



The 2019 Wellbeing Report



Table of Contents

4	The Link Between Work & Wellbeing
6	Survey Demographics
8	The Benefits Of A Wellbeing Investment
10	Reduce Work Stress
12	Boost Healthy `Mindsets
14	Wake Up To Sleep Issues
16	The Fitness Factor
18	Gender Matters
20	Build A Culture Of Wellness In 2019
22	A Note From The WorkScore Founders

“

There is a clear link between employee wellbeing and work performance.

Workplaces that care about employee wellbeing have over **6 times** more employees who feel happy at work and close to **4 times** more employees who are engaged at work.



The link between work & wellbeing

Based on WorkScore's rolling survey of Australian employees, we delve into the underlying factors that unlock increased engagement, improved productivity and overall happiness at work. The key rests on five areas — all related to wellbeing: work, body, fuel, fitness and mindset.

What happens at work has a considerable impact on employee wellbeing, both positive and negative. One third of Australian employees believe work has a negative impact of their wellbeing and one third rate work as not caring about employee wellbeing.

There is a strong link between the health and wellbeing of employees and productivity and performance. Our research shows that employees who rate their workplace as caring about employee wellbeing feel significantly more engaged and happier at work, compared with those employees who rate their workplace as not caring about employee wellbeing.

Thankfully, many companies now recognise the need for a focus on employee wellbeing, yet do not fully understand the needs of their employees or the return on investing in such programs.

In this report, we break down the most significant findings from our 2018 surveys, focusing on key factors such as sleep, stress, fitness, mindset and gender differences. We also review the benefits of investing in employee wellbeing and bring you a guide for building your own wellness culture in 2019.

“There is a strong link between wellbeing and work performance.

Understanding employee needs matters.

“

In workplaces that focus on employee wellbeing, employees rate significantly more engaged and happier at work.

 **51 %**
of people think their workplace cares about employee wellbeing



 **1 in 3**
people think their workplace does not care about their wellbeing

People who rate their workplace as **caring** about employee wellbeing:

78% Feel engaged by work

74% Are happy at work

54% Have high energy levels

47% Feel down/depressed often

58% Feel anxious often

52% Have high stress levels

People who rate their workplace as **not caring** about employee wellbeing:

38% Feel engaged by work

22% Are happy at work

26% Have high energy levels

71% Feel down/depressed often

78% Feel anxious often

75% Have high stress levels

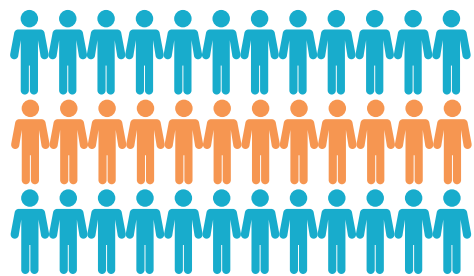


In 2018, WorkScore was named gold medal Corporate Health and Wellbeing Service Provider by the Human Resource Director Magazine.

