

The State of Employee Well-being 2022



Improve employee
well-being
through effective
initiatives



JUNE 2022

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Executive Summary

You want a high level of well-being for yourself and your loved ones. We all do. Most of today's employers recognize this and want to help their workers enhance their well-being, but that goal can be challenging to achieve.

Well-being is, after all, a complex phenomenon. One definition says, "Well-being is the experience of health, happiness, and prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and ability to manage stress."¹

Many of today's well-being initiatives originated with wellness programs, but they tend to be more encompassing than those original programs. Gallup reports that wellness describes "a healthy lifestyle beyond acute illness" whereas well-being "encompasses the broader holistic dimensions of a well-lived life."²

In short, well-being is multidimensional. That's why, for the purpose of this study, we consider five different dimensions of well-being:

- physical
- mental
- financial
- social
- work environmental

Although many of today's wellness and well-being concepts arose over the last half-century, the Covid-19 pandemic brought about a dramatic shift in the ways organizations view and address well-being related issues. For example, today's well-being paradigms are more likely to incorporate the concepts of remote work, hybrid work, virtual healthcare, mental wellness and more. Organizations tend to be more alert, responsive, and empathetic to the well-being requirements of the employees.

About the Survey

The survey, called, "The State of Employee Health and Well-being 2022," ran in the first quarter of 2022. There were responses from 246 participants with 185 responding to every question.

The participants represent a broad cross-section of employers by industry and also number of employees, ranging from small businesses with under 50 employees to enterprises with 20,000 or more employees.

¹ Davis, T. (2019, January 2). What Is Well-Being? Definition, Types, and Well-Being Skills. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/click-here-happiness/201901/what-is-well-being-definition-types-and-well-being-skills>

² Pendell, R. (2021, March 22). Wellness vs. Wellbeing: What's the Difference? *Gallup*. Retrieved from <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/340202/wellness-wellbeing-difference.aspx>

Here is an overview of key findings from our study:

Major Finding 1

The vast majority say their organizations are still dealing with well-being challenges related to the pandemic.

- Since the pandemic began, mask policies (74%) and remote work (72%) are the initiatives most commonly used to better secure employee well-being in the work environment.
- However, nearly all (92%) say their organization encounters at least one challenge still associated with the pandemic, and most cite more than one.
- The top work-related well-being challenges still associated with the pandemic are:
 - ▶ dealing with uncertainty (45%)
 - ▶ reducing employee fears (42%)
 - ▶ maintaining virtual work relationships (42%)
- A further 39% point to the challenge of keeping the workplace safe for returning employees, and 35% say that assessing the need for a hybrid workforce is a concern.

Major Finding 2

Most organizations have specific initiatives to enhance all types of employee well-being, with mental/emotional well-being the most commonly mentioned.

- Respondents say their organization strives to enhance these areas of employee well-being via specific initiatives:
 - ▶ mental/emotional well-being (78%)
 - ▶ work environment well-being (70%)
 - ▶ physical well-being (66%)
 - ▶ financial well-being (56%)
 - ▶ social well-being (48%)

Major Finding 3

Few HR professionals say the well-being programs in their organizations are highly effective, but most say they are at least moderately effective.

- Just 22% say the programs that promote employee well-being are effective to a high or very high degree.
- Another 44%, however, say their programs are effective to a moderate degree.
- Among those that do not feel their programs are effective, 34% say their well-being programs are lackluster and/or that they do not have enough well-being programs.

Major Finding 4

Today, most organizations report that mental/emotional health is a high priority, and stress is the issue that employees are most commonly coping with.

- Fifty-seven percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that mental health is among the top five HR priorities in their organization.
- The most widely-cited mental-health-related issues employees have coped with over the last year are:
 - ▶ stress (88%)
 - ▶ anxiety (77%)
 - ▶ uncertainty (70%)
 - ▶ depression (69%)
- Further, 61% of HR professionals agree that negative stress is prevalent in their organization.

Major Finding 5

Respondents say employees are also dealing with financial stress.

- One-third (34%) say that financial stress is one of the most common employee stressors.
- The greatest sources of financial stress are:
 - ▶ unexpected emergency expenses (46%)
 - ▶ saving for retirement (44%)
 - ▶ childcare expenses (41%)
 - ▶ running out of money before payday (38%)

Major Finding 6

Enhancing employees' physical well-being and mental health occurs via multiple initiatives.

- The top ways organizations handle employee mental health are through:
 - ▶ providing Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services (73%)
 - ▶ offering flexible work arrangements (57%)
- Organizations are most likely to have the following in place to promote physical well-being:
 - ▶ healthcare benefits (80%)
 - ▶ telemedicine/virtual healthcare (50%)

Major Finding 7

Well-being initiatives can lead to organizational improvements in a variety of ways.

- Greater employee engagement is the top outcome of employee well-being initiatives.
- Respondents also say employee well-being initiatives can lead to:
 - ▶ improved employee experience
 - ▶ improved employee performance
 - ▶ increased attraction for new or potential employees

Major Finding 8

Organizations that are more successful in implementing well-being programs are more likely to:

- successfully maintain employees' well-being
- be more confident that employees who work from home operate in a safe work environment that meets the standards of occupational safety and health laws
- offer financial education initiatives to employees
- successfully address employee stress issues
- strive to enhance all areas of employee well-being
- provide formal manager training around mental health issues

Today's Well-being Challenges

Challenges Tied to the Pandemic



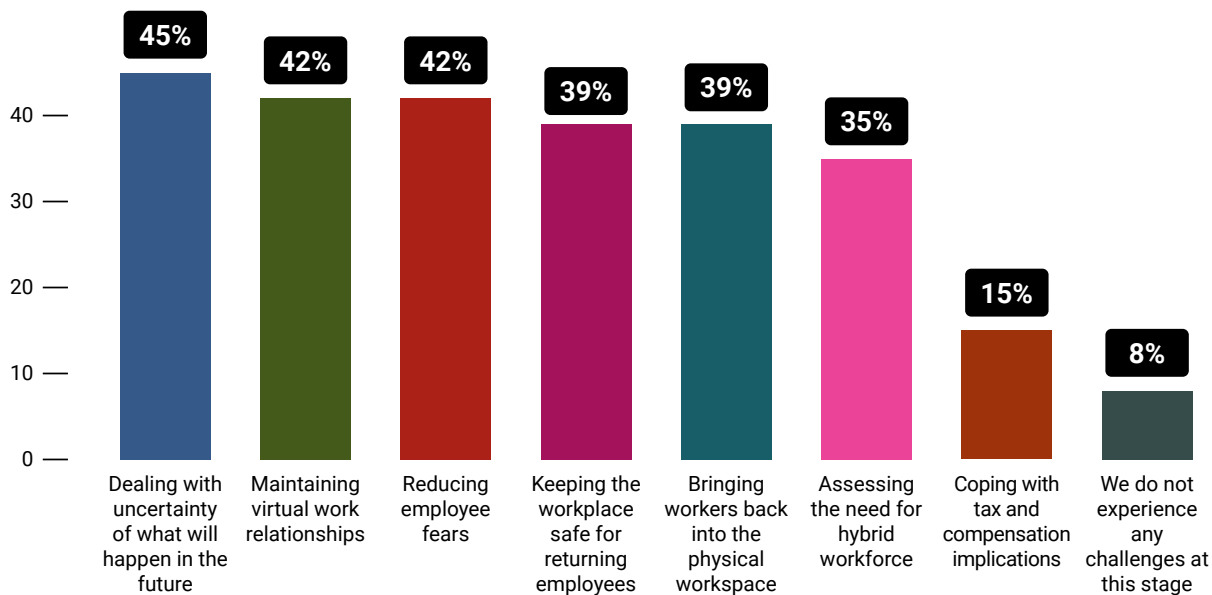
Finding: The vast majority still see work-related challenges associated with the pandemic

Fully 92% indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic continues to represent workplace challenges. While everyone hopes that the brunt of it is in the past, various issues remain. When asked about the work-related well-being challenges still associated with Covid-19, 45% say that dealing with uncertainty is the biggest challenge, followed closely by reducing employee fears (42%).

Many employees began working from home in 2020 and 2021 and employers learned that fostering genuine relationships with coworkers can be a struggle. Indeed, 42% say maintaining virtual work relationships is a challenge still associated with the pandemic.

Some have been reluctant to return to in-office work. About two-fifths of HR professionals (39%) say that both bringing workers back into the workspace and also keeping the workplace safe for returning workers remain challenging. Just over a third (35%) say that assessing the need for hybrid workforces is a challenge.

Survey Question: What are the work-related well-being challenges that are still associated with the pandemic? (select all that apply)



Uncertainty about the future is a major challenge



Challenges Related to Mental Health Issues

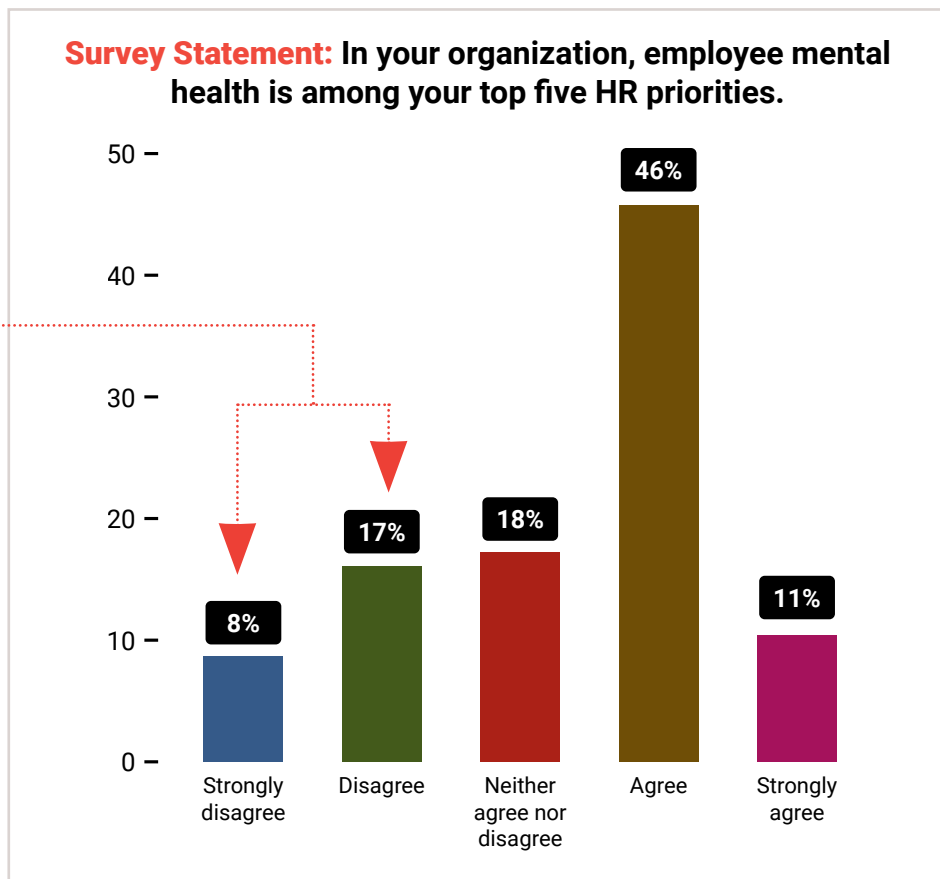


Finding: The majority of respondents agree that employee mental health is among HR's top five priorities

Fifty-seven percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that mental health is among the top five HR priorities. Why is it a priority in so many organizations? One answer is that the recent pandemic caused an uptick in such issues. In fact, two years after the pandemic began, the World Health Organization reported that in the first year of the pandemic, anxiety and depression increased by 25% globally.³ This has impacted the employee experience and may be one of the reasons that so many employees have left their positions over the last year in the United States.



Only 25% actively disagree that employee mental health is among their organization's top five priorities



³ World Health Organization. (2022, March 2). *COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-03-2022-covid-19-pandemic-triggers-25-increase-in-prevalence-of-anxiety-and-depression-worldwide>



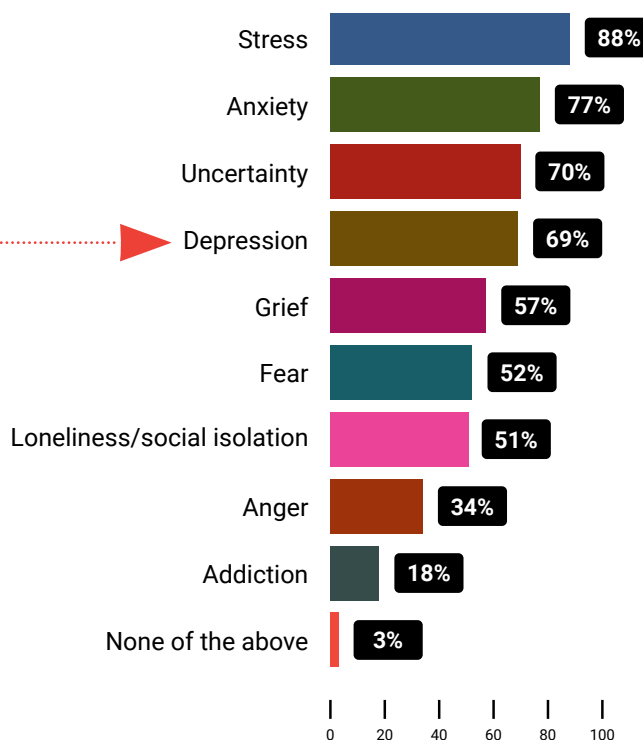
Finding: Stress and anxiety are the two major mental-health related issues that organizations have dealt with over the last year

HR professionals were asked which mental-health related issues employees in their organizations dealt with in the last 12 months. The two top answers are stress (88%) and anxiety (77%), but these are not the only answers given by a majority. The Covid-19 pandemic has likely exacerbated mental-health issues such as uncertainty (70%), depression (69%), grief (57%), fear (52%), and loneliness/social isolation (51%).



