefits of employee wellness
4. To eradicate Steps to improve employee wellness

Research Methodology

As mentioned above, the literature and inputs available have been studied and grouped into relevant heading/group in a chronological manner for a synchronized and structured report on this subject. The input data is from academic textbooks, research papers and publications available on various websites. This study is mainly based on theoretical data. Statistical MIS or numerical data is not used. This study is supported by verbal/telephonic inputs from HRD department of some companies in Nagpur region.

Importance of Employee wellness:

With recent COVID-19 outbreak, many employers noticed the impact employee wellbeing has on their performance, and consequently on the business results. Employees were distressed and worried, and employers had to find ways to accommodate the rising needs for empathy towards their employees.

More specifically, psychologists have warned that quarantine can spark increase in diseases such as depression or even PTSD. Therefore, many employers started carefully preparing their [plans for return to work after COVID-19](#).

However, employee wellbeing was an increasingly popular topic even before COVID-19. Take a look at why employee wellbeing is more important now than ever before.

1. Reduced absenteeism and healthcare costs

Companies started realizing that preventing issues related to poor employee wellbeing such as burnout, stress or sickness was more profitable than reacting to all these issues when they already happened.

More specifically, the employees' sedentary lifestyle increases possibilities of diabetes, high blood pressure and other diseases. Moreover, [employees who say they often or always experience burnout at work](#) are 63% more likely to take sick days. That means that employee wellbeing is directly related with absenteeism and its cost for employers.

Because of their many benefits, companies started implementing wellness programs. They can vary in scope and focus, but employee wellbeing programs have proved to be cost-effective for employers.

2. Increased employee engagement

According to research, 85% of companies say wellness programs support [employee engagement](#). When an employee wellbeing program is implemented, employees feel more connected, their health is elevated, and consequently their happiness is increased.

All these factors contribute to [higher employee engagement levels](#). However, employee engagement is [influenced by employee recognition](#) and [good feedback practices](#) too. Make sure you approach employee engagement holistically when trying to enhance it in your company.

3. Improved employee productivity

On one hand, research shows that smokers are twice as likely to take time off work, and workers with obesity take three to six sick days more than those of normal weight annually. On the other hand, employees that handle stress better are less likely to experience burnout. Overall, when employee wellbeing is optimized, employees are more focused on their work and their productivity increases.

4. Improved employee morale

During COVID-19 crisis, we have seen how important it is to keep employee morale afloat. By introducing employee wellbeing initiatives such as mental health workshops or a fitness competition among departments or teams, you can significantly improve your employees' morale.

5. Attractive employer branding

[78% of employers offer wellness programs to attract and retain talent](#). The fight for the best talent on the market is very competitive, and high-quality candidates have several options to choose from when picking their next employer. Providing employee wellbeing benefits that are in line with your future workforce are very important if you want to attract the best candidates that will ensure your company's business success.

6. Improved Work-life Balance

Work life balance is a method which helps employees of an organization to balance their personal and professional lives. Work life balance encourages employees to divide their time on the basis on priorities and maintain a balance by devoting time to family, health, vacations etc. along with making a career, business travel etc. It is an important concept in the world of business as it helps to motivate the employees and increases their loyalty towards the company.

Impact on employee wellness:

1. Recognizing your employees' work

When their hard work, dedication and teamwork are appreciated, your [employees' feel more fulfilled and satisfied in their jobs](#). In addition, employee recognition positively affects productivity and creates a culture of appreciation. Overall, [employee recognition has a power to inspire your employees](#) and make them realize what a crucial part of your company they are.

2. Facilitating seamless communication

[After COVID-19 pandemic](#), we are facing more disruption in work than ever. Remote work is here to stay, albeit in less invasive form than during the most critical pandemic period. In many companies, employee wellbeing was endangered during crisis but was mitigated by proper and timely communication.

Therefore, [allow your internal communication to run smoothly](#) and ensure your employees read the content that they are meant to. Furthermore, remote work employees' biggest struggle is lack of communication and collaboration. By facilitating seamless communication between your employees, you can alleviate one of the main sources of work-related stress.