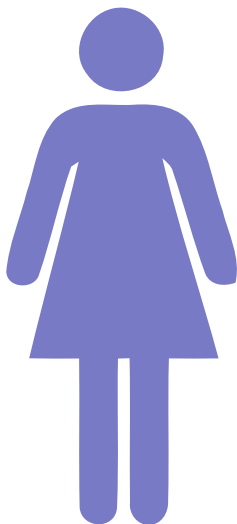
Survey Demographics

Survey Participants

12,575
Survey Participants



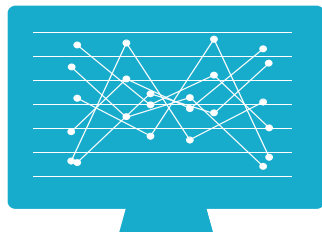
Australian
employees



9,582
Female Participants

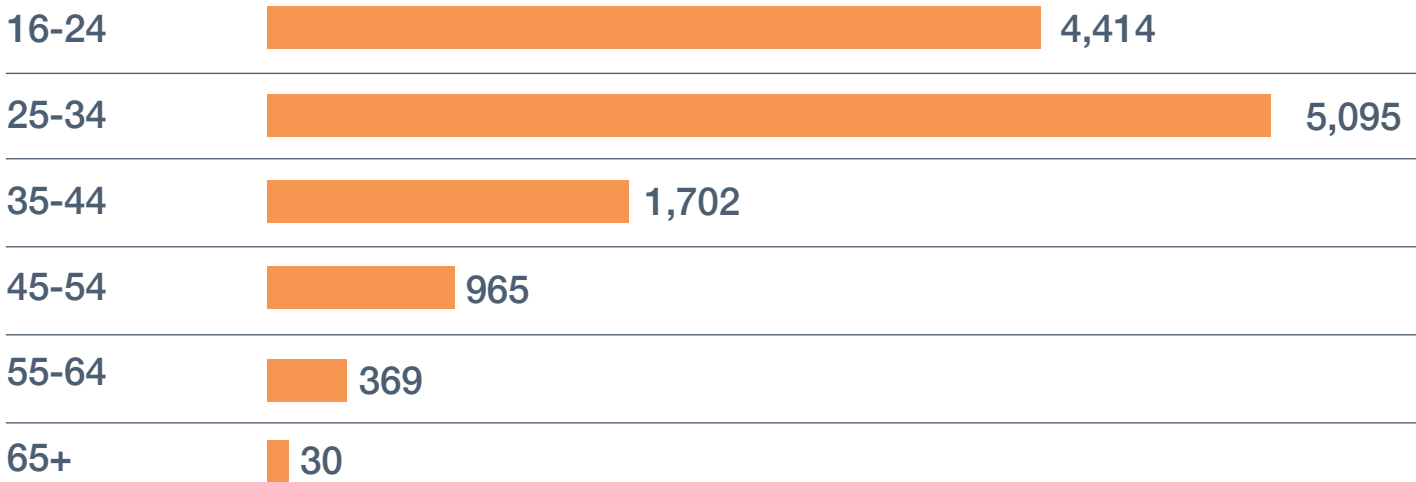


2,993
Male Participants



650,000+
data points

Age



Key Industries



Financial
Services



Retail



Health Care

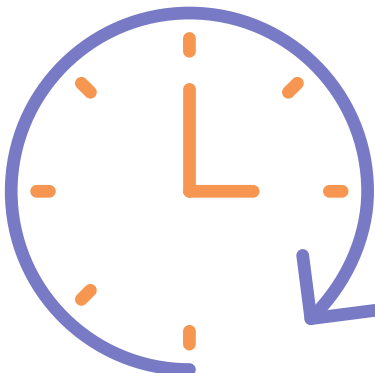


Education



Government

Hours of Work



8,941
Full-time Workers

3,634
Part-time Workers

Disclaimer: As with any raw collected data, to ensure validity of all analyses performed, a thorough data cleaning process was applied. Responders with missing or irregular responses were removed from the data-set. As such, the analysis may not necessarily be performed on all 12,575 responses.



The benefits of a wellbeing investment

Should your workplace invest in employee wellbeing? Can the workplace truly impact employee wellness? We asked WorkScore users, and the resounding answer is 'yes'.

Invest to increase engagement

Whilst nearly half (47 per cent) of people surveyed believe that work has a positive impact on their wellbeing, over a third (32 per cent) rate the impact as negative. Our data shows that investing in wellbeing reaps benefits: of the respondents who felt their workplace cared about wellbeing, 78 per cent rated as engaged at work. In workplaces that are rated as caring about employee wellbeing, there are 3.8 times more employees who are engaged at work, compared with workplaces who are rated as not caring about employee wellbeing.

Invest to increase energy

If you want to see a more energetic workforce, look after health and wellbeing at work. Our survey revealed 54 per cent of people who work in companies that care for wellbeing reported high energy levels,

“

Seventy-eight per cent of respondents who felt their workplace cared about wellbeing also rated as highly engaged at work.

compared to 26 per cent of those who feel that their workplace doesn't prioritise wellness.

Invest to increase happiness

Happy employees are more productive employees. In workplaces that are rated as caring about employee wellbeing, there are 6.2 times more employees who feel happy at work, compared with workplaces who are rated as not caring about employee wellbeing. Our data reveals that by investing in employee wellbeing you can enjoy a workforce where 74 per cent of employees feel happy at work, and a reduction in anxiety and stress levels compared to those workplaces that don't prioritise wellness.