More than two-thirds say employees in their organization have dealt with depression in the last 12 months

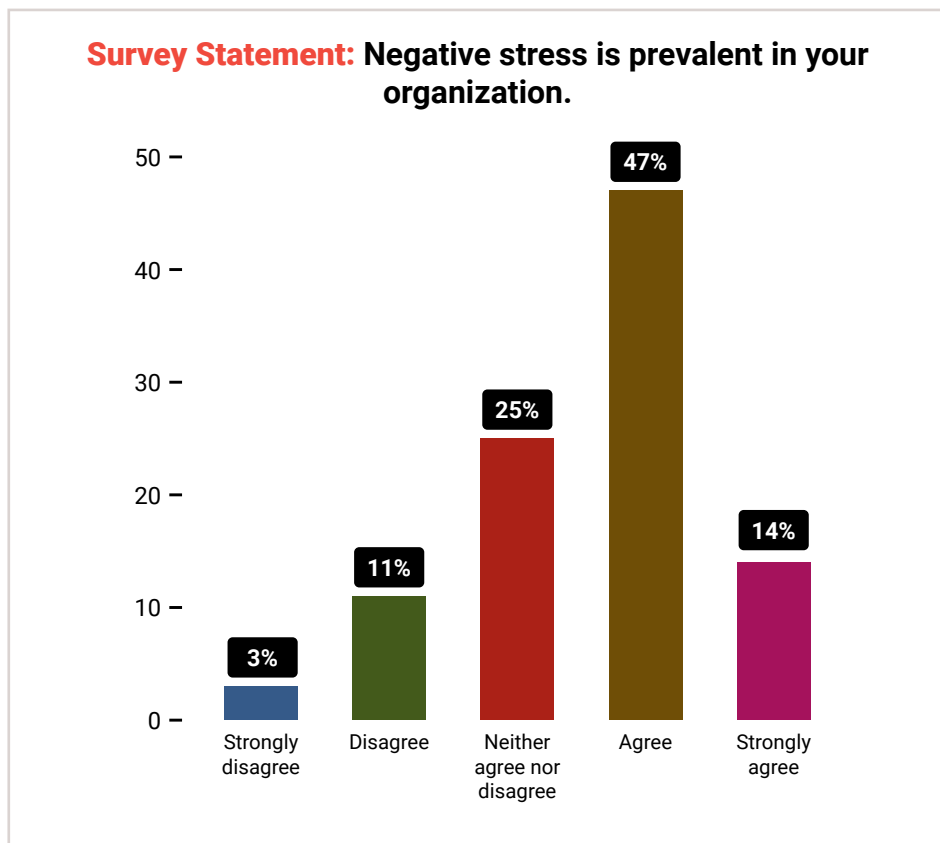
Survey Question: Which of the following mental-health related issues have your organization's employees dealt with in the last 12 months?





Finding: Negative stress is prevalent in the majority of organizations

Sixty-one percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that negative stress is prevalent in their organization. Negative stress is detrimental to both the physical and emotional health of the workers. This can, in turn, lead to a poor employee experience and a reduction in productivity.



We provided survey respondents with the following definition regarding stress.

DEFINING STRESS: For the purpose of this survey, the word “stress” refers to negative emotional stress. Emotional stress can be positive or negative. Positive stress tends to be short-term and is perceived as being within our coping abilities. Negative stress, however, tends to cause anxiety and is perceived to be outside of our coping abilities. Negative stress is often longer term in nature.



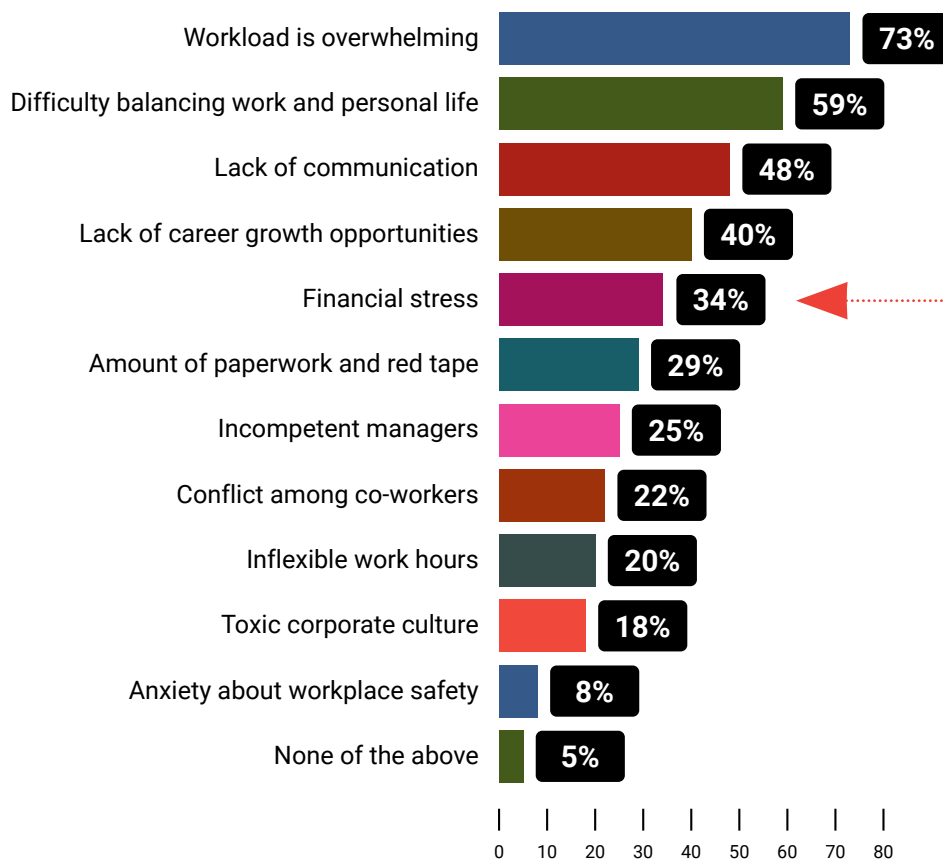
Finding: An overwhelming workload is the most common employee stressor

The top employee stressors are:

- Workload is overwhelming (73%)
- Difficulty balancing work and personal life (59%)
- Lack of communication (48%)

An overwhelming workload or a poor work-life balance could lead to burnout and, ultimately, resignation. Organizations should understand that piling more and more work on an employee is not a cost-saving strategy and can be costly in the long run.

Survey Question: In your organization, what are the most common employee stressors?



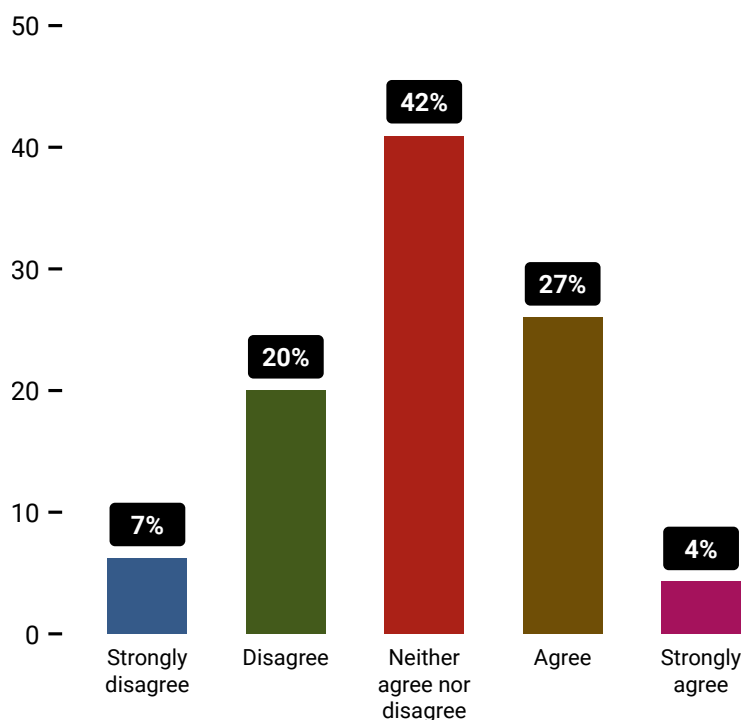
About one-third (34%) say financial stress is a common employee stressor



Finding: Only about one-third agree their organization is excellent at helping employees address stress issues

Although a majority of respondents say negative stress is prevalent in their organizations, fewer than one-third (31%) agree or strongly agree that their organization is excellent at helping employees address these issues. Indeed, 27% actively *disagree* with this. This indicates there is lots of room for organizations to improve their methods of addressing mental health and, particularly, stress-related issues.

Survey Statement: Your organization is excellent at helping employees address stress issues.



Just 4% strongly agree that their organization is excellent at helping employees address stress issues

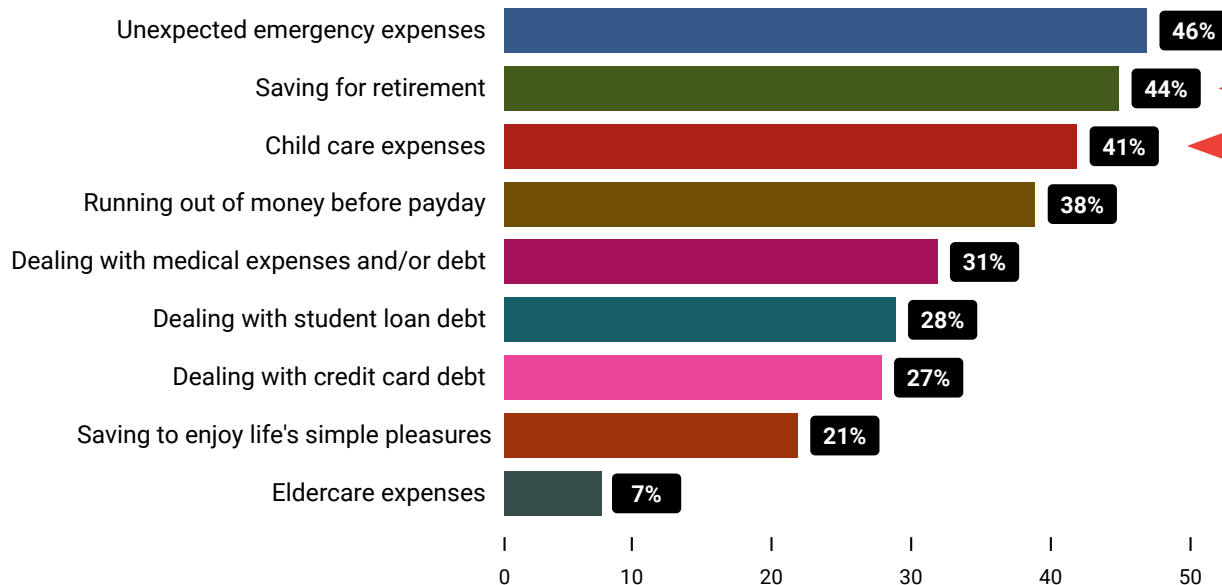


Finding: Financial struggles are one major source of employee stress

Financial struggles and hardships remain major causes of worry for many employees. An American Psychology Association study has shown that 72% of Americans feel stressed at some point in time due to financial worries.⁴ Covid-19 has adversely impacted the financial health of people through furloughs, layoffs, and high inflation, among other factors. When we look at the causes of financial stress, the greatest source comes from unexpected emergency expenses (46%).

Other sources of stress include saving for retirement (44%), child-care expenses (41%) and running out of money before payday (38%). Nearly one-third of employees struggled with dealing with medical expenses and a little more than one-fourth grappled with student loan debt and credit card debt. Saving to enjoy life's simple pleasures is also among the three greatest sources of financial stress for 21% of respondents.

Survey Question: What do you believe are your employees' three greatest sources of financial stress?



Unexpected emergency expenses, saving for retirement, and child-care expenses are the three most cited sources of financial stress

⁴ American Psychology Association. (2022, May 9). *Speaking of Psychology: The stress of money*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/news/podcasts/speaking-of-psychology/financial-stress>

Today's Well-being Solutions

Many of today's well-being programs originated from wellness programs of the past. After World War II, business leaders saw the value in helping employees stay fit. As a result, some companies built gymnasium facilities complete with fitness instructors, though some were focused on executives rather than all employees. Such programs grew throughout the 1970s and were a precursor to today's worksite wellness promotion programs.⁵

Today, the concept of wellness tends to have a broader definition than it did half a century ago. It is defined by the World Health Organization as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."⁶ It is a multidimensional and holistic approach to understanding the health and happiness of employees. This is one of the reasons that some organizations use the word well-being rather than wellness.⁷



⁵ Khoury, A. (2014, January 29). The Evolution of Worksite Wellness. *Corporate Wellness Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://www.corporatewellnessmagazine.com/article/the-evolution-of>

⁶ World Health Organization. (2018, March 30). *Mental health: strengthening our response*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

⁷ Merriwether, C. B. (2021, July 21). *The rise of workplace wellness: A history*. Retrieved from <https://www.benefitspro.com/2021/07/21/the-rise-of-workplace-wellness-a-history/>

Categories of Solutions



Finding: Mental/emotional well-being is the area for which organizations are most likely to have specific initiatives

Since well-being can encompass a variety of areas, we asked respondents which areas of well-being their organization strives to enhance via specific initiatives. We explore each well-being area in the sections below.

