GOOD DAY AT WORK robertson cooper

GOOD DAY AT WORK

Insights Report

September 2025

How High Wellbeing Drives High Performance



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Foreword

By Matt Liggins, Managing Director

Having worked in health and wellbeing across private, public and third sectors for over twenty years - engaging with organisations of all sizes and sectors - I have been fortunate to see the profound impact a well-executed wellbeing strategy can have. I also understand that employee wellbeing can often be pushed into the background by many competing priorities, which can be seen as more pressing.

While the health and wellbeing of employees may not always be the top workplace priority, our research helps strengthen the case that wellbeing can be the route to solving numerous problems and achieving business goals. Whether organisations are striving for financial gain, growth and development, improved productivity, enhanced reputation, reduced absence, reduced employee attrition or better engagement, wellbeing can be the answer. It is difficult to think of any other workplace initiative that does all of this and so effectively, with our research showing significant changes in key metrics such as productivity, intention to leave, advocacy, and sickness absence.

Employees are the most important asset of any organisation; therefore, it makes sense that supporting people to be their best selves at work yields results, and morally, it is the right thing to do.

Beyond building the business case, the insights and recommendations produced by our business psychologists will prove valuable for all workplaces to be able to take tangible steps to more good days at work and the benefits this brings. We present a model for what good looks like, including the key drivers of employee wellbeing and business outcomes, as well as the key trends which are affecting outcomes. This allows for a strategic approach which embeds wellbeing into everyday ways of working to bring sustainable change and the greatest impact.

I am really proud of the work of the Robertson Cooper team on this report, and I am delighted to share the findings of both the impact of good days at work and the recommendations of how to achieve more in your organisation.



> **“It is difficult to think of any other workplace initiative that does all of this, and so effectively.”**

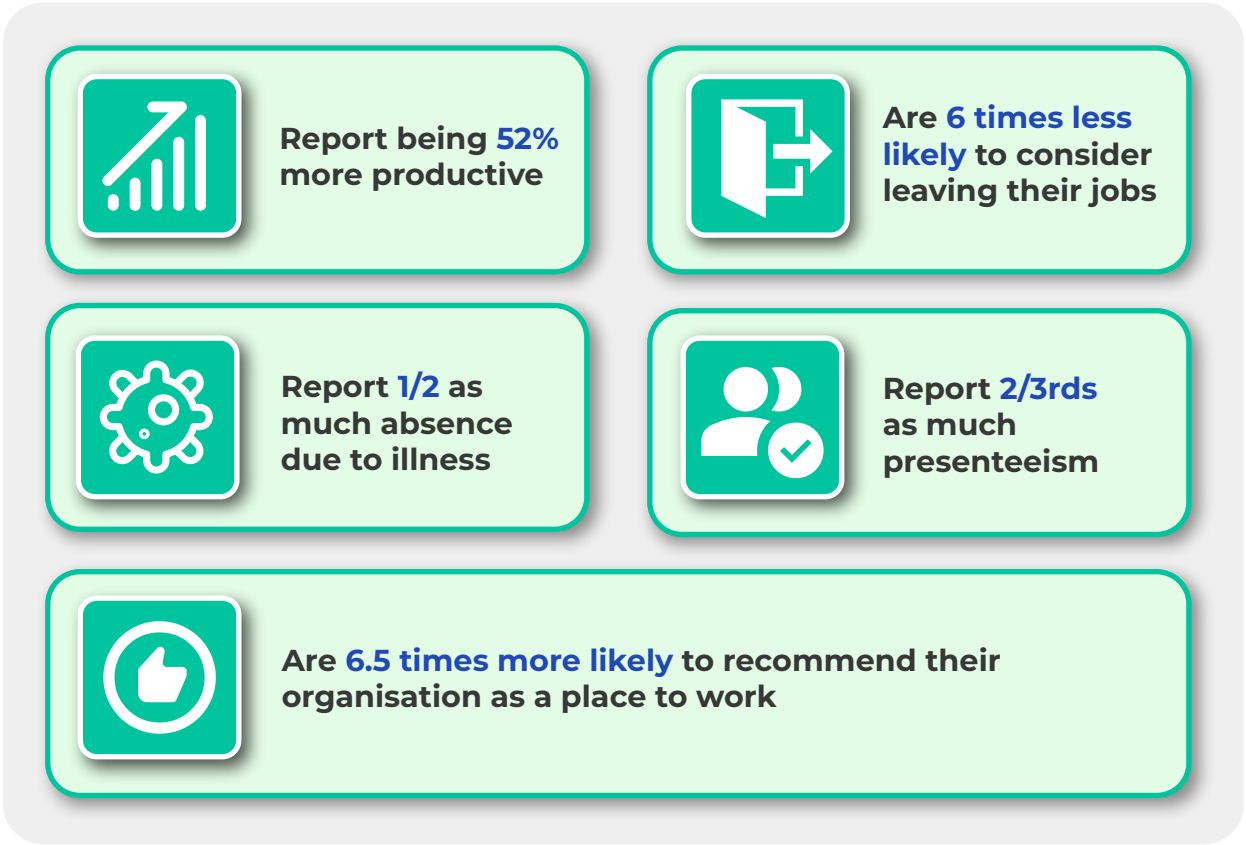
Executive Summary

Robertson Cooper has been working with organisations for 25 years to develop healthy workplace cultures to support engaged, high-performing teams.