3. Enabling easy collaboration

Collaborating on projects in large teams can be a source of stress for many employees. It can get frustrating and become tiresome if employees cannot track each other's work or assess their contribution to a larger project scheme.

Teamwork can be stressful – but it is inevitable part of work process. By enabling easy collaboration, you can optimize your employees' wellbeing and decrease their stress levels.

4. Listening to your employees

Your employees want to be listened to! When your employees have grievances that are not addressed, they start feeling like their opinion does not matter. Moreover, listening to your employees and acting upon their recommendations can make them feel like a valued member of your community. It makes your employees' work more meaningful and therefore increases employee wellbeing.

5. Giving regular and timely feedback

[Receiving regular feedback](#) makes 68% of employees more satisfied with their jobs. When you give feedback to your employees continuously, they feel like their growth matters. In addition, your employees can find out how to work better, which allows them to advance their skills and continue learning. The feeling of satisfaction and happiness in a career is crucial for employee wellbeing.

6. Showing empathy

There are no specific instructions on how to show empathy in the workplace – but there is an overwhelming need to make workplaces more human. The shift to workplaces that put their employees first and create communities instead of employees and customers has already started.

Showing empathy and having compassion for your employees' issues will create an emotional bond between you and your employees humanize your workplace and make it a better place for everybody to work at.

Factors Affecting emotional well-being

Here are some factors in the workplace that are associated with the workforce's mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

1. Clean Environment

Employees like to work in a clean space where they can be more productive and efficient. Nobody wants to start their days by seeing cluttered workstations, leftovers, or wasted papers in the workplace. You should make sure that you give your employees a clean surrounding where their mind does not get distracted. This will help keep illnesses at bay and make them more productive, thereby benefiting you.

You can hire cleaning staff to keep your office space and the toilets clean. Additionally, you can also seek the services of pest control companies every two months.

The outer part of the office is as vital as the desks. Employees should feel relaxed whenever they take a break and sit with their colleagues. It should not be unpleasant for the employees to spend time in the surroundings. Hence, it is also essential to keep the outdoors clean. If you have a garden or lawn on your property, you should contact [lawn landscaping services](#) according to your needs and seal a deal for regular maintenance.

2. Financial Security

Today, with increasing competition, opportunities have become very limited. It is natural for employees to be insecure about their job. This may harm their mind and health. Lack of job assurance for the long term may lead to hypertension, anxiety, stress, etc.

Your prime responsibility is to ensure your employees' financial security to keep them focused and mentally fit. You can also have a policy in place to timely monitor the employees' financial stability.

3. Justice at the Workplace

One of the reasons employees' do not love their workplace is not getting equal treatment as others. Some employees are extremely good at their jobs, while others struggle at some points. This leads to unfair treatment and fewer opportunities for struggling employees, which affects their mental peace. Similarly, there can be many more ways of injustice like not getting the credit for the work, lower salary, etc.

The employer has to encourage building rather than harming the employees' self-esteem. Employees must get equal opportunities and fair treatment. This practice can be done by developing programs that promote fairness and justice at work.

4. Health Insurance

With many flashy types of benefits such as gym memberships, it can be easy to leave behind the more common benefits like health insurance. Many employers provide the benefits, and employees do not question it. But the pandemic made people realize the importance of medical benefits.

Offering health insurance as a benefit can be one of the simplest yet effective steps you can take for your employee. Offering [health benefits](#) to employees can increase productivity, boost morale, and shape positive company culture.

5. Micro-managing

Some authorities of the companies have a habit of [micromanaging](#) the employees' work. That may be due to various reasons such as past performance, delays in delivering work, etc. This behavior of the company does not let the employee grow as an individual. Even if they improve, micromanaging can lead to lower self-confidence. This can make the employees feel the company does not trust them.

The sense of not being trusted or essential for the company can increase blood pressure, depression, and lack of interest in work. Hence, as an employer, you should keep an eye on this and trust the employees with their work.

6. Overtime

Working more than the fixed working hours can lower the productivity of the employee. Long work hours are also associated with health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and others. Your employees might not say no to overtime because of the additional incentives, but it can lead to health challenges.