Mental/emotional Well-being

Seventy-eight percent of respondents say their organizations strive to enhance mental/emotional well-being. Mental health embraces cognitive, emotional and behavioral well-being. It impacts the way we think, feel and act, and can also affect the way we manage stress. The pandemic has brought greater attention to mental health today, which some organizations are finding difficult to address. The new realities of working from home, missing physical contact with friends and relatives, and long periods of isolation have affected mental health adversely. It is estimated that anxiety and depression cost the global economy \$1 trillion every year.⁸

Solutions can be cost-effective. One source indicates that for every \$1 invested in mental health, a return of \$4 is achieved in terms of health and productivity.⁹

Work Environment Well-being

Seventy percent of respondents say their organization strives to enhance work environment well-being. Employers' understanding of occupational safety and health has undergone change since the onset of the pandemic. For example, several decades ago no-smoking workplaces would have been a focus of such programs. During the pandemic, organizations were more focused on safety rules relating to wearing masks and social distancing.

⁸ Broom, D. (2020, October 9). 5 things to know about mental health across the world. *World Economic Forum*. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/mental-health-day-covid19-coronavirus-global/>

⁹ The Lancet. (2020, Nov 1). *Mental health matters*. Retrieved from [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(20\)30432-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30432-0/fulltext)

Physical Well-being

Two-thirds of respondents say their organization strives to improve physical well-being. The pandemic may have affected the physical well-being of many people. Gyms and exercise facilities were closed in many locations due to Covid-19 and healthy habits may have been forgone.

Financial Well-being

Fifty-six percent say their organization strives to enhance financial well-being. The pandemic has affected the financial health of millions of employees due to unemployment, medical bills, delayed payments, and a rise in the cost of living. A survey by CIPD's Reward Management Survey in 2021 found that nearly half the organizations do not have a financial well-being policy.¹⁰ Further, according to the 2021 Wellness Barometer Survey, 65% of employees are coping with financial stress, costing U.S. employers a total of \$4.7 billion per week in lost productivity.¹¹

Social Well-being

Just under half (48%) say their organization strives to enhance social well-being. Social wellness involves nurturing and maintaining healthy and supportive relationships within and beyond the workplace setting. It has become even more relevant in the current times considering the impact of continued social distancing and remote work leading to issues such as loneliness and isolation. Issues such as burnout and work-life balance have become more prominent.

Underestimating Well-being Initiatives

In addition to asking respondents about which types of well-being their organizations address via specific initiatives, we asked what they are doing in certain areas. For example, we found that 80% provide healthcare benefits, which we view as one type of employee well-being initiative (compared to just 66% who said they have specific initiatives geared toward physical well-being). Similarly, we found that 74% instituted a mask policy during the pandemic, which we would consider an initiative geared toward work environment well-being.

Given these discrepancies, we believe that some respondents did not fully understand how we are defining well-being initiatives and so underestimated the degree to which their organizations provide them.

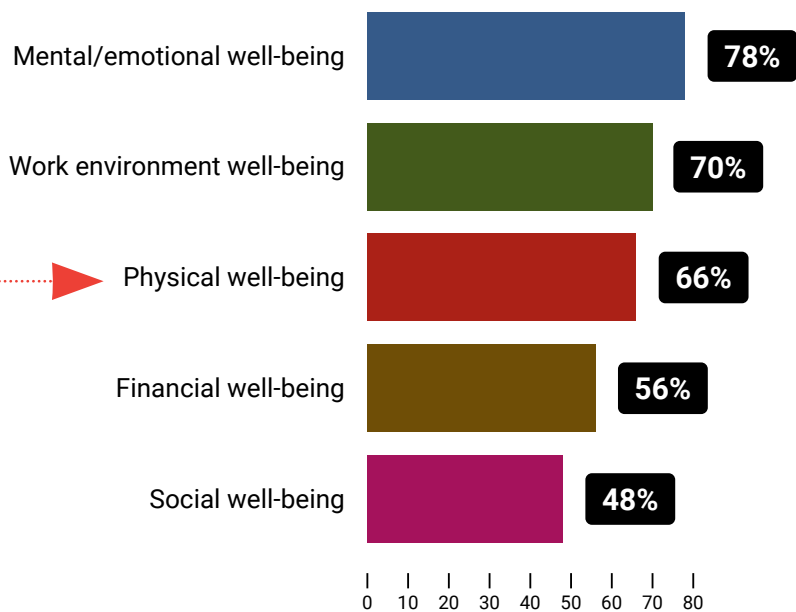
¹⁰ CIPD. (2021, March 5). *Half of employers don't have a financial wellbeing policy, despite financial impact of COVID-19*. Retrieved from <https://www.cipd.co.uk/about/media/press/050321half-employers-dont-have-financial-wellbeing-policy#gref>

¹¹ De Beer, M. (2021, August 8). *Financial stress costs U.S. companies \$4.7 billion per week*. Retrieved from <https://www.benefitspro.com/2021/08/18/financial-stress-costs-u-s-companies-4-7-billion-per-week/>



Two-thirds say their organization strives to enhance physical well-being via specific initiatives

Survey Question: Which types of employee well-being does your organization strive to enhance via specific initiatives?



Pandemic-related Solutions

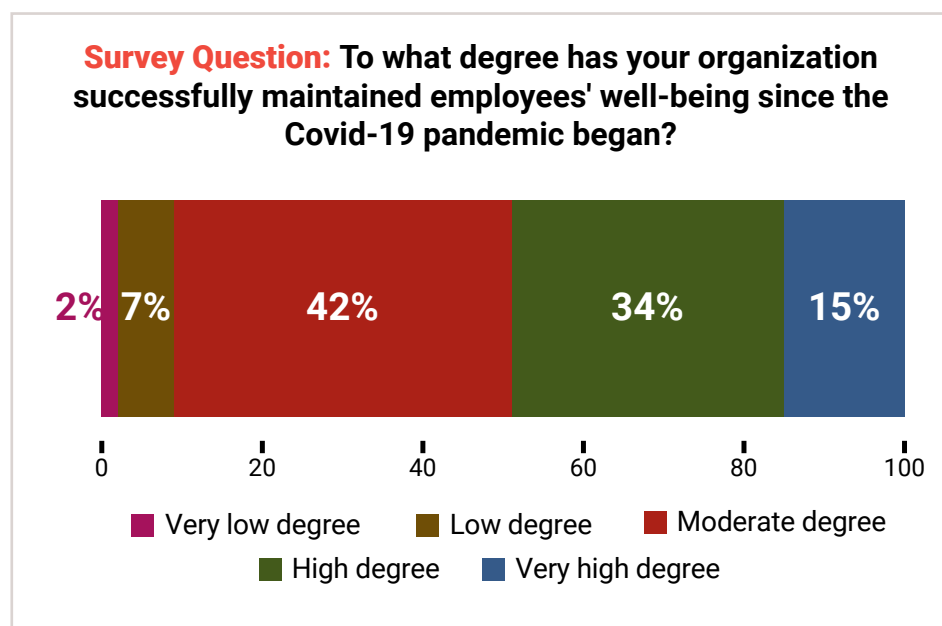


Finding: About half of respondents believe that their organizations have successfully maintained employees' well-being to a high degree since the Covid-19 pandemic began

Just under half (49%) say that organizations have successfully maintained employees' well-being to a high or very high degree since the Covid-19 pandemic began. Although we might view this as good news, it means, of course, that 51% say that their organizations have been successful to only a moderate degree or lower.

By size of the organization

HR professionals at small organizations tend to view their organizations as being more successful in maintaining employees' well-being during Covid-19. While 62% of respondents from small organizations say their organization has successfully maintained employees' well-being to a high or very high degree, just 45% of respondents at mid-sized and 44% of those at large firms say the same.





Finding: Mask and remote work policies have been the most widely used initiatives for securing employee well-being during the pandemic

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, what types of initiatives have organizations used to better secure employee well-being?

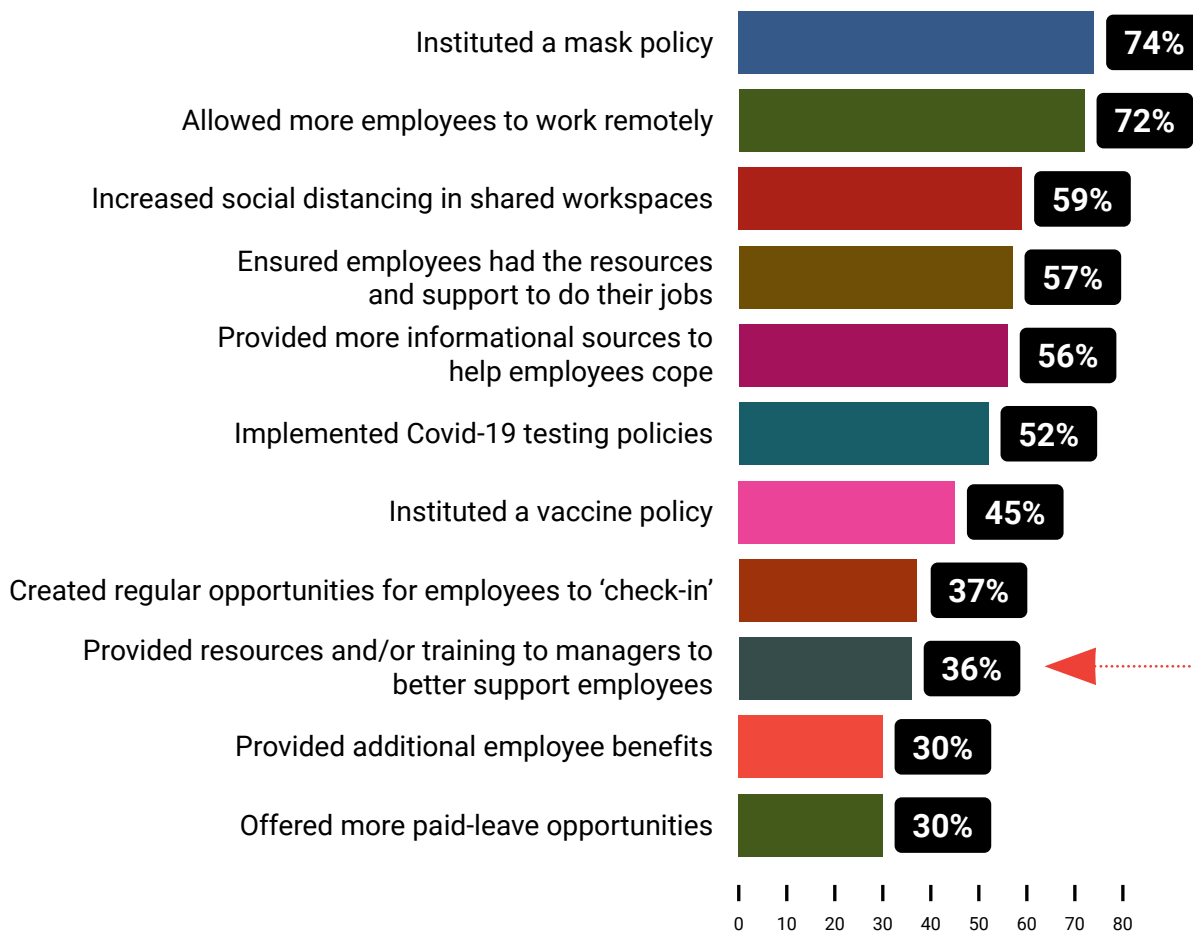
Two initiatives were most commonly used:

- instituted a mask policy (74%)
- allowed more employees to work remotely (72%)

Other initiatives include increased social distancing in shared workspaces (59%), ensuring employees had the resources and support to do their jobs (57%), and providing more informational sources to help employees cope (56%). Fewer organizations implemented Covid-19-related initiatives such as Covid-19 testing policies (52%) and vaccine policies (45%). And only a little over a third (36%) provided resources and/or training to managers so they can better support employees.



Survey Question: Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, what types of initiatives has your organization used to better secure employee well-being?



Just 36% provide resources and/or training to managers so they can better support employee well-being during the pandemic

Mental Well-being Solutions



Finding: Employee Assistance Programs are the most common step an organization takes in regard to employee mental health

As we found earlier in this report, employees are dealing with a range of mental-health related issues. How are organizations responding to this?