Our mission is to create Good Days at Work for more people, more often. The idea of a Good Day at Work resonates with everyone and is something we want to experience as often as possible. However, to achieve this, we need to understand the science behind the concept. At Robertson Cooper, we have carried out extensive research to understand the specific ingredients that make up a Good Day. This enables us to measure how often people are experiencing Good Days and, importantly, identify how we can create more of them.

Why should organisations invest in improving wellbeing and creating more Good Days at Work?

Whilst we instinctively strive for more Good Days at Work as individuals, what is often overlooked is how taking a strategic approach to workplace wellbeing can help businesses overcome common challenges, such as problems attracting and retaining talent and high levels of absenteeism. Compared to those with low wellbeing, those with high wellbeing:



How will this report help organisations overcome obstacles to meet business targets?

Our Good Day at Work Insights Report (2025) provides data-driven recommendations to help organisations unlock a variety of business benefits associated with wellbeing and Good Days at Work.

The insights within this report are based on analysis of our dataset of ***almost 70,000 workers***, spanning multiple organisations, countries and industries, who have completed our Good Day at Work Assessment ***over the past 5 years.***



Almost 70,000 workers over the past 5 years

Our report highlights the role that wellbeing and Good Days at Work play when it comes to improving key business outcomes, including productivity, absenteeism and intention to leave. To help organisations unlock these benefits, we have examined the data to identify the key factors that are influencing these outcomes; this enables us to share clear actions that organisations can take to drive business improvements.

What are the key insights and recommendations that organisations need to know?

The section below summarises the key findings and recommendations to help businesses unlock the benefits of workplace wellbeing, with more detailed insights and guidance included later in this report.

Productivity

Within our analysis, ***4 in 5*** workers rated their level of productivity at ***61%*** or above, with half of workers rating their productivity at ***81%*** or higher. However, health challenges threaten to impede productivity, with ***22%*** regularly facing sleep problems, such as insomnia, and ***25%*** frequently experiencing periods of constant tiredness.



4 in 5 workers rated their level of productivity at ***61% or above***



22% of workers regularly face sleeping problems



Half of workers rated their productivity at ***81% or higher***



25% of workers face periods of constant tiredness

How can a focus on wellbeing improve productivity?

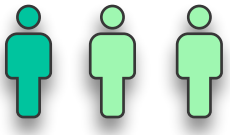
Wellbeing can be the key to unlocking higher levels of productivity. Our analysis found that those with high wellbeing report ***being productive 91% of the time, compared to just 60% for those with low wellbeing - a 52% uplift compared to their peers***.

Our analysis found that the following factors were key drivers of productivity:

Workload: Workload is a challenge for many people, with ***1 in 3 reporting challenges in this area***. If workload is assigned and managed effectively, there is scope to improve both wellbeing and productivity. Managers play a key role in effective resource planning and should be confident in both spotting the signs that workload pressure may be becoming excessive and providing effective support and guidance to manage this

Control and autonomy: Strengthening a sense of control and autonomy can help to improve productivity. For example, productivity can also be improved by empowering workers to make autonomous decisions, where appropriate, without unnecessary levels of approval which may impair productivity.

1 in 3 people report challenges with workload

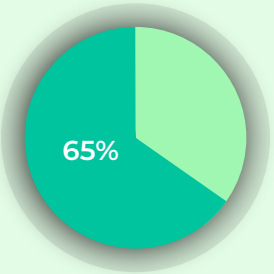


Absenteeism and Presenteeism

Absenteeism (i.e. absence due to illness or injury) and presenteeism (i.e. working whilst unwell) are two issues that can impact on productivity and lead to significant costs to businesses. We would encourage organisations to read our previous whitepaper - 'Seeing Presenteeism Differently: Revealing the Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood' – for a detailed analysis of the different types of 'working whilst unwell' and their associated impact on productivity.

Our analysis found that workers are more likely to work whilst unwell than take time off due to sickness.

65% of the GWP (General Working Population) report having worked whilst unwell over the past 3 months, compared to 29% who had been absent due to illness or injury.



How can a focus on wellbeing improve absenteeism and presenteeism?

Those with high wellbeing ***report 1/2 as much absence and 2/3 as much presenteeism*** than those with low wellbeing.

Whilst health issues clearly play an important role, our analysis found that workload is a key factor that influences both absenteeism and presenteeism. Therefore, following the recommendations presented within this report relating to managing workload can help to positive impact absenteeism and presenteeism, as well as productivity.

Advocacy

Recent research shows rising competition for talent over recent years, with almost two thirds of organisations reporting challenges when it comes to attracting talent[1]. In an increasingly digital age, where word-of-mouth experiences spread quickly via social media, employee advocacy helps to maintain a positive, authentic employer brand and reputation, which is vital when it comes to attracting talent.

Whilst our analysis found that the majority of workers are happy to recommend their organisation as a place to work, a large number show some hesitancy. Around 2 in 5 workers express low to moderate levels of advocacy, with less than 1 in 4 stating that they are extremely likely to recommend their organisation as a place to work.

How can a focus on wellbeing improve employee advocacy?

Employee advocacy needs to be authentic in order to have a positive impact. Creating an environment that genuinely supports wellbeing helps to achieve this; our analysis shows that...

those with high wellbeing are 6.5 times more likely to recommend their organisation as a place to work than those with low wellbeing.