Highlights

Wellbeing is worth it:

- Promotes higher energy levels
- Decreases anxiety, stress and depression
- Creates a happier workplace
- Increases employee engagement

Work & Wellbeing

47% 

of people think work has a positive impact on their wellbeing



1 in 3

people think work has a negative impact on their wellbeing

“

Workplaces that care about employee wellbeing have over **6 times** more employees who are happy at work.

The Difference

When an employee rates that their workplace cares about their wellbeing:

78% Feel engaged by work

74% Are happy at work

When an employee rates that their workplace **does not** care about their wellbeing:

38% Feel engaged by work

22% Are happy at work

Work/life balance

1 in 3

find it hard to switch off from work



1 in 3

struggle to achieve work/life balance

Sense of achievement at work

1 in 2

feel a sense of achievement



25%

of employees do not feel a sense of achievement



Feeling a sense of achievement at work:

↑ Happiness **50%**

↓ Depression **25%**

Reduce work stress

In October 2018, WorkScore examined data from over 11,000 employee surveys and found one in three employees reported that work impacts negatively on their overall wellbeing.

More stress, less happiness

Stress at work is wearing down your workforce. More than 78 per cent of survey respondents noted that they frequently experience stress at work. People who suffer stress every day at work are 30 per cent less happy, 40 per cent more anxious and 30 per cent more depressed than those who experience low stress.

Flexibility makes a difference

On the positive side, employees with a healthy work-life balance are 35 per cent happier, have reduced rates of depression and can deal with problems more effectively. They also report 20 per cent less mental health issues. The data also shows that having flexibility in working hours plays a role in the mental health of employees.

“Stress levels are driven by what happens at work every day. The implication is clear: invest in employee wellbeing.”

Invest in wellbeing

Significantly, stress levels are driven by what happens at work every day. We found that the ability to switch off from work increases happiness by 20 per cent and reduces anxiety and depression by 27 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. The implication is clear: invest in employee wellbeing. The data shows that employees in workplaces that care for their wellbeing are 46 per cent happier and have close to 25 per cent less anxiety and depression.

Highlights

- Employees are often feeling stressed at work
- Stressed employees also rated as regularly feeling anxious
- A healthy work and life balance can reduce anxiety
- Investing in wellbeing reduces stress and anxiety

It's not all about time

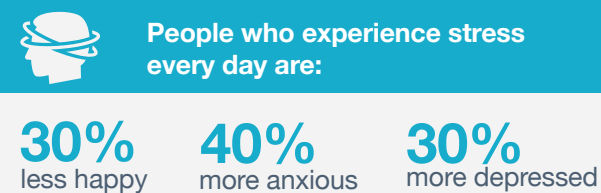
Interestingly, reducing work hours (to part-time or casual) doesn't affect happiness or levels of anxiety and depression. It seems there's more to finding work-life balance than just working shorter hours.

Work negatively impacting employee wellbeing

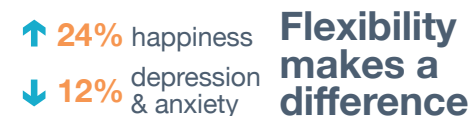


“People who experience stress every day at work are 40% more anxious.”

More stress = less happiness



People need work/life balance



What can employers do?

1 Provide regular, meaningful recognition

Encourage & support skills development 2

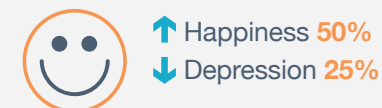
3 Promote work/life balance and flexibility