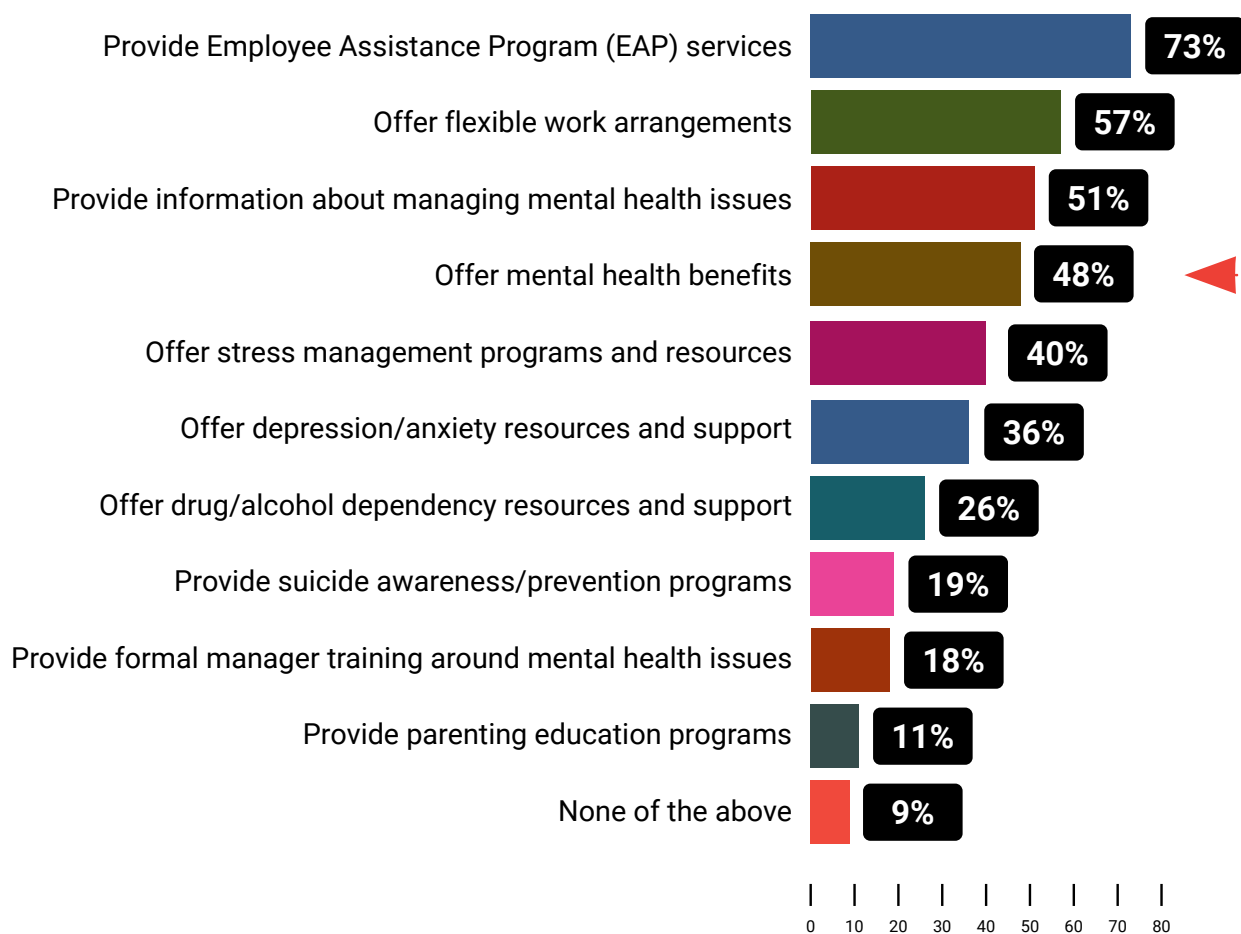
To respond to mental health issues, there are just three steps chosen by half or more of respondents:

- Provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services (73%)
- Offer flexible work arrangements (57%)
- Provide information about managing mental health issues (51%)

Just 18% say their organizations provide formal manager training around mental health issues. Investment in such programs can potentially equip managers to help employees locate and use mental health resources provided by the organization.



Survey Question: Which steps does your organization take in regard to employee mental health?



Few organizations provide formal training to managers around mental health issues

Physical Well-being Solutions



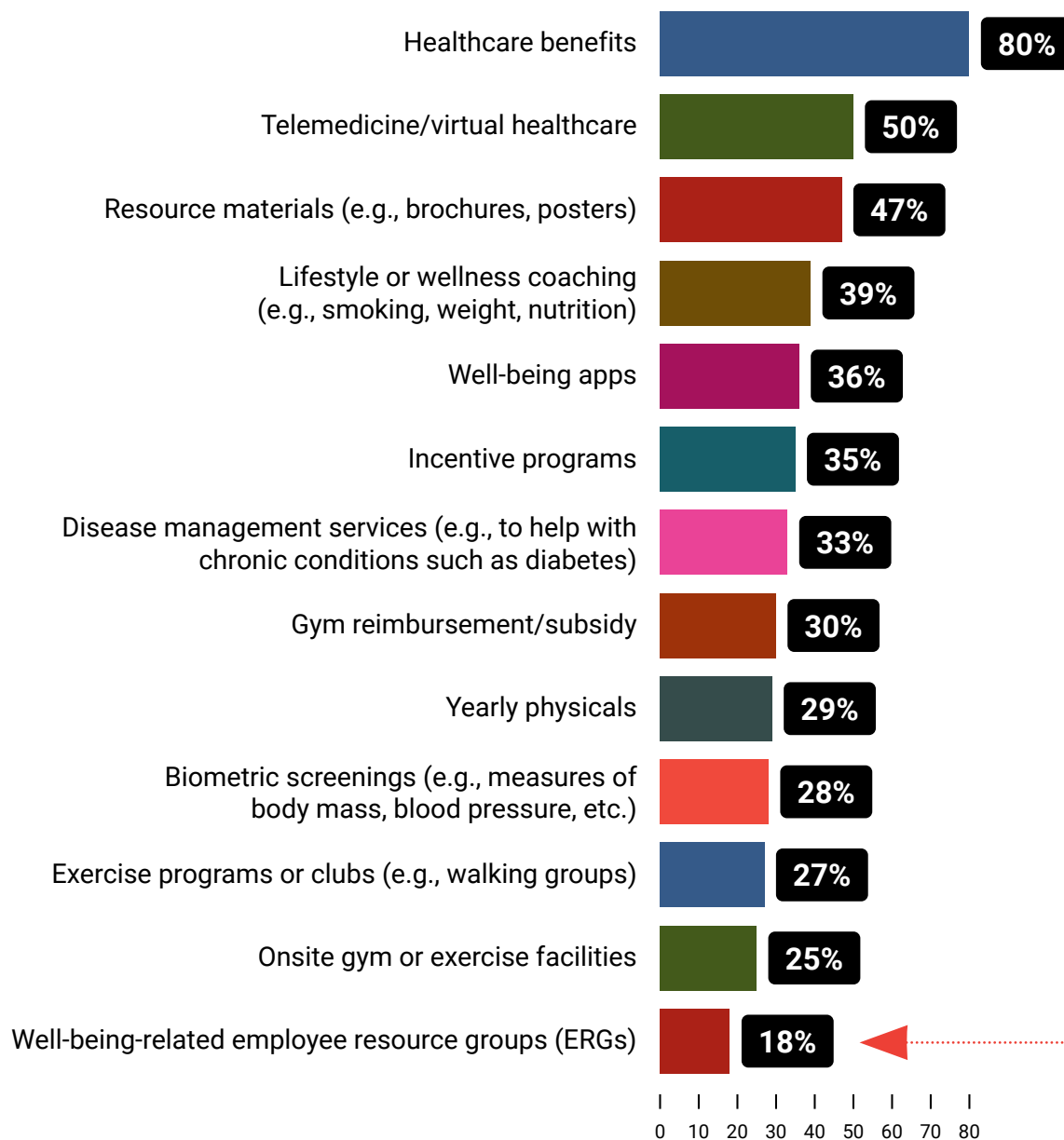
Finding: Healthcare benefits remain the popular choice among employers, followed by virtual care benefits

Healthcare benefits are the top choice for promoting physical well-being. However, we did not ask about the makeup of these benefits; the components included are often at the discretion of the employer and can vary widely from organization to organization.

Half also say their organization offers telemedicine/virtual healthcare to promote physical well-being. This initiative was likely fast tracked due to Covid-19.



Survey Question: Which of the following does your organization have in place to promote physical well-being? (select all that apply)



Few organizations have well-being-related ERGs in place (18%)

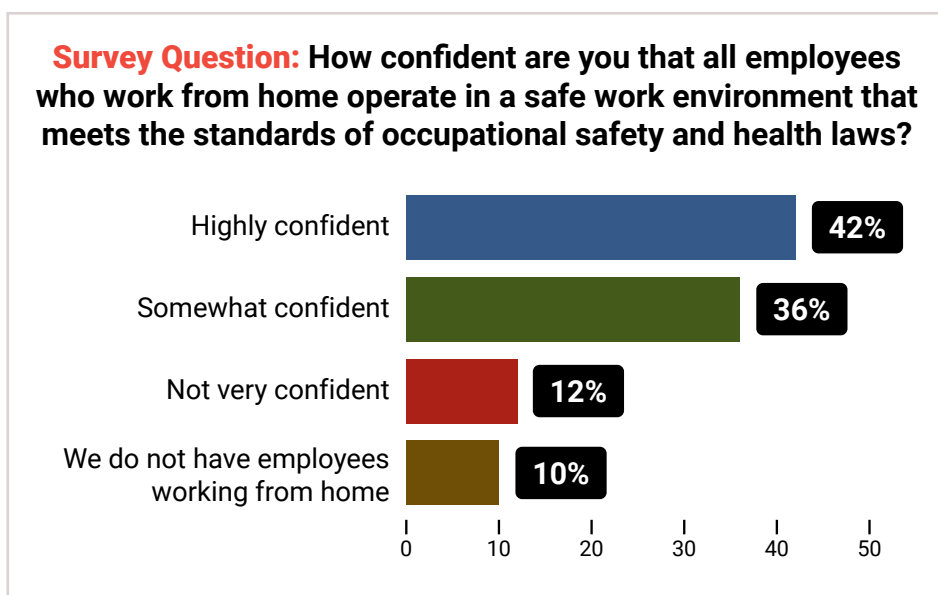
The Impact of Today's Well-being Solutions

The Continuing Impact of Covid-19 on Well-being



Finding: The majority of respondents are confident that employees who work from home are doing so safely

Some organizations have health and safety officers who ensure onsite working conditions are safe and compliant for employees. However, with so many employees working from home, organizations may not be able to ensure that health and safety standards are being met. Encouragingly, the majority of respondents are somewhat (36%) or highly (42%) confident that employees who work from home operate in a safe work environment that meets the standards of occupational safety and health laws. However, 12% say they are not very confident in this area.



The Effectiveness of Well-being Programs



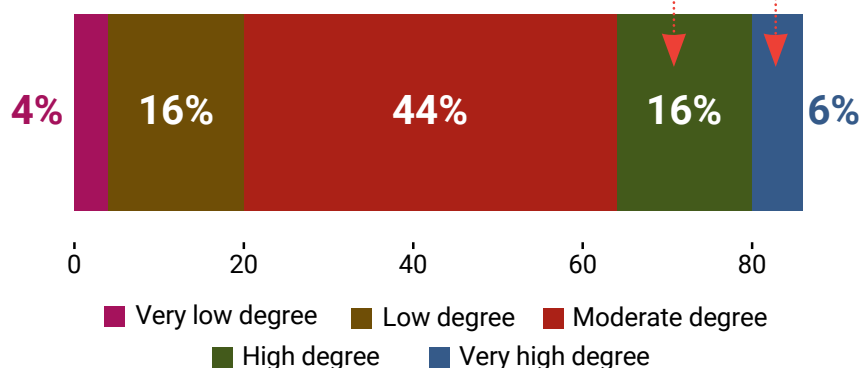
Finding: Most HR professionals find their organization's well-being programs are effective to a moderate degree or less

While many organizations strive to enhance aspects of well-being, just 22% of respondents say the programs that promote employee well-being in their organizations are effective to a high or very high degree. Further, one-fifth say these well-being programs are effective to a low or very low degree and another 44% consider them only moderately effective. Organizations should consider proactively monitoring the impact of well-being programs and whether they bring the desired outcomes and pinpoint areas that can improve the effectiveness of these programs.



Just 22% say that the programs that promote employee well-being are effective to a high or very high degree

Survey Question: Overall, to what degree are the programs that promote employee well-being effective in your organization?





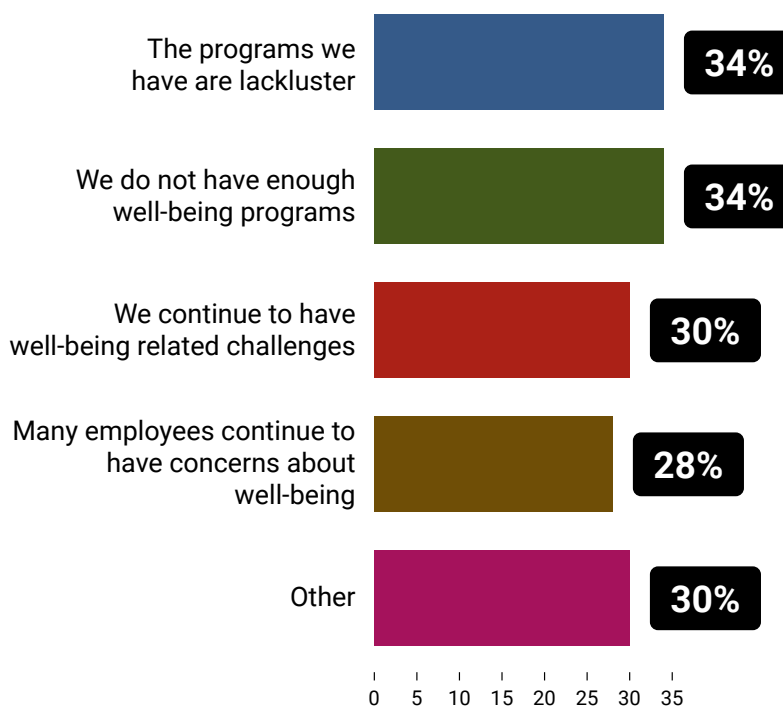
Finding: About one-third say their well-being programs are lackluster or that they do not have enough of them

We asked those who said their organization's well-being programs were effective to a low or very low degree why they thought so. One-third (34%) say that these are lackluster and another 34% say they do not have enough well-being programs.