Our analysis found that the following factors were key drivers of advocacy:

Communication: Adopting a 'two-way' approach to communication, where workers are well informed about what is happening within the organisation and are also invited to share their own feedback and ideas, is likely to improve advocacy. *With 1 in 3 workers reporting issues* with their organisation's approach to communication, this is an area where there is clear opportunity for improvement.

Management style: Managers who are overly critical with an aggressive style create a barrier to advocacy. Providing managers with valid and reliable insights into their style of leadership, alongside leadership development initiatives tailored to specific levels of management, can help to improve capability in this area.

1 in 3 workers reported issues with their organisation's approach to communication



Retaining Talent

Retention is another key issue faced by many organisations, with over half reporting retention challenges in recent research[1]. Many organisations collect turnover data as a way of identifying retention issues.

[1]Hogarth, A. and McCartney, C. (2024) Resourcing and talent planning report 2024.London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

However, measuring intention to leave can help to identify issues at an early stage and provides organisations with the opportunity to prevent intention to leave progressing to actual turnover.

With **1 in 4 workers stating that they do not feel valued, trusted and motivated**, it is unsurprising that many of the workers in our dataset were thinking about leaving their organisation. Almost half of the GWP were considering leaving, with almost 1 in 5 showing high intention to leave.

How can a focus on wellbeing improve intention to leave?

A lack of wellbeing support is a key factor influencing a person's decision to leave their organisation[2], therefore, it's unsurprising that...

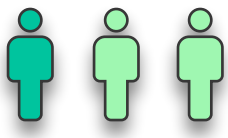
those experiencing high wellbeing are 6 times less likely to consider leaving their job.



Our analysis found that the following factors were key drivers of intention to leave:

Control and autonomy: Control is a key driver of multiple important outcomes; however, *1 in 3 people currently report issues relating to their level of control at work*. When people feel they have been involved in decisions relating to their jobs, they perceive a greater level of influence over their work environment and are less likely to consider leaving. Providing flexibility (in terms of working hours or location, for example) is also likely to improve retention and can help people to work in a way that enables them to be at their most productive.

Support at work: People are more likely to remain working in an organisation where they have good quality working relationships and effective support from management. However, *27% of people currently feel they lack support at work*. Taking a long-term, strategic approach to building a supportive, inclusive and psychologically safe culture provides the conditions for supportive relationships to flourish. Our case studies provide useful real-world examples of clients who have taken this approach.



1 in 3 people currently report issues relating to their level of control at work

27% of people currently feel they lack support at work



[2]Hays (2025), Hays UK 2025 Working Well Report [Online]. Available at https://www.hays.co.uk/market-insights/working-well-report.

Taking a strategic approach to drive improvements

To unlock the business benefits and create a culture which supports wellbeing and Good Days at Work, actions should form part of a co-ordinated, strategic approach to wellbeing which is based around your own data insights.

This involves:

Utilising data insights: Establishing your baseline when it comes to health, wellbeing and business outcomes, and identifying the most important factors driving these outcomes, helps to develop an impactful wellbeing strategy that delivers results.

Taking targeted action: Everyone in the organisation has a part to play when it comes to creating more Good Days at Work. Therefore, it is important that organisations take targeted action across all levels, creating the organisational infrastructure needed to support Good Days at Work and considering the different levels of capability and support needed across employees, managers and leaders.

Our case studies provide real-world examples of how our clients have taken a strategic approach to embed wellbeing and Good Days at Work within their organisation.



Good Day at Work: Background

At Robertson Cooper, our mission is to create Good Days at Work for more people, more often. A Good Day at Work is something we all want to achieve. However, the benefits of a Good Day at Work extend beyond helping us to feel good. Our research has found that Good Days at Work are also good for business, positively impacting on key outcomes such as productivity, advocacy and intention to leave. Our extensive research and data collection has enabled us to identify four key ingredients that make up a Good Day at Work:

Feeling energised: Positive emotional states that are experienced by employees throughout their working day.

Working well with others: Positive relationships with colleagues, managers and customers or service users.

Getting things done: Feeling that we have been productive and able to achieve our work goals.

Work that matters: Feeling that our tasks are worthwhile, valued and have a positive impact on others.

For over 25 years, we have been supporting organisations to unlock the full potential of their people, delivering evidence-based solutions and providing data-driven insights which enable people to experience more good days and perform at their best. Within this report, we will be sharing key insights from our analysis of data collected through our Good Day at Work (GDAW) Assessment (see Appendix 1 for a more detailed methodology). Our dataset is made up of the responses of almost 70,000 people working across multiple countries, industries and sectors. We refer to this dataset as our General Working Population (GWP) Norm Group.

The GDAW Assessment provides an insight into how people are currently feeling at work, how they feel towards their organisation, and how this may be impacting on several business performance metrics. To help organisations take meaningful action, the survey identifies the key factors within the work environment that are driving these outcomes.

Good Day at Work Assessment

Workplace Drivers & Individual Outcomes

Good Day at Work Outcomes

Good Day at Work Indicators

This graphic is designed to capture what makes a good day at work and all the key elements we measure in our assessment. Full details of the science behind our good day at work model can be found in the appendix on page 40.



Good Day at Work Insights & Recommendations

This section provides an in-depth exploration of our data with commentary and recommendations provided by our team of psychologists, based on analysis of our General Working Population (GWP) Norm Group data. For more information around how we analysed the data, please refer to Appendix 1.