Focus on teamwork and culture 4

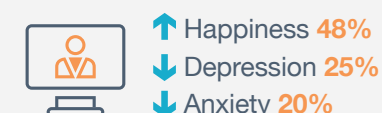
5 Let employees switch off from work

Reducing stress & improving engagement

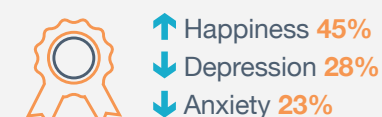
Feeling a sense of achievement



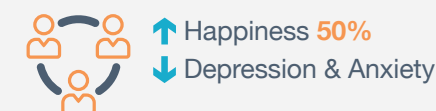
Being highly engaged in their work



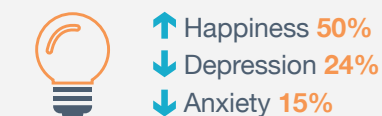
Regular recognition at work



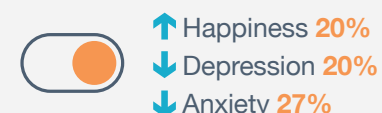
Sense of belonging and teamwork



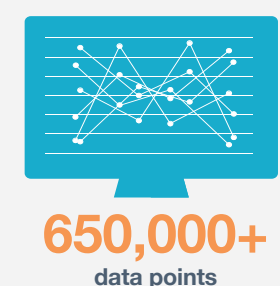
Using skills at work



Being able to switch off from work



The data





Boost healthy mindsets

In September 2018, WorkScore analysed data from over 11,000 employee surveys and found that women rate themselves as regularly more anxious, more depressed and less able to deal with their problems than men.

Eating for better mental health

A healthy diet reduces the impairment caused by a mental health condition by 23 per cent. Specifically, more fruit and vegetables and less sugar increased positivity and general wellbeing. Eating more than five serves of fruit per day (compared to one serve) increases wellbeing rate by 10 per cent and positivity by 13 per cent.

Exercise and mindset

Being fit is also a great way to improve mindset, with those rating themselves as fit reporting 20 per cent less anxiety and depression and increased positivity at the same rate. Meanwhile, taking regular full lunch breaks can decrease anxiety by 10%, and taking short breaks during the day increases positivity by 14%.

“

Key lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise and taking breaks impact mindset for both men and women.

Gender matters

Surprisingly, women who do all the right things to improve their mental health are struggling to match their male counterparts regarding a positive mindset:

- Females that take a full lunch break every day only reach the same anxiety score as males who never take a full lunch break
- With depression, females must eat at least four serves of vegetables a day to match the rating of males who only eat one serving per day.



Highlights

- Women appear to be more anxious than male employees
- Strong links to a healthy diet and feeling positive
- Taking regular breaks is important to the wellbeing of employees
- Keeping physically fit can reduce prevalence of anxiety

Women suffering more in the workplace



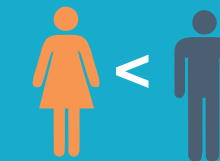
Women rate themselves as:

12% MORE anxious

8% MORE depressed

8% LESS able to deal with their problems

Average Mindset Scores:



On average, women report as having lower mindset scores than men.

“

Employers must help women in the workplace improve their mindset, positivity and overall wellbeing.

Eating for better mental health



Employees with a healthy diet report:

24% More able to deal with problems

25% More positive

23% Reduction in impairment caused by mental health condition

5+ serves of fruit (compared to 1 serve):



Increases wellbeing by **10%**



Increases positivity by **13%**

Exercise & mindset



Employees who rate themselves as fit report:

20% Improvement in anxiety, depression and positivity

Gender matters

Identical levels of anxiety:



Women who take a full lunch break



Men who NEVER take a full lunch break

Identical levels of depression:



4 serves of vegetables per day



1 serve of vegetables per day

Take a break to boost mental health



Regular full lunch breaks can decrease anxiety by **10%**



Taking short breaks during the day increases positivity by **14%**

What can employers do?



Remove junk food from vending machines



Encourage regular short breaks



Provide mental health support



Provide fruit and vegetables as snacks



Encourage team fitness activities (ensuring both female and male focus)

The data



11,000+ participants



Australian employees



650,000+ data points



Wake up to sleep issues

In August 2018, WorkScore crunched the numbers on sleep with 8,800 survey responses and found that it's impacting wellbeing and performance at work.

What does sleep have to do with work performance? As it turns out, quite a lot. We found less than one in three employees are getting enough sleep each night and not getting enough sleep is a significant contributor to increased stress at work.

Too little

Employees who sleep less than seven hours per night are 23 per cent more stressed, while those who sleep less than five hours per night rate work 17 per cent more stressful.

Too much

However, more sleep doesn't always mean better wellbeing and performance. People who sleep more than 10 hours per night report having 50 per cent less energy than those who get seven to nine hours of shut-eye. Interestingly, they also report having less energy and concentration than those who sleep less than five hours.

“

Not getting enough sleep is a significant contributor to increased stress at work.

Think Balance

When it comes to sleep, like so many things in life, it's all about getting the balance right.