Just over a third say their organization's well-being programs are not very effective because they do not have enough of them

Survey Question: Why do you feel your organization's well-being programs are not very effective?

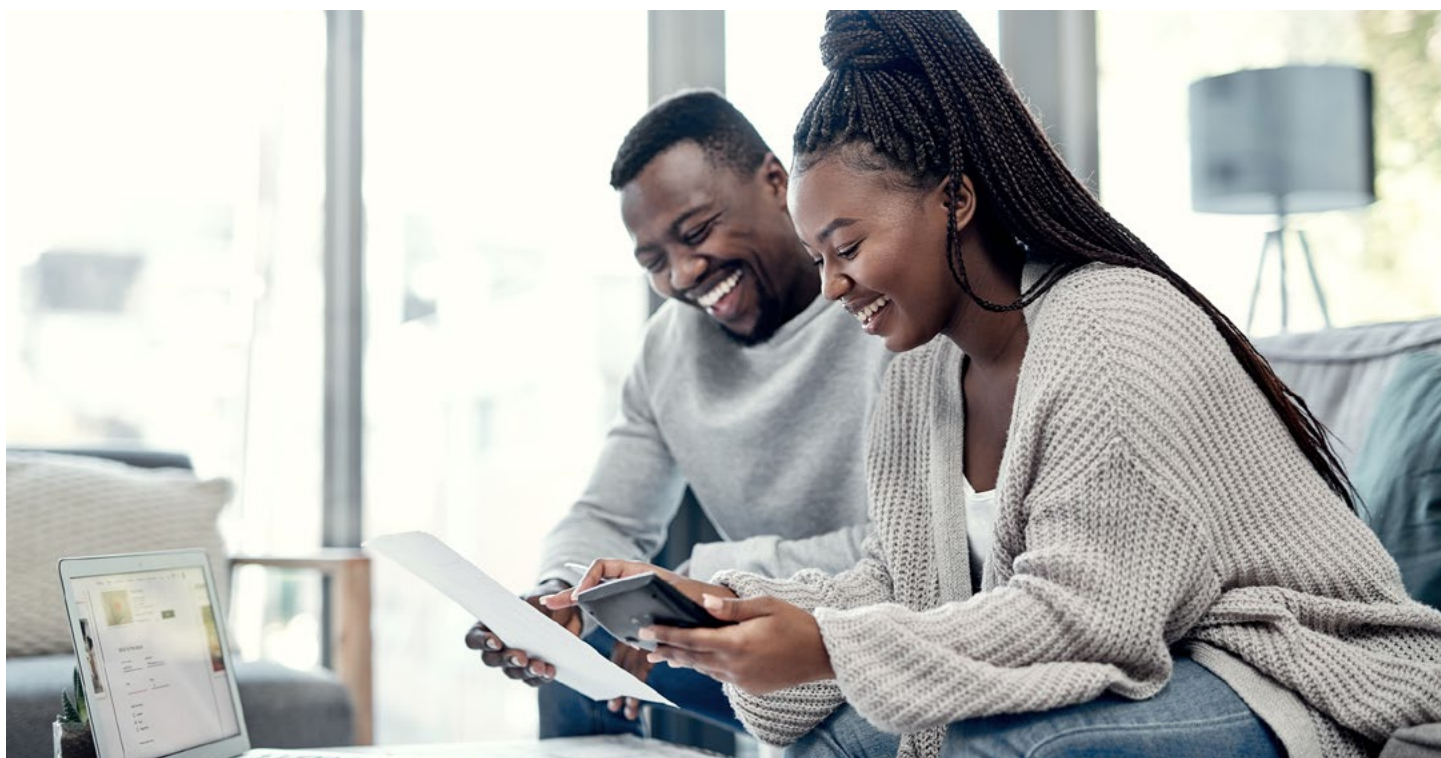




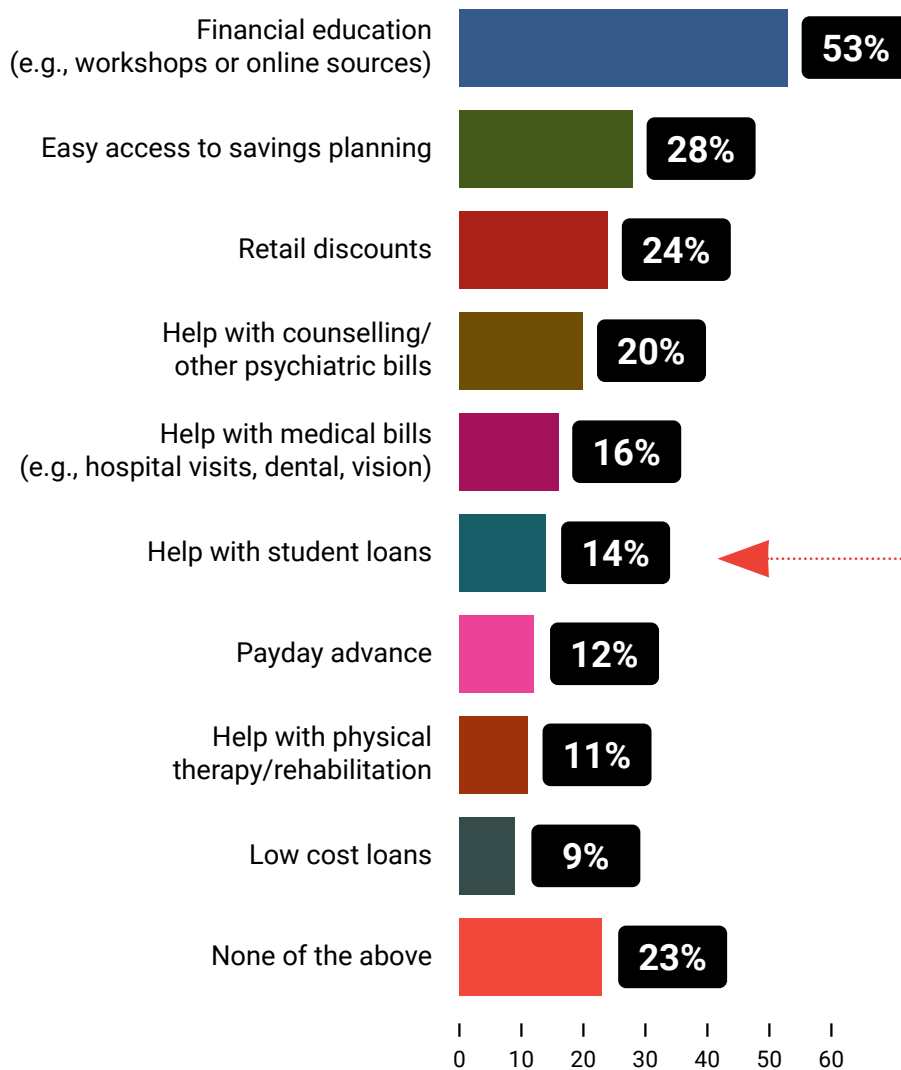
Finding: Just over half of employers offer financial education initiatives

Fifty-three percent of respondents say that their organization offers financial education initiatives to employees. In fact, it is the only response selected by more than half of respondents. Education often plays a large part in achieving financial wellness. However, it is important to note that employees from different age groups may have different financial needs; a young employee entering the workforce will have different financial priorities than an employee a few years away from retiring. The financial education provided should cover aspects that will be of interest and relevant to all generations of employees.

Easy access to savings planning is the next popular initiative (28%), followed by retail discounts (24%). An initiative gaining momentum is help with student loans. Just 14% say their organization offers this initiative to employees, but we believe that this number will increase in the coming years.



Survey Question: Which of these initiatives does your organization offer to employees?



Just 14% of organizations have an initiative to help with student loans

The Outcomes of Well-being Initiatives



Finding: Well-being initiatives lead to greater employee engagement

Greater employee engagement is the top outcome of well-being initiatives. However, this is the only response chosen by more than half of respondents.

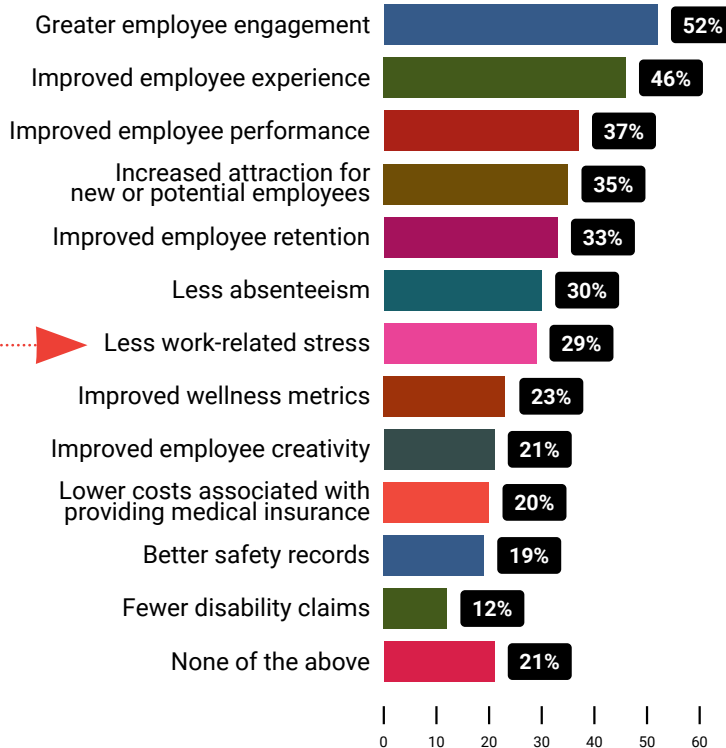
A third or more, though, say that well-being initiatives lead to:

- Improved employee experience (46%)
- Improved employee performance (37%)
- Increased attraction for new or potential employees (35%)
- Improved employee retention (33%)



Just 29% say less work-related stress is an outcome of employee well-being initiatives

Survey Question: Which of the following are outcomes of employee well-being initiatives in your organization?



How Well-being Leaders and Laggards Differ

We have endeavored to find how the organizations that have effective well-being programs compare with organizations that are not that as effective in this area. In this section, we look at two cohorts:

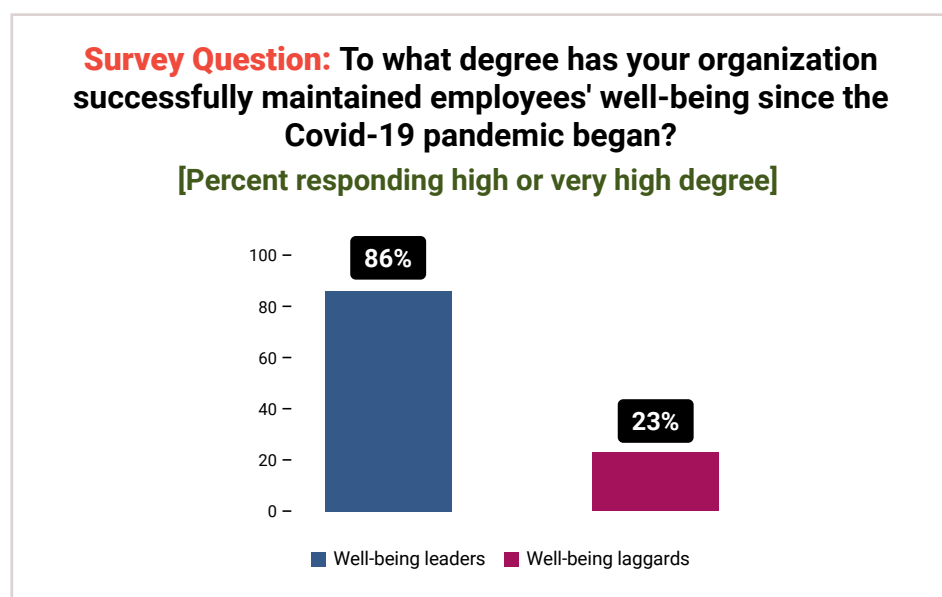
Well-being leaders: These represent respondents who indicate that their organization’s programs that promote employee well-being are effective to a high or very high degree.

Well-being laggards: These represent respondents who indicate that their organization’s programs that promote employee well-being are effective to a low or very low degree.



Finding: Leaders are more likely to successfully maintain employees’ well-being to a high or very high degree

The large majority (86%) of the well-being leaders say their organization maintains employees’ well-being successfully to a high degree since the Covid-19 pandemic began. By comparison, just 23% of well-being laggards say the same.

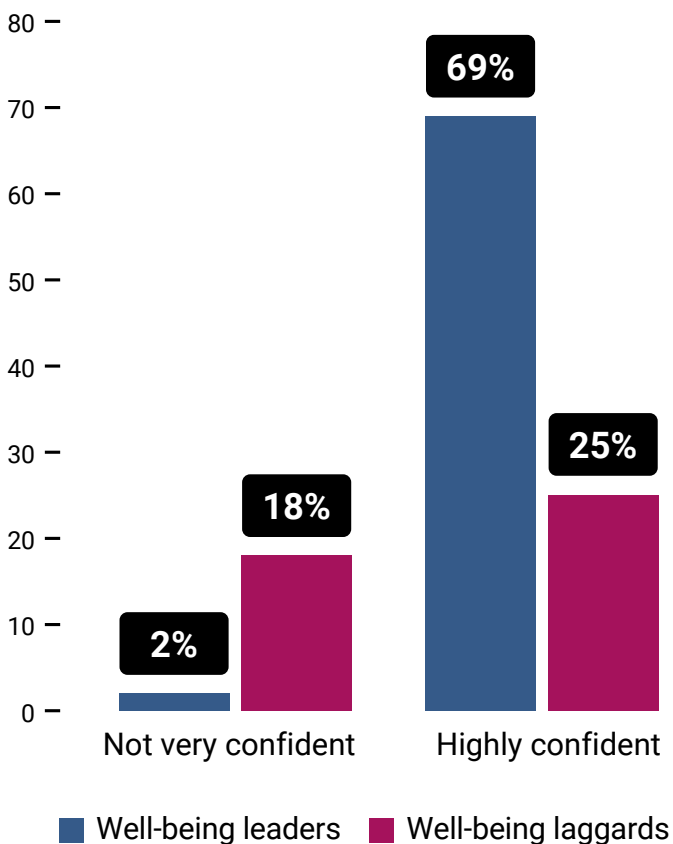




Finding: Well-being leaders are more confident that employees who work from home are doing so safely

Well-being leaders are more confident than well-being laggards that employees who work from home operate in a safe work environment that meets the standards of occupational safety and health laws (69% vs. 25%). Well-being laggards, however, are more likely to say they are not very confident in this area.