Moreover, spending more time on work and less on personal life can result in an inactive lifestyle. Hence, you should encourage employees to come to and leave the office on time or once the work is done. It will allow them to enjoy time with their family and friends. Asking for overtime once in a while to meet deadlines is okay, but it should not become a habit.

Every employer must carefully consider the points that make their employees love their work and workplace. They should not feel down or useless while they are in the office. Ensuring better health and well-being will help them stay focused on work and like their office.

Improvements

Research has shown costs spent on wellness initiatives save businesses money in the long run – making it a smart investment. Without further ado, here's what to do to assist your staff in being happier and healthier, enabling them to perform better at work too.

1. Carry out regular surveys

Conduct regular [surveys on the workplace culture](#), which will enable you to identify any areas for improvement regarding employee's wellbeing at work. You can even ask questions about what would help employees be more productive and how they feel about their current wellness at work.

2. Eliminate workplace stressors

Identify the most common stressors faced by your employees and see if interventions could be made at work, such as changes in break times and providing new equipment that could mitigate these stressors.

3. Provide safety training

Take into consideration the physical risks that employees are exposed to at work. This could include providing regular training for your workforce on how to handle accidents or hazardous situations as well as rehabilitation services if they are injured at work.

4. Provide health and wellness facilities

Create a space where employees can learn and exchange information about health-related issues, such as fitness trends and healthy eating tips. You may also consider having a workplace gym and lounge area for employees to exercise after work hours or rest during break time.

5. Provide snacks and drinking water

Provide wellbeing resources such as healthy snacks and drinking water at the workplace. This can really help employees get some energy when they are taking a break from work.

6. Encourage breaks

Encourage employees to take breaks throughout the day, such as a short walk around the block or taking a quick snack break in their cubicle. This is to help them relax and recharge their batteries so that they can be more productive in their work.

7. Be mindful of ergonomics in workstations

Create a more comfortable working environment by adding ergonomic furniture and standing desks, which will encourage workers to be more productive throughout the day as they would feel less tired.

8. Conduct psychological assessments

Conduct psychological assessments among your staff to determine their mental wellbeing. Be ready to handle any situations that may arise from this assessment, such as referring them for counseling or helping them cope with emotional issues so that they can better perform in their jobs.

9. Offer a flexible work schedule

Offer flexible work schedules where possible so they can complete tasks at a more convenient and easier time for them and show consideration to their personal commitments or family matters. Allow employees time for medical appointments to help employees achieve a healthier life style in their personal time.

10. Help everyone connect with their colleagues and supervisors

Provide regular team-building activities for staff to participate in so they can bond with their colleagues and boost their morale. This will also help them feel more valued by the organization.

Promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging participation in company sports teams, social events, or even simple activities like outside-the-office meetings to promote a healthier lifestyle.

Bonus tip: Keep an eye on your employees' workloads

Make sure your employees don't bite more than they can chew on a day-to-day basis. Good [resource management software](#) can help you keep track of everyone's workload and prevent burnout before it creeps in.

In summary, the importance of workplace wellbeing should never be underestimated by company managers as it directly impacts the workforce's productivity. By creating a workplace where employees are encouraged to take charge of their own health and provided regular opportunities for growth, you will be able to improve employees' mental state at work and increase staff commitment. This benefits both the organization and its workers.

Finding, Conclusion and Recommendations

In business terms, securing [employee wellbeing can translate to:](#)

1. **More productivity:**

Employee wellbeing boosts productivity and performance. When feeling well, employees display healthier behaviors and better decision-making.

2. **Higher employee morale:**

Employees feel more competent and valued when their needs are met at all levels, including physical, mental, and financial.

3. **Better talent:**

When your company has a good reputation in the market as an employer who respects and supports work-life balance, you're more likely to attract skilled candidates and retain your existing employees for longer periods.

4. **Improved CRM:**

Happy employees are your best brand ambassadors. If you treat them well, that positive energy will pass on to your customers. Those employees will be motivated to understand how your products and services will best serve customer needs.

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