Workplace Influence

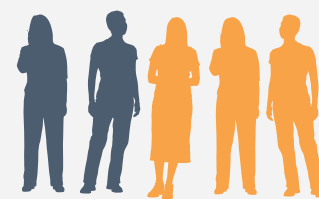
Improve what happens after hours by encouraging employees to disconnect after work and reducing work communication outside business hours.



Highlights

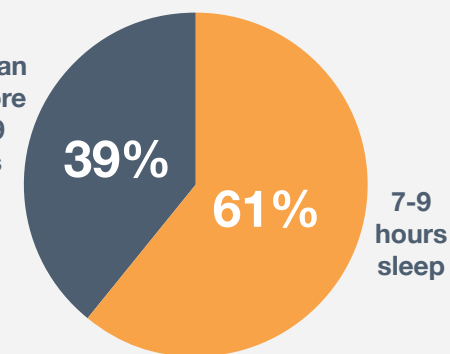
- Strong links to sleep issues and high stress levels
- Sleeping 7 – 9 hours per night leads to better wellbeing
- Too much sleep reduces energy levels
- Not enough sleep increases stress levels

Employers need to wake up to sleep issues



2 in 5
people not getting enough sleep

Less than 7 or more than 9 hours sleep



Less sleep equals more unpaid work



48%

48% of people who sleep less than 5 hours per night work an additional 6-8 unpaid hours per week



People who sleep 8-9 hours per night work the least amount of additional unpaid hours.

This data should be keeping employers awake at night!

“ Employees who sleep seven to nine hours per night have 25% more energy

Getting enough sleep delivers better work performance



Employees who get 7-9 hours sleep per night:



Score **25%** higher for overall wellbeing



Find it **35%** easier to switch off from work



Have **25%** more energy



Rate their work/life balance the highest



Report the highest flexibility at work

The effect of too little or too much sleep



Too little sleep is stressful:



Employees who sleep less than 7 hours per night are 23% more stressed



Employees who sleep less than 5 hours per night are 17% more stressed



Too much sleep saps energy:

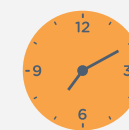


Employees who sleep more than 10 hours per night have 50% less energy

What can employers do?



Allow employees to disconnect from work



Encourage breaks from work during the day



Schedule walking meetings for more fresh air

The data



8,800+
participants



Australian employees



500,000+
data points

The fitness factor

Based on data provided by nearly 9,000 participants in July 2018, WorkScore found that people who exercise the most have the highest scores around general wellbeing and performance at work.

Unfit and stressed

While there's a high correlation between regular exercise and being focused at work, 21 per cent of people we surveyed said they don't exercise at all in an average week. Alarming, people who don't exercise also rate themselves as having low concentration at work and as highly stressed.

Fit for work

Conversely, people who exercise three days or more per week rate higher for concentration, have lower stress levels, take regular breaks at work and find it easier to switch off from work. This demonstrates a clear link between exercising and performance at work, reinforcing the need for employers to provide more opportunities to exercise.

“

People who don't exercise rate themselves as having low concentration at work and as highly stressed.

More for men, less for women

Another interesting finding is the difference in commitment to exercise between men and women. While 23 per cent of women say they don't exercise at all, this applies to only 16 per cent of men. Meanwhile, 12 per cent of men exercise six days or more, but only 5 per cent of women say the same thing.

Highlights

- Strong links between regular exercise and performance at work
- Exercising 3 days a week improves concentration
- Employees who exercise find it easier to switch off from work
- Men exercise more regularly than women

How fitness makes a difference at work

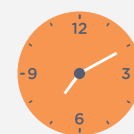
People who exercise 3 days per week or more:



Rate higher for concentration



Have lower stress levels



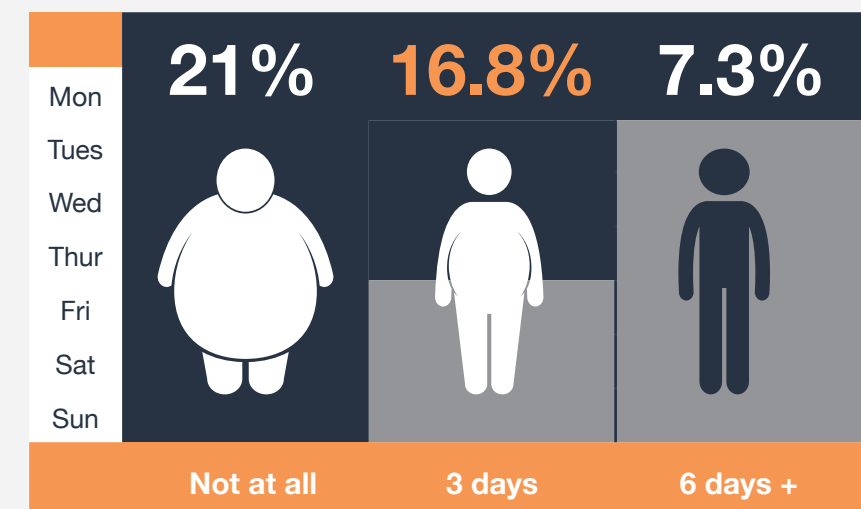
Take regular breaks at work



Find it easier to switch off from work

How often do people exercise?

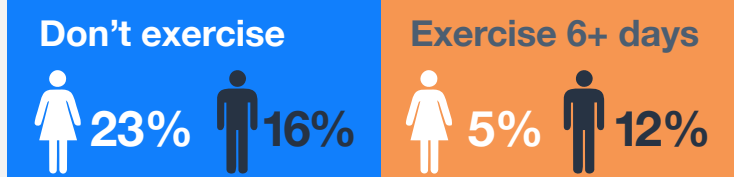
There's a high correlation between regular exercise and being focused at work. Those people who exercise the most have the highest scores around their general wellbeing and their performance at work.



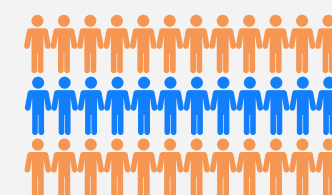
“ While 23% of women say they don't exercise at all, this applies to only 16% of men.

Gender matters

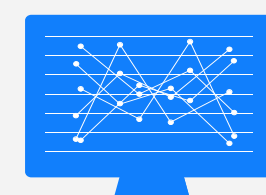
There's a notable difference between men and women when it comes to commitment to exercise. What can employers do to address this imbalance?



The data



9,000
participants



540,000
data points



1 in 5
people not fit for work

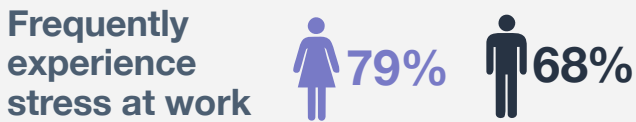
Gender Matters

WorkScore found that when it comes to wellbeing, men and women have different needs. We highlight the key differences observed across five areas: work, body, fuel, fitness and mindset.

Work

Work is more stressful for women

More women reported higher stress levels (65 per cent) than men (51 per cent). While the majority of men (68 per cent) and women (79 per cent) surveyed said they frequently experience stress at work, there are significantly more females who struggle with stress.



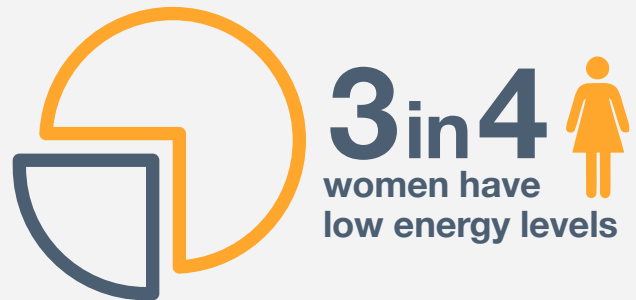
“There are significantly more females who struggle with stress at work.”

Body

Body issues for both genders

Both men and women struggle with sleep. Only 29 per cent of women and 40 per cent of men reported experiencing good sleep. It's not surprising then that nearly three-quarters of women surveyed said they have low energy levels and 58 per cent of men said the same.

We also found that 14 per cent of men and 25 per cent of women have a high waist circumference (for women: 89cm+, for men: 103cm+) putting them at risk of developing chronic diseases.



Fuel

Fuel fails for men

A quarter of men surveyed do not eat healthily. When it comes to getting at least four serves of the good stuff, women outrated men, with five per cent more females eating four serves of fruit or vegetables a day. It's a significant concern since those who regularly eat fruits and vegetables report lower levels of anxiety and depression.