Survey Question: How confident are you that all employees who work from home operate in a safe work environment that meets the standards of occupational safety and health laws?





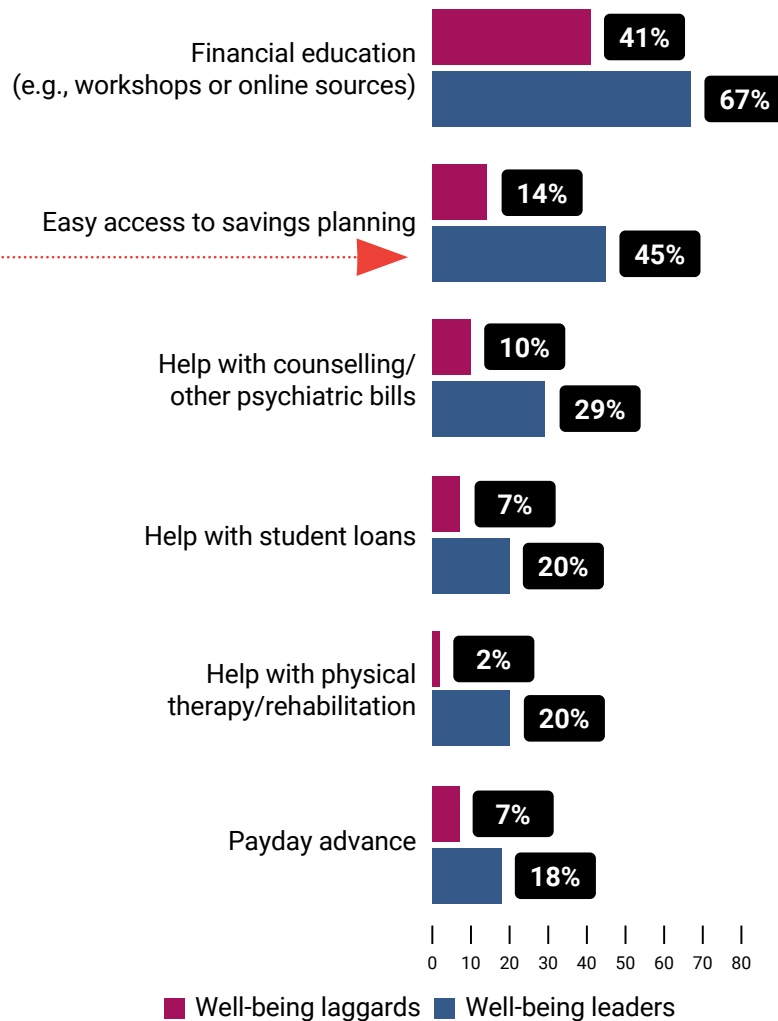
Finding: Financial education and easy access to savings planning are two popular initiatives of well-being leaders

Well-being leaders are more likely than laggards to offer a number of initiatives to employees. For example, about two-thirds (67%) of leaders offer financial education to employees, but just 41% of laggards do so. Similarly, 20% of well-being leaders offer help with student loans yet just 7% of laggards say the same.



Well-being leaders are three times more likely than laggards to offer easy access to savings planning initiatives to employees

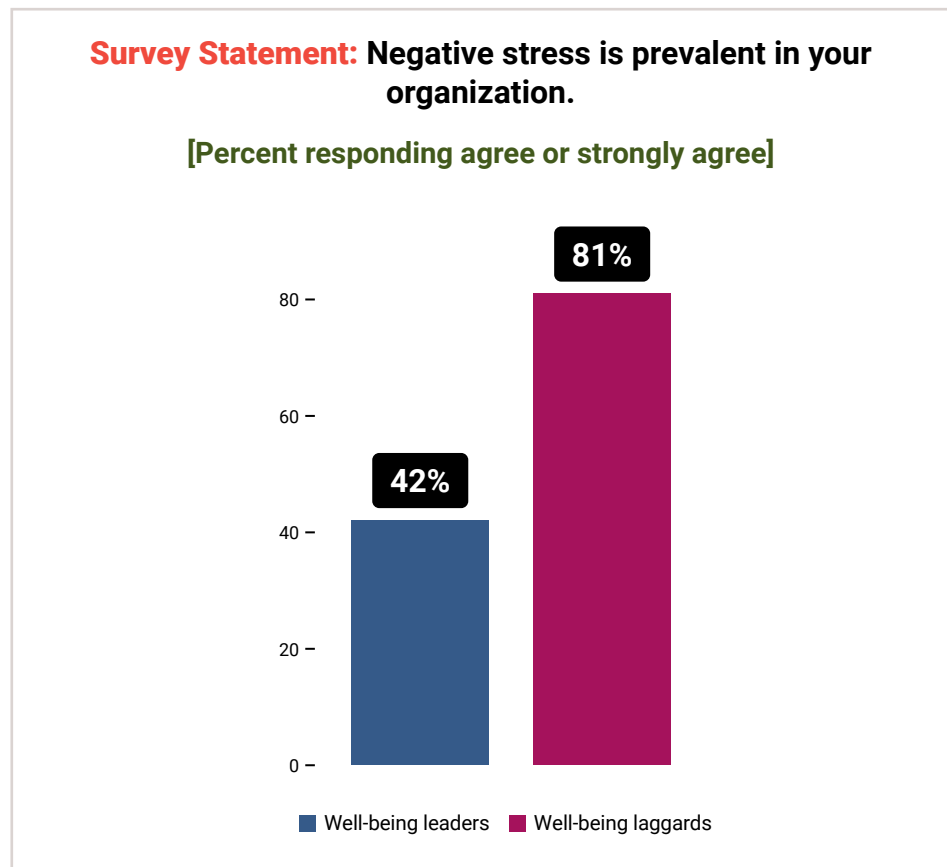
Survey Question: Which of these initiatives does your organization offer to employees?





Finding: Well-being laggards are more likely to agree that negative stress is prevalent in their organizations

While 81% of laggards agree or strongly agree that negative stress is prevalent in their organizations, just 42% of well-being leaders say the same.





Finding: Well-being leaders are more likely to say their organizations are excellent at helping employees address stress issues

Well-being leaders are nearly ten times more likely to agree or strongly agree that their organization is excellent at helping employees address stress issues (66% vs. 7%). Further, well-being *laggards* are more likely to actively disagree with this statement (48% vs. 4%).

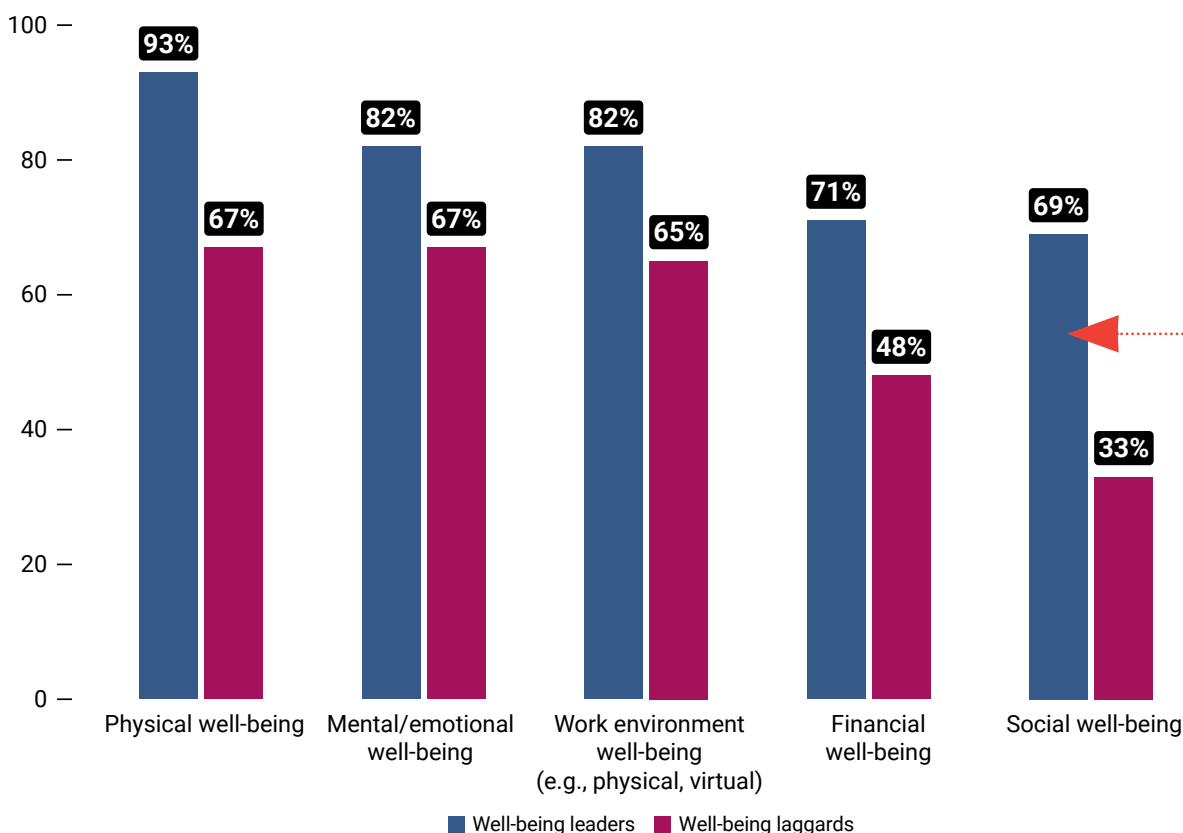




Finding: Well-being leaders are more likely to say their organization strives to enhance all areas of employee well-being

Well-being leaders are more likely than laggards to focus on all five dimensions of well-being. For example, nearly all (93%) well-being leaders say their organization strives to enhance physical well-being via specific initiatives, but only 67% of laggards say the same.

Survey Question: Which types of employee well-being does your organization strive to enhance via specific initiatives?



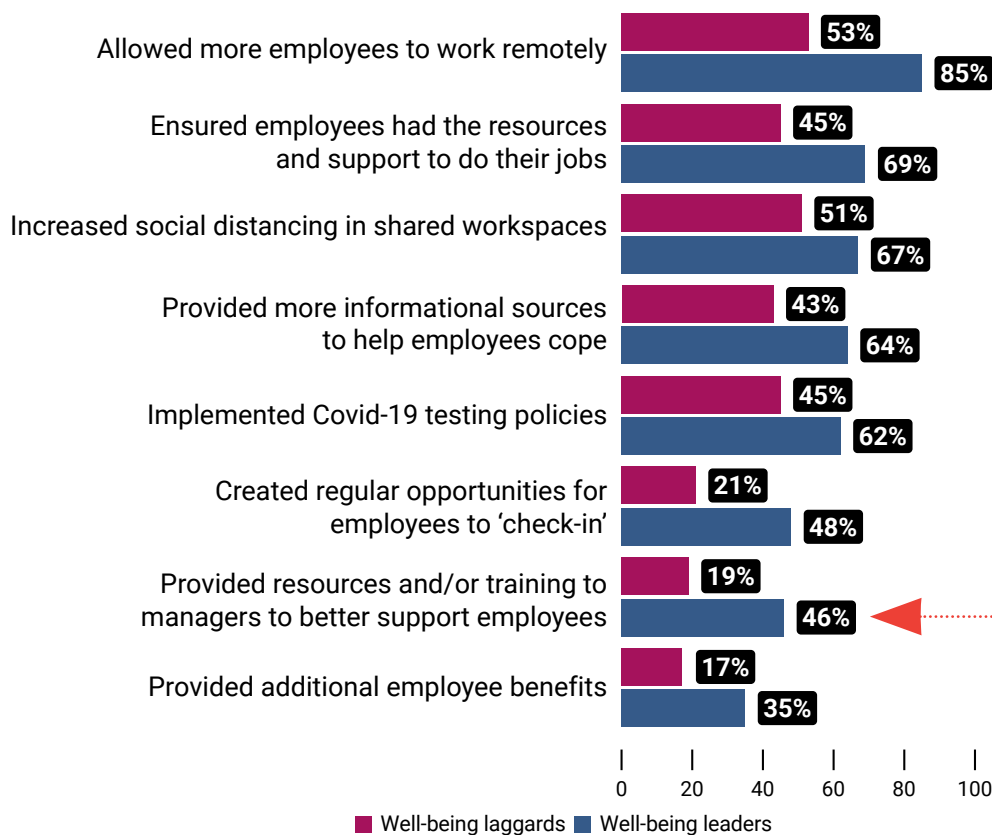
Well-being leaders are twice as likely as laggards to say their organization strives to enhance social well-being via specific initiatives



Finding: Well-being leaders were more likely to use a variety of initiatives to better secure employee well-being since the Covid-19 pandemic began

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more agile and proactive well-being initiatives. Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, well-being leaders were more likely to use initiatives to better secure employee well-being. They were more than twice as likely to create regular opportunities for employees to ‘check in,’ provide resources and/or training to managers to better support employees, and provide additional employee benefits.