The results of our analysis and recommendations are presented across the four areas:

01 **Why should organisations invest in supporting wellbeing and creating more Good Days at Work?**

02 **What can organisations do to create more Good Days at Work and improve business outcomes?**

03 **What are the key trends across workplace health, wellbeing and engagement?**

04 **What factors in the work environment impact a Good Day at Work?**



01

Why should organisations invest in supporting wellbeing and creating more Good Days at Work?

At Robertson Cooper, our founders, Professor Sir Cary Cooper and Professor Ivan Robertson, proposed that psychological wellbeing can be described as “the affective and purposive psychological state that people experience while they are at work” - in other words, how people feel at work and whether they feel their work is meaningful and has purpose.

The moral case for improving workplace wellbeing is clear; experiencing better wellbeing is good for people. But is it also good for business?

We investigated the impact that both psychological wellbeing and Good Days at Work have on key business outcomes. Our analysis clearly showed that when workers are experiencing high levels of wellbeing and more Good Days at Work, businesses also reap the benefits.

High wellbeing leads to better business outcomes

Across our General Working Population (GWP) Norm Group, people in the top 20% of wellbeing, compared to those in the bottom 20%:

Report being 52% more productive

Workers with low wellbeing report being productive 60% of the time, whereas those with high wellbeing report being productive 91% of the time.



Are 6 times less likely to be considering leaving their jobs

46% of those with low wellbeing often consider leaving their jobs, compared to only 8% of those with high wellbeing.



Are 6.5 times more likely to recommend their organisation as a place to work

Just 12% of those with low wellbeing are likely to recommend their organisation as a place to work, compared with 76% of those with high wellbeing.



Report 1/2 as much absence due to illness

46% of those with low wellbeing report absence (due to illness) over the last 3 months, compared to 25% of those with high wellbeing.



Report 2/3 as much presenteeism

78% of those with low wellbeing report working whilst unwell over the last 3 months, compared to 49% of those with high wellbeing.



Our findings show that levels of wellbeing are consistently linked to better business outcomes, which is consistent with previous research[3].

[3]De Neve, J. E., & Ward, G. (2025). Why Workplace Wellbeing Matters: The Science Behind Employee Happiness and Organizational Performance. Harvard Business Press

Considering the significant costs associated with lower wellbeing, organisations run the risk of paying the price of inaction. A report by Business in the Community (2023) estimated a £130-£370 billion opportunity by improving employee wellbeing in the UK.[4] They estimated the direct costs of poor wellbeing through attrition (£12-36bn), absenteeism (£4bn) and the potential benefits of good wellbeing through reduced presenteeism and improved productivity (£85-288bn), retention (£15-24bn) and attraction (£13bn).

There are economic benefits to investing in workplace wellbeing. For example, a study which included over 250 million data points from the jobs website Indeed found that US firms with higher wellbeing had higher company valuation, higher return on their assets and greater profits[5]. A further study using Gallup data (1.9 million employees, across 230 organisations, in 49 industries and 73 countries) found that higher employee wellbeing was consistently associated with higher productivity and firm performance[6].

Ultimately, the best data to consider when reviewing the business benefits of wellbeing is yours. Bringing together your annual sickness absence costs, the direct and indirect costs of attrition and recruitment, and other meaningful business metrics, alongside measures of wellbeing, offers the opportunity to quantify the benefits of improving workplace wellbeing.

"It feels logical that higher wellbeing is associated with better performance (and academic studies support this), but to see this in our data is important. When we work with companies to look at these numbers at an organisation level, we can quantify the business benefits with internal cost data, and the savings really come to life."



Dr. Judith Grant,
CPsychol Senior Psychologist and Workplace Strategist

The Power of One More Good Day at Work

Our mission is to create more Good Days at Work for more people, more often. The benefits to individuals are clear, but what impact does this have on business performance?

Our extensive research has helped us to define and conceptualise what we mean by a Good Day at Work. This enables us to measure how often people are experiencing the factors associated with a Good Day, and what the effects are when these Good Days happen more often.

[4]Business in the Community (2023). Prioritise People: Unlock the value of a thriving workforce. Available at: https://www.bitc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/bitc-report-wellbeing-prioritise-people-v3-oct23.pdf
[5]De Neve, J-E., Kaats, M., Ward, G. (2024). Workplace Wellbeing and Firm Performance. University of Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre Working Paper 2304. doi.org/10.5287/ora-bpkbjayvk
[6]Krekel, C., Ward, G. & De Neve, J-E. (2019) Employee Wellbeing, Productivity and Firm Performance. Centre for Economic Performance. Retrieved from https://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1605.pdf

By increasing your average number of Good Days at Work by one day per week, our research shows the following improvements in GDAW Assessment scores (based on 0-100 scales):

- **18-point** increase in productivity
- **21-point** decrease in intention to leave
- **7-point** reduction in instances of absenteeism
- **17-point** increase in advocacy
- **16-point** increase in job satisfaction
- **18-point** reduction in presenteeism



Good Days at Work aren't just good for people; they are good for business. As highlighted through our analysis, as well as within the studies referenced above, organisations who overlook the importance of Good Days at Work and workplace wellbeing are at risk of falling behind their competitors when it comes to attracting and retaining talent and achieving consistent, sustainable levels of high performance.

02

What can organisations do to create more Good Days at Work and improve business outcomes?

This section focuses on how organisations can unlock business benefits, including: more Good Days at Work; increased levels of advocacy; reduced intention to leave; higher levels of productivity; and reduced levels of absenteeism and presenteeism.