Eating for better mental health

Women who eat 5+ serves of fruit & vegetables (compared to eating <1):

20% More positive
25% Less depressed

Men who eat 5+ serves of fruit & vegetables (compared to eating <1):

16% More positive
26% Less depressed

Fitness

Fitness comes first for men

More men are committed to exercising than women, with only 16 per cent of males reporting they don't exercise compared to 23 per cent of females. Men are also spending more time on exercise. The survey revealed 12 per cent of men exercise six or more times per week while only five per cent of women did the same.



Mindset

Mindset woes affect both

For men and women, mental struggles are a key concern. Among women, 70 per cent said they feel anxious most of the time during the survey week, and 53 per cent of men said the same. Also, 59 per cent of women reported feeling depressed, and 49 per cent of men suffered the same feelings.



Build a culture of wellness in 2019

Based on the findings of WorkScore's 2018 surveys and the feedback from over 12,500 employees, we've put together 5 simple steps to improve employee wellbeing and create a culture of wellness for 2019.

1 Gather Insights

- Understand the wellbeing needs of employees with a wellbeing survey
- Build your wellbeing policy around the key areas identified

2 Create awareness

- Communicate your commitment to wellbeing with a formal policy
- Emphasise the importance of employee wellbeing and adopting a healthy lifestyle

3 Invest in a wellbeing program

- Mental health training and programs
- Healthy food options, such as fruit and healthy vending machine snacks
- Fitness and sporting activities
- Provide workplace flexibility in hours and location
- Improve ergonomics of workspaces and work equipment to support overall wellness at work

“

Five simple steps to improve employee wellbeing, based on feedback from over 12,500 employees.

4 Lead by example

- Encourage regular breaks and full lunch breaks for employees
- Allow people to switch off by reducing work calls and emails outside working hours
- Promote and support work and life balance
- Recognise employee achievements
- Facilitate regular team-based activities

5 Key Steps

1 Gather insights

2 Create awareness

3 Invest in wellbeing

4 Lead by example

5 Check in regularly

5 Check in regularly

- Monitor the dynamic wellbeing of employees with regular discussions, check-ins and encourage open feedback
- Adapt your programs to cater for the changing needs of employees

“

Workplaces that care about employee wellbeing have close to **4 times** more employees who are engaged at work.

A note from the WorkScore founders

Through working with many innovative and forward-thinking business leaders, 2018 was a remarkable year of growth for WorkScore. With over 15,000 employees actively using the WorkScore platform we have captured over 1 million data-points on the correlation between employees' experiences at work and their wellbeing.

The results of our surveys highlight the need for a focus on, and the benefits gained from investing in, employee wellbeing. In organisations that demonstrate they care about wellbeing they benefit from over **6 times** more employees who feel happy at work and close to **4 times** more employees who are engaged at work. Importantly, when employees rate that work cares about their wellbeing they find it easier to switch off from work and rate lower levels of stress.

By using WorkScore's data-driven dashboard, our clients gain real-time access to the wellbeing of their people and can build customised wellness and engagement programs for maximised return on investment.

With the release of our new modules in early 2019 on diversity & inclusion, engagement and financial wellbeing we can support our clients with deeper insights into employee experience.

Please reach out should you be interested in learning more about how WorkScore can support your business performance.



Suzanne Deeming

Managing Director & Wellbeing Expert



Jeff McLean

WorkScore Co-founder

suzanne@workscore.com.au | M +61 434 347 916

Our leadership team

WorkScore has assembled some of Australia's leading wellness and organisational experts, mental health professionals, data scientists, researchers and digital evangelists who all value the connection between employee wellbeing and business productivity.



Ashley Rowe

Client Manager



Jessica Jarvis

Psychologist - MindHub



Katelin Addison

Lead UX Designer



Amaya Tasker

Counsellor - MindHub



Melanie Penny

Fitness and Wellness Expert



Grant Feng

Data Scientist



Annelysee Jorgenson

Lead Researcher





Our Mission

At WorkScore, our mission is to empower every workplace to prioritise overall wellbeing, inspire employees to lead healthier lives and create thriving workplaces.

We believe that people are the core of any business and by providing key insights into employee wellbeing, employers can provide targeted wellbeing and engagement programs, with accurate measurement of the results and a greater return on investment.