Survey Question: Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, what types of initiatives has your organization used to better secure employee well-being?



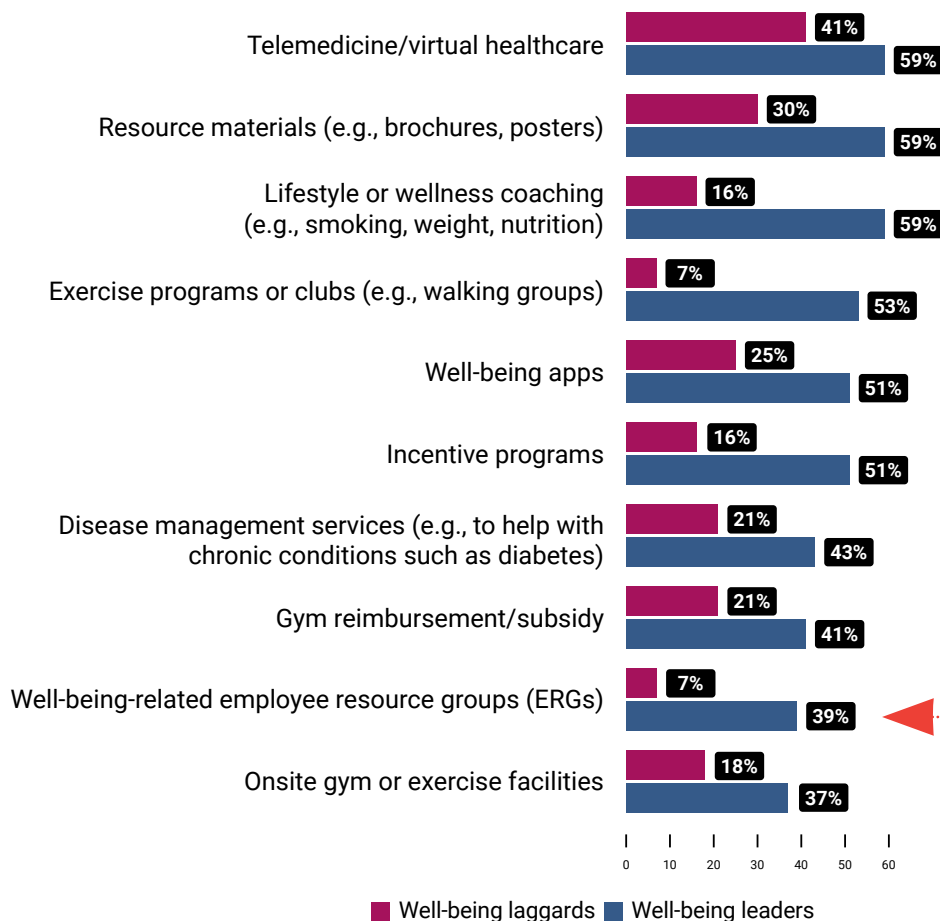
Well-being leaders were more than twice as likely as laggards to provide resources and/or training to managers to better support employees



Finding: Well-being leaders are nearly four times more likely than laggards to have lifestyle or wellness coaching in place to promote physical well-being

Leaders are more likely than laggards to use a variety of initiatives to promote physical well-being. They are more than seven times more likely to have exercise programs or clubs (53% vs. 7%) and more than five times more likely to use well-being related ERGs (39% vs. 7%).

Survey Question: Which of the following does your organization have in place to promote physical well-being?

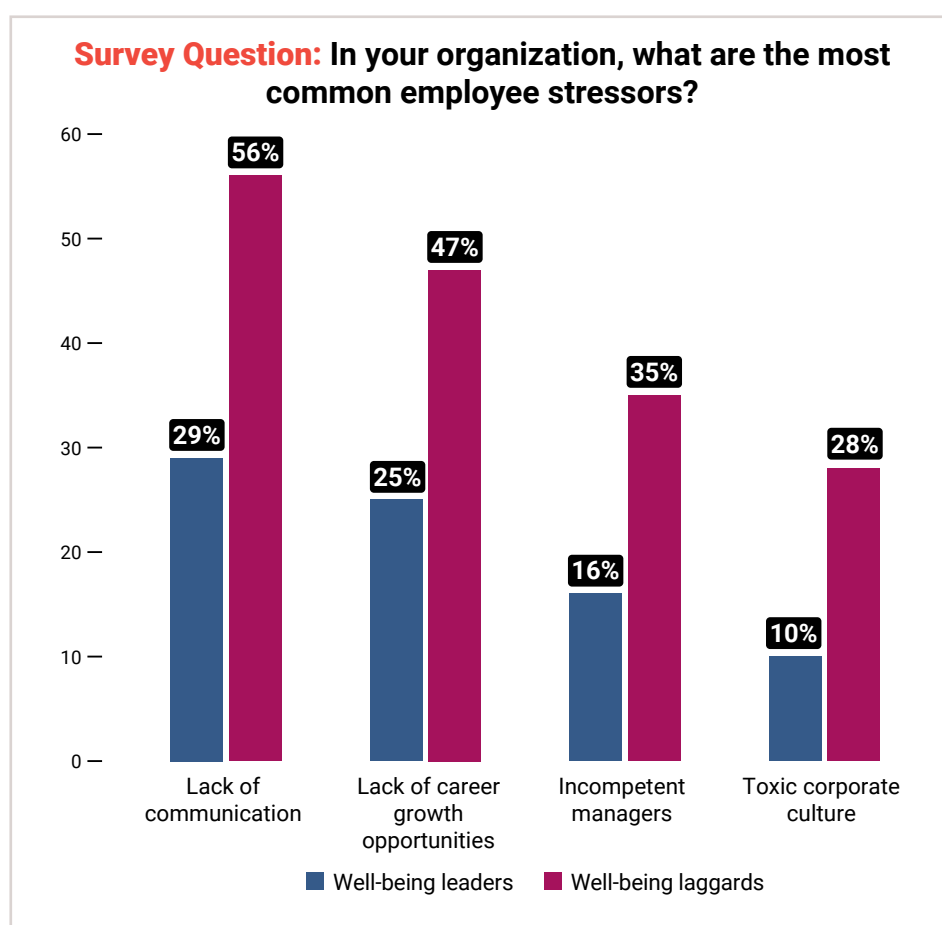


Well-being leaders are more than five times more likely to use well-being related ERGs to promote physical well-being



Finding: Well-being laggards are twice as likely as well-being leaders to say that incompetent managers are the most common employee stressor

Well-being laggards are more likely to cite a variety of employee stressors. Most notably, laggards are more likely to say lack of communication, lack of career growth, incompetent managers, and toxic corporate cultures are common employee stressors in their organization.

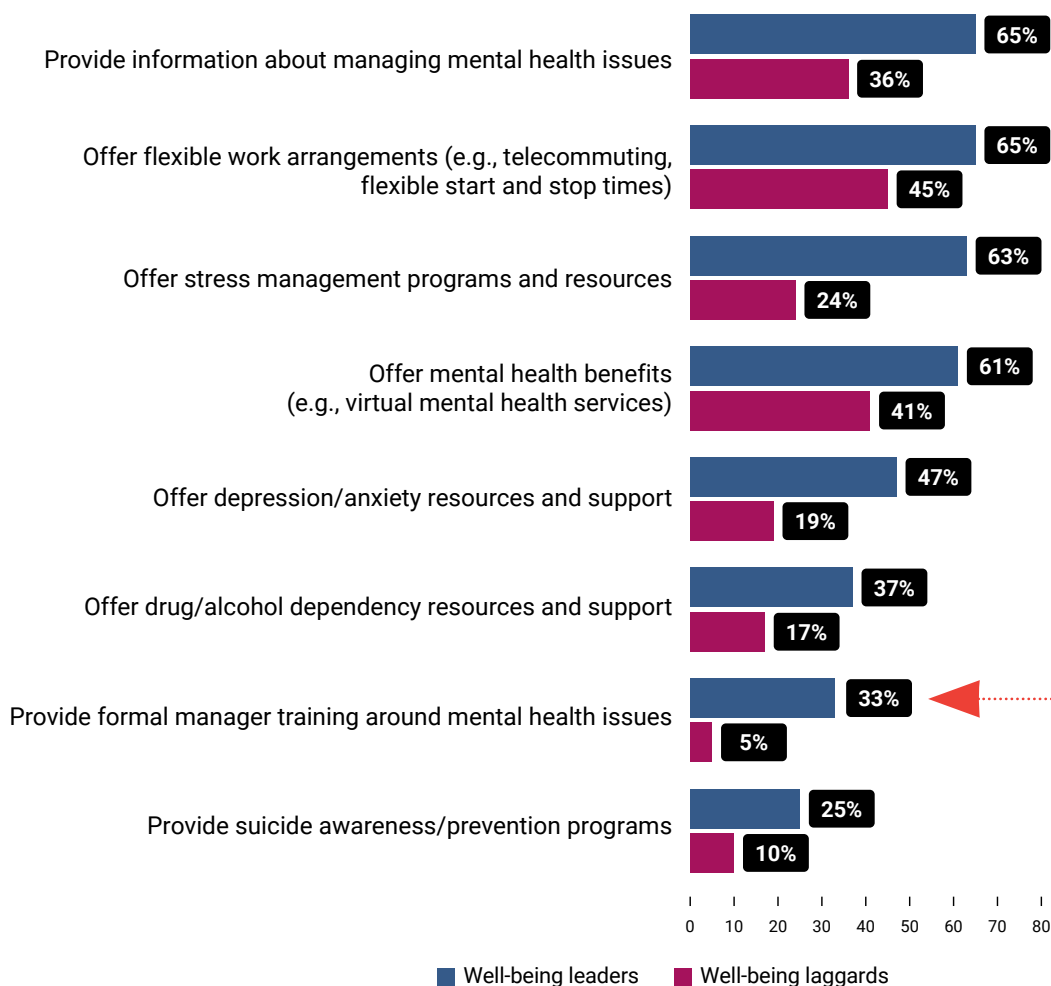




Finding: Well-being leaders are more likely than laggards to provide more mental health resources and support

Well-being leaders are more likely to take multiple steps to address employee mental health. When compared with laggards, they are more likely to offer stress management programs and resources (63% vs. 24%), offer depression/anxiety resources and support (47% vs. 19%), and provide formal manager training around mental health issues (33% vs. 5%).

Survey Question: Which steps does your organization take in regard to employee mental health?



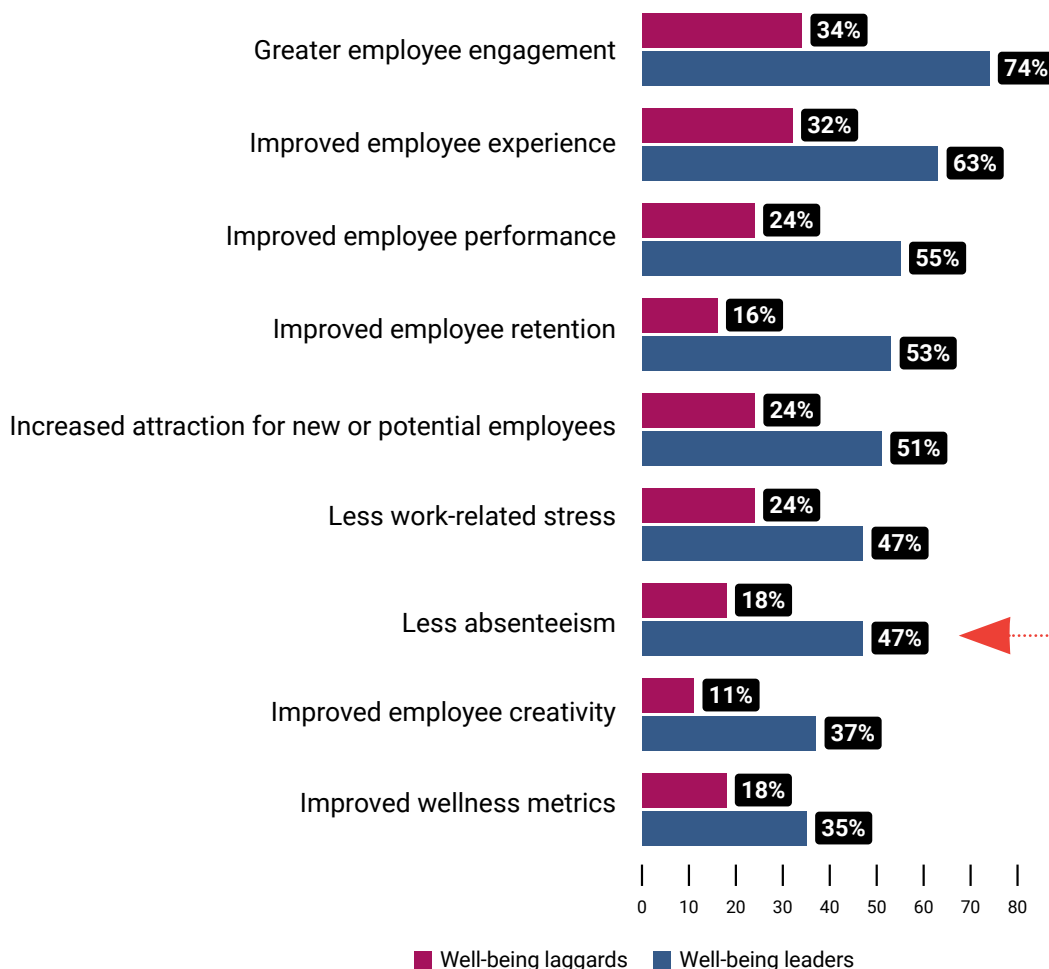
Well-being leaders are more than six times more likely to provide formal manager training around mental health issues



Finding: Well-being leaders are more likely to cite positive outcomes of employee well-being initiatives

Well-being leaders are more likely than laggards to say they have improved employee engagement, experience, performance and retention due to employee well-being initiatives. Further, they are more than three times more likely to say they have improved employee creativity and twice as likely to say there is *less* employee stress.