We will firstly present the current context, sharing key statistics across the above areas. We will then present key recommendations for improvement across these areas, based on the results of our data analysis.

The current context: Good Days at Work and business outcomes

How often are people experiencing Good Days at Work?

On average, the GWP are experiencing the factors associated with a Good Day at Work 4.05 days per week. However, some aspects of a 'Good Day' are experienced more frequently than others.

Looking more closely at each of the components of a Good Day at Work (see page 9 for definitions), we can see that the aspects that are most frequently experienced relate to the relationships people hold at work and the extent to which they feel their work is meaningful:

• ***Working well with others*** is the aspect of a Good Day at Work that is being experienced most often (4.65 days per week).

• This is closely followed by the extent to which people are experiencing ***work that matters*** by feeling that they make a ***valuable contribution*** (4.4 days per week).

However, workers report positive experiences and a sense of achievement less frequently within the working week:

The lowest scoring component of a Good Day at Work relates to ***feeling energised*** (3.35 days per week).

Workers experience an overall sense of ***getting things done*** 3.85 days per week on average.

These findings suggest that the areas with the most opportunity for improvement relate to workers' sense of achievement and positive experiences at work – specifically, those experiences that are associated with positive, energising emotions.

Our analysis found that these are the two components of a Good Day at Work that have the strongest relationships with productivity; the more often workers experience positive emotions at work and feel able to achieve their goals, the more productive they are likely to feel.

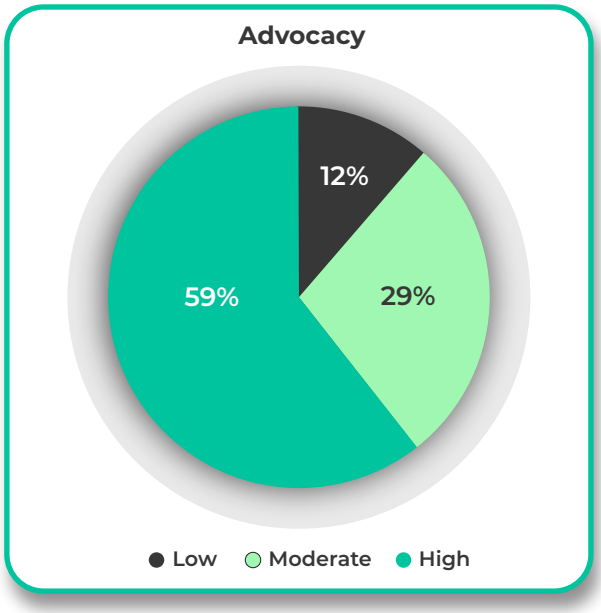


How many workers would recommend their organisation as a place to work[7] ?

Attracting talent is a challenge for many organisations, with skills shortages leading to rising competition for talent over recent years and almost ***two-thirds*** of organisations reporting challenges when it comes to attracting talent.[8]

[7]Workers rate level of Advocacy on a scale of 0 – 10. Low levels = rating of 0-3; Moderate levels = rating of 4-6; High levels = rating of 7-10.

Employee advocacy can go a long way when it comes to attracting talent. In an increasingly digital age, word of mouth recommendations can reach a wider number of potential job candidates through social media platforms. Whether or not someone is prepared to recommend their organisation as a place to work provides an insight into organisational culture that can either strengthen or damage the employer brand portrayed to potential applicants. Therefore, having a strong level of advocacy not only provides a valuable insight into how employees feel about their employer, but also helps an organisation maintain a positive reputation that attracts talent[8].



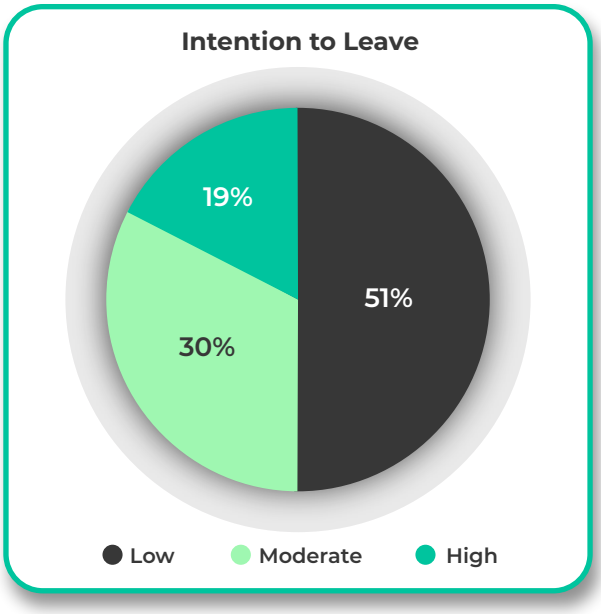
When asked how likely they were to recommend their organisation as a place to work:

41% of workers reported low or moderate levels of advocacy

Although 59% showed high levels of advocacy, only 23% of workers were 'extremely likely' to recommend their organisation as a place to work.

Positive recommendations from current employees can strengthen employer brand and help to attract top talent. However, our findings show that whilst the majority of workers are happy to recommend their organisation as a place to work, ***2 in 5 workers*** display some hesitancy when it comes to recommending their employer. This suggests that organisations can be doing more to attract talent through strengthening advocacy.

How many workers are considering leaving their organisation[9]?



Recent research highlights that retention is another key issue faced by many organisations, with over half reporting retention challenges[10]. Many organisations collect turnover data as a way of identifying retention issues. However, measuring intention to leave provides the opportunity to take a proactive approach to retention. We know that intention to leave is usually a precursor to leaving an organisation. However, we also know that people may consider leaving the organisation a while before they actively take steps to leave. This provides a window of time that can be utilised by organisations to prevent intention to leave from becoming actual turnover.

[8]Hogarth, A. and McCartney, C. (2024) Resourcing and talent planning report 2024. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
[9]Workers rate Intention to Leave on a 0-10 scale. Low turnover intention = rating of 0-3; Moderate turnover intention = rating of 4-6; High turnover intention = rating of 7-10.
[10]Hogarth, A. and McCartney, C. (2024) Resourcing and talent planning report 2024. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

When asked how often they considered leaving their organisation:

19% reported high turnover intentions, with 5% thinking about leaving 'all the time'.

30% were on the fence, generally considering leaving their organisation 'sometimes'.

51% reported low turnover intentions. 28% of workers never consider leaving their organisation.

Whilst the majority of workers showed low turnover intentions, almost half were considering leaving their organisation, with almost ***1 in 5 showing high intention to leave***.

Wellbeing support is a key factor influencing a person's decision to leave their organisation, with recent research finding that ***39%*** had left an organisation due to inadequate wellbeing support and ***34%*** had considered it.[11] Therefore, organisations may be able to prevent intention escalating into a worker leaving the organisation through improving wellbeing support and taking steps to improve the work environment.

How productive do people feel at work?

Productivity is a key variable of interest for many organisations, and plays a crucial role when it comes to business performance and profitability. We use a self-report measure of productivity as part of our assessment[12], which provides insight into how productive workers have been feeling in comparison to the GWP.

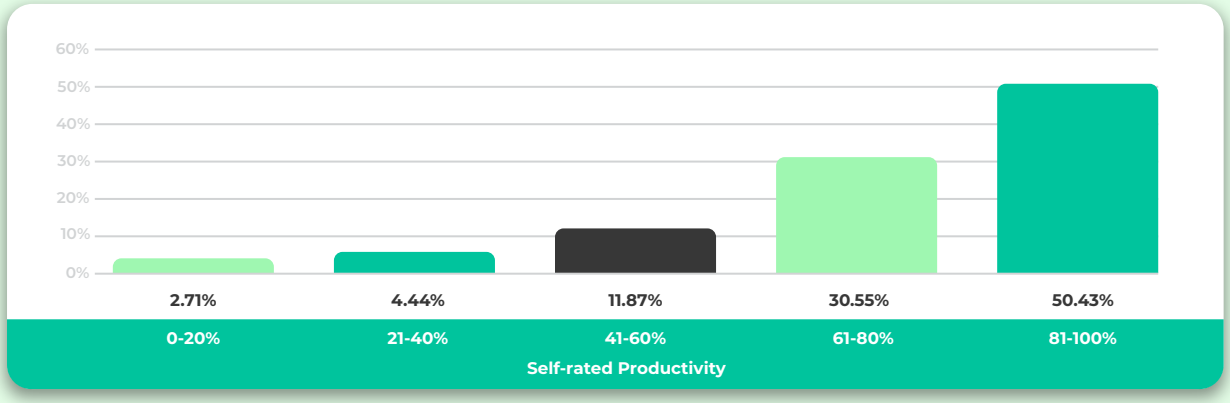
When asked how productive they had felt over the past 3 months:

Half of participants rated their level of productivity at between 81-100%, with 17% rating this at 100%.

4 in 5 people rated their productivity at 61% or above.

14% of participants rated their level of productivity as 50% or less.

Productivity over the past 3 months



[11]Hays (2025), Hays UK 2025 Working Well Report [Online]. Available at [https://www.hays.co.uk/market-insights/working-well-report].
[12]Workers report how productive they have felt over the past 3 months on a scale of 0 – 100.

Although higher levels of productivity are generally considered advantageous for organisations, it is important that the level of productivity is also sustainable. When there is a pressure to be 100% productive over a prolonged period of time, without sufficient time for rest and recovery, wellbeing and performance can be negatively impacted[13]. Therefore, it is important that workers have the opportunity for breaks where needed, to avoid fatigue and improve focus and creativity.

How often do people report instances of absenteeism and presenteeism?

Absenteeism (i.e. absence due to illness or injury) and presenteeism (i.e. working whilst unwell) are two issues that can impact on productivity and lead to significant costs to businesses.

As part of the GDAW Assessment, we ask workers to report:

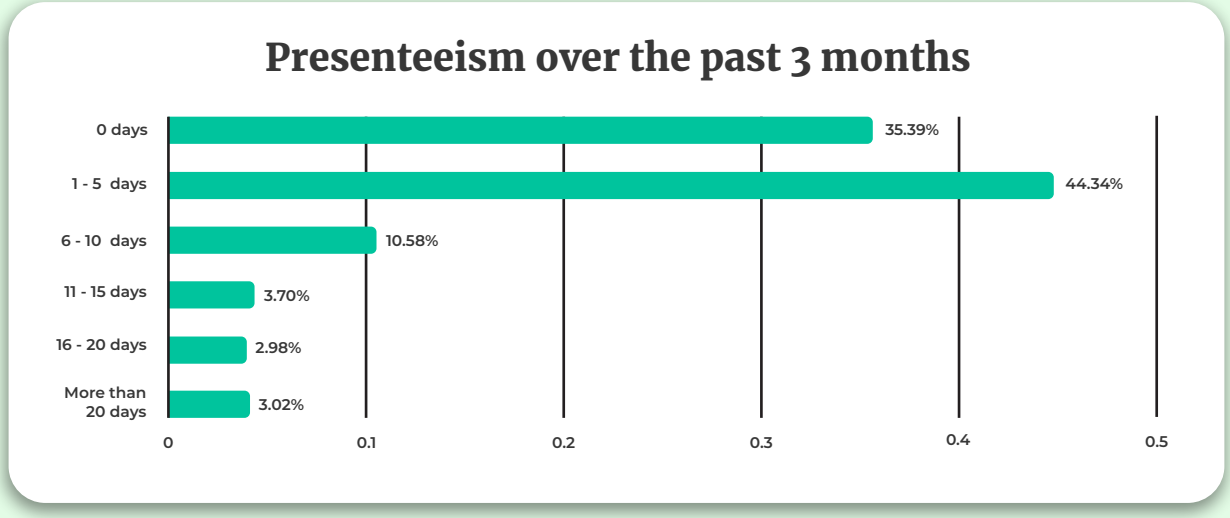
• How many days within the last three months they have been off work due to sickness (absenteeism).

• How many days within the last three months they have felt too unwell to work at their normal standard, but have worked regardless (presenteeism).

Our results showed...

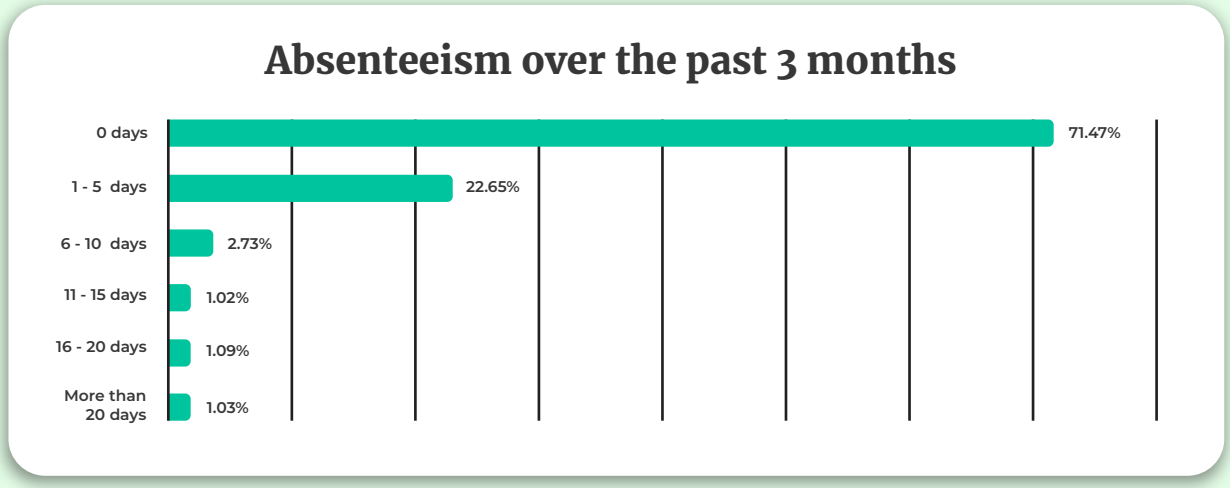
29% of workers have been absent due to illness over the past 3 months.

65% of workers have engaged in presenteeism over the past 3 months.





[13]Albulescu, P., Macsinga, I., Rusu, A., Sulea, C., Bodnaru, A., & Tulbure, B. T. (2022). " Give me a break!" A systematic review and meta-analysis on the efficacy of micro-breaks for increasing well-being and performance. PloS one, 17(8), e0272460.



Our findings suggest that people are more likely to work whilst unwell than take time off due to sickness. Generally, working whilst unwell is associated with negative business outcomes, although our previous research has highlighted nuances which influence the impact that this has on our wellbeing and performance.

Our whitepaper, '[Seeing Presenteeism Differently: Revealing the Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood]' breaks down the different types of working whilst unwell and provides recommendations for its management in practice.



What steps can organisations take to create more Good Days at Work and improve business outcomes?

Keep workload pressure at a positive level

Our analysis identified workload as the factor which has the biggest impact on Good Days at Work and productivity. When workers feel that they have enough time to do a good job and maintain a healthy work-life balance, they are more likely to complete their tasks and meet goals and objectives. This helps people to feel productive and experience the sense of achievement that is associated with a Good Day at Work.

Workload is also a factor that influences both absenteeism and presenteeism. When people are experiencing an excessive workload and long working hours over a prolonged period, they are more at risk of stress-related health problems which can result in sickness absence. However, our previous research also found that almost half of participants stated that having too much work to do was the reason they had continued to work whilst unwell.[14]

When workload is challenging but manageable it can have a motivating effect, providing a sense of achievement and the feeling that we are making a valuable contribution, which are important elements of a Good Day at Work. However, it is vital that we get the balance right. If workload presents a level of pressure that exceeds our ability to cope, this can present a risk of stress and burnout when sustained over longer periods of time. Perceptions of workload can vary between individuals; what is motivating to some may be overwhelming for others, so it is important to understand what the 'optimal level' looks like for each individual.