Survey Question: Which of the following are outcomes of employee well-being initiatives in your organization?



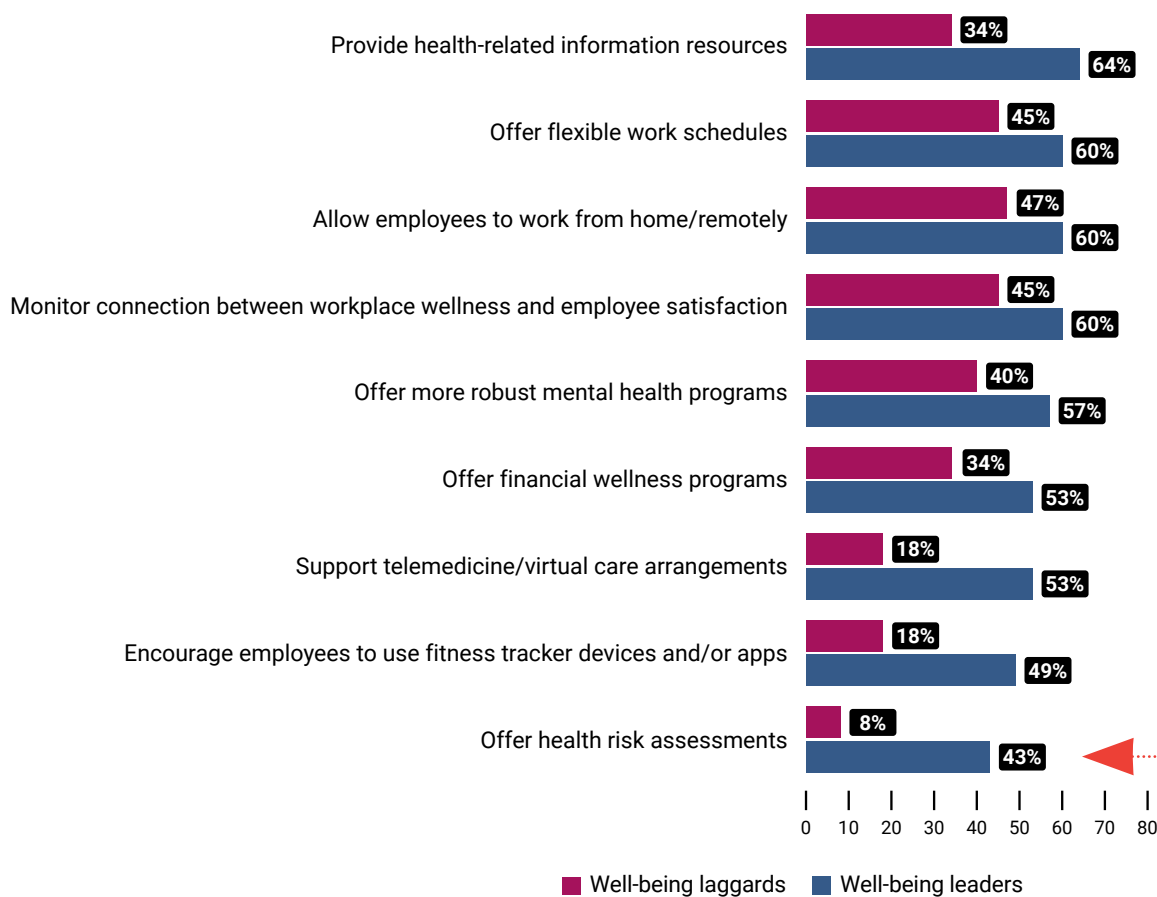
Well-being leaders are more than twice as likely as laggards to say less absenteeism is an outcome of employee well-being initiatives



Finding: Well-being leaders are nearly three times more likely than laggards to say their organization will utilize telemedicine/virtual care arrangements within the next two years

Well-being leaders are more likely than well-being laggards to say their organization will use a variety of well-being related initiatives within the next two years. For example, they are more likely to say their organization will provide health-related information resources (64% vs. 34%), offer financial wellness programs (53% vs. 34%) and support telemedicine/virtual care arrangements (53% vs. 18%).

Survey Question: Which of the following well-being related initiatives do you think your organization will utilize within the next two years?



Well-being leaders are more than five times more likely than laggards to say their organization will offer health risk assessments within the next two years

The Future of Employee Well-being



Finding: Remote work and flexible work schedules will remain popular over the next two years

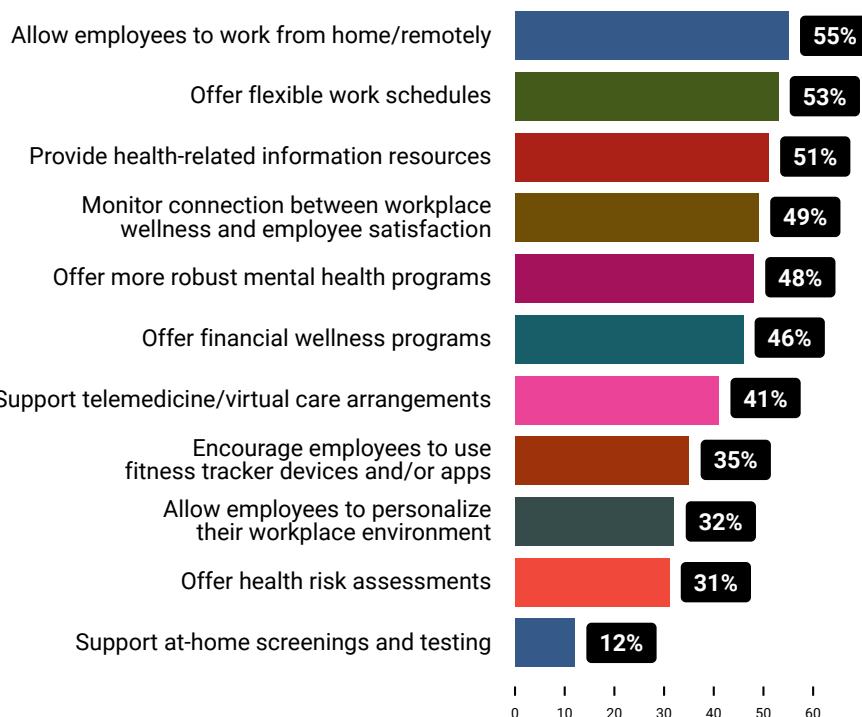
Fifty-five percent of respondents believe that organizations will continue to allow employees to work from home and 53% say that their organization will offer flexible work schedules. Just under half of respondents also feel their organizations will:

- provide health-related information resources
- monitor connection between workplace wellness and employee satisfaction
- offer more robust mental health programs
- offer financial wellness programs



Two-fifths say their organization will support telemedicine/virtual care arrangements within the next two years

Survey Question: Which of the following well-being related initiatives do you think your organization will utilize within the next two years?





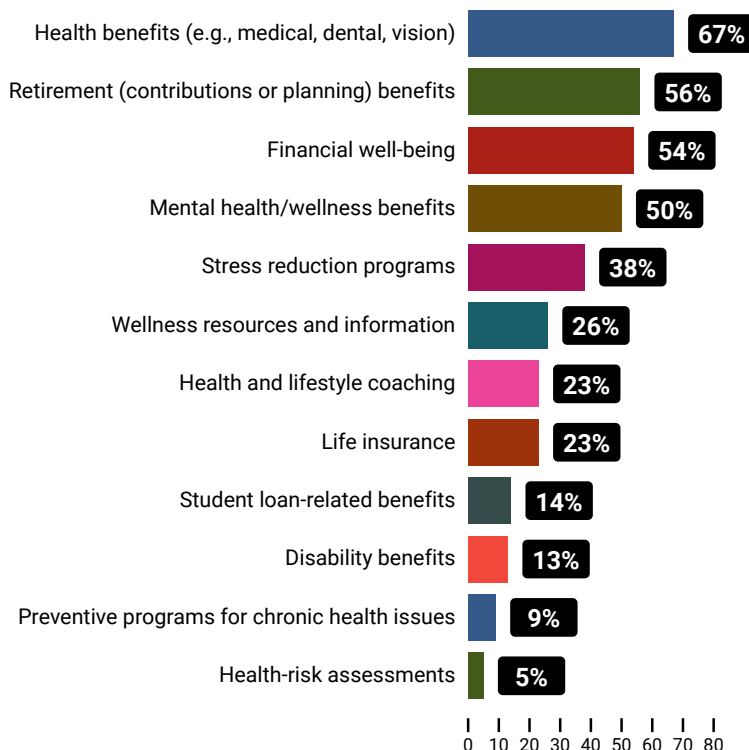
Finding: Respondents say employees in their organization are most interested in health and retirement benefits

We asked respondents which four benefit areas they believe employees are most interested in. The top four, selected by half or more of respondents, are:

- health benefits (e.g., medical, dental, vision)
- retirement (contributions or planning) benefits
- financial well-being
- mental health/wellness benefits

In an era of “The Great Resignation,” organizations should be in tune to what their current employees and prospective employees are interested in to better retain and recruit top talent.

Survey Question: Out of the benefit areas listed below, in which four are employees most interested in your organization?





Key Takeaways

Based on the findings in this study, below are some recommendations for how organizations can increase the impact of their employee well-being programs.

Key Takeaway 1

Focus on mental health and well-being of employees. The pandemic has increased mental health awareness. The uncertainties, anxieties and financial worries as a consequence of disruption, furloughs, unemployment, prolonged isolation and remote working may have adversely affected the mental health of the workforce. Retirement provisions, childcare expenses and running out of money before payday are the three greatest sources of financial stress. Consider improving employee mental health by:

- a. focusing on sleep awareness
- b. building a culture of connections through intentional check-ins
- c. creating and nurturing agile policies and practices
- d. offering flexibility and better work/life balance

Key Takeaway 2

Offer personalized wellness with a wide range of choices. Employee well-being isn't one size fits all. One employee may enjoy free yoga classes while another would prefer childcare benefits. There are well-being apps that allow for increased personalization. By offering a wide range of personalized benefits organizations can build trust, confidence and deeper engagement.

Key Takeaway 3

Implement well-being programs that focus on all five dimensions of well-being. The contemporary wellness programs incorporate an integrated approach with a concerted focus on multiple dimensions such as physical, financial, emotional, work environment and social well-being. For example, these programs could include vision care, student loan benefits, encouraging a culture of inclusivity and more.

Key
Takeaway **4**

Measure well-being initiative outcomes. Metrics associated with well-being initiative outcomes can provide insights on the effectiveness of the programs and how they need to be tweaked to deliver even better outcomes. While the measurement of engagement and impact analysis remains difficult to measure, tools such as pulse surveys, one-on-one interviews, employee net promoter scores, absenteeism rates, and health insurance costs are often used to perform qualitative and quantitative analyses of the programs.

Key
Takeaway **5**

Promote telemedicine and virtual healthcare. Virtual care and telemedicine services are gaining popularity. As remote work and virtual interactions become more common, employees could utilize virtual consultations with doctors, counselling for mental health, and therapy sessions, among others. This not only saves cost and time, but it can also boost the morale of the employees. In fact, it has become key to employee retention.¹²

Key
Takeaway **6**

Ensure employees are aware of the well-being benefits available to them. Some employees may not be aware of the entire range of benefits available to them. More than half of the respondents of a research survey conducted by Harvard Business Review Analytic Services and League, Inc. indicated that “employees are unaware of the company-provided health benefits to which they are entitled.”¹³ Ensure your organization communicates the available benefits through multiple communication channels.

Key
Takeaway **7**

Develop strong communication channels. Lack of communication is one of the three prominent employee stressors as opined by nearly half of the respondents in this study. It is important that HR managers realise the importance of timely, unequivocal and efficient communication mechanisms across multiple channels to ensure every employee is reached. Proper communication has a positive effect on the employee experience, employee engagement and the employer brand.¹⁴

¹² HR.com's HR Research Institute. (2022, January). *Virtual Care 2021-22*. Retrieved from https://www.hr.com/en/resources/free_research_white_papers/virtual-care-research_kz6l9p5u.html

¹³ Gallo, S. (2019, September 11). *3 Characteristics of Successful Employee Wellness Programs*. Retrieved from <https://trainingindustry.com/articles/compliance/3-characteristics-of-successful-employee-wellness-programs/>

¹⁴ HR.com's HR Research Institute. (2022, April). *The State of Employee Communications 2022*. Retrieved from https://www.hr.com/en/resources/free_research_white_papers/the-state-of-employee-communications_l29d6qxh.html

Key
Takeaway **8**

Plan for the future. Wellness programs take time to show their impact as they require consistent and persistent effort to produce tangible results. What is best for current employees may not work for future employees. A multidimensional and broader picture of a wellness program could be realized when we keep a long-term view.





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