Recommendations to keep workload pressure at a positive level:

- Regularly ***checking in*** with teams to understand how they are experiencing workload helps us to keep this at a level which is challenging, but manageable.
- Developing ***psychological safety*** within teams can make workers feel more comfortable reaching out for support with their workload.
- Use resource planning tools to ensure workload is ***fairly allocated***.
- Train managers to ***spot the signs*** of excessive pressure and provide them with the skills needed to hold a wellbeing conversation.

Increase control and autonomy

Our analysis identified that the degree of control people feel they have at work is a key factor impacting on advocacy, intention to leave and productivity. Firstly, this refers to the degree of control and flexibility people have in relation to how they carry out their work. Secondly, this relates to the organisation's approach to decision-making. When people feel they have been involved in decisions relating to their jobs, they are less likely to consider leaving. Providing opportunities for people's voices to be truly listened to strengthens the level of influence they feel they have over their work environment and demonstrates that their opinion is valued.

[14]Robertson Cooper (2023). Seeing Presenteeism Differently: Revealing the Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood. Available at https://www.robertsoncooper.com/resources/seeing-presenteeism-differently-revealing-the-good-the-bad-and-the-misunderstood/

"When we think about some of the common barriers to retention, competitiveness of pay and benefits is often one of the first factors that springs to mind. Providing a fair and competitive compensation package is undoubtedly of high importance when it comes to retaining talent.

"However, our analysis found that the key factors driving intention to leave related to the level of control and support that people have at work. This highlights that to improve retention, increasing pay and benefits alone is unlikely to be effective if people lack support and autonomy."



Becky Baines,
Business Psychologist

Recommendations to improve control and autonomy:

• Where possible, provide workers with flexibility when it comes to how they carry out their job (for example, by providing ***flexibility in terms of working hours or work location***). This in turn can help workers to achieve better work-life balance.

• ***Involve workers in key decisions*** about their jobs, following up with prompt action and feedback. This relates to communication, discussed below.

• ***Empower workers to make decisions***, avoiding any unnecessary levels of approval. In turn, workers are likely to feel trusted and may grow in confidence.

Improve communication and feedback

Our analysis found that communication is a key driver of advocacy. Good communication does not simply relate to the messages an organisation shares; it encompasses how well an organisation listens to its workers and provides them with a voice. When people feel informed about what is going on and feel truly listened to, they are more likely to recommend their organisation as a place to work.



Recommendations to improve communication and feedback:

• Provide ***clear, timely and consistent updates*** around what is going on within their organisation. Processes should be in place to ensure key messages are cascaded appropriately by line managers.

• Adopt a ***'two way' approach to communication***, where workers are not only well-informed but are also invited to share their own views and ideas and have clear channels enabling them to do so.

• ***Provide feedback*** on actions taken as a result of the ideas or views shared by workers, or reasons as to why action cannot be taken.

Build supportive relationships

Good quality relationships are a key ingredient of a Good Day at Work and play an important part in a worker's decision to stay or leave their organisation. An inclusive, psychologically safe culture provides the right conditions for supportive relationships to develop.

The level of support provided by managers is also important. Managers need to provide the right balance between challenge and support. Unsurprisingly, people are less likely to recommend their organisation if they feel their manager behaves in a bullying or intimidating way or provides overly critical feedback without fairly recognising efforts.

Recommendations to strengthen relationships and support:

• Developing a supportive culture does not happen overnight; organisations should take a ***longer-term strategic approach***, led by data and supported by training, with positive behaviours ***role-modelled from the top***.

• Organisations should consider how they can ***create opportunities for relationship-building***, particularly within remote or hybrid environments.

• Managers should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and time they need to ***effectively manage pressure for their teams***, providing support, recognition, clear direction and feedback. Leadership development initiatives, which are tailored to the needs of each level of management, can help to improve capability in this area.

• Providing leaders with an insight into the ***natural balance they strike between challenge and support*** can help to inform future development efforts. This should be provided by psychometrically validated tools, such as our Leadership Impact tool, and can be complemented by multi-source feedback.

• Promote ***informal recognition*** as well as formal recognition (e.g. performance-related pay). Simply taking the time to say a specific and meaningful 'thank you' can have a big impact and should be role-modelled by leaders.

Create clear, meaningful goals and expectations

Our analysis found that when workers have a clear understanding of what their manager expects from them, they are more likely to feel productive and experience a Good Day. Having clear goals to work towards helps workers to identify when they have achieved success, which links into the sense of task achievement that is important for a Good Day at Work.

To achieve a Good Day at Work, people need to have a good understanding of how what they do contributes towards something bigger. Therefore, co-creating goals that are ***meaningful*** (e.g. having a clear link to the organisation's wider vision and goals or a worker's personal goals and interests) can help to create goals that drive more Good Days at Work.

Recommendations to create clear, meaningful goals and expectations:

- ***Managers play a key role*** and should have a good knowledge around how to set motivating goals.
- Ensure goals are ***clear*** on what specifically needs to be achieved and by when.
- There should be clear processes in place to ***regularly track goal progress*** and ***reward efforts***.
- Taking a ***collaborative approach*** can help to develop meaningful goals that motivate workers and drive more Good Days at Work.



How They Did It: Improving Wellbeing and Productivity at sportscotland

sportscotland
the national agency for sport

sportscotland, the national agency for sport in Scotland, wanted a clearer understanding of *employee wellbeing*. In particular, they wanted a view on pressure, health, engagement and performance, to take targeted action at both individual and organisational levels.

sportscotland partnered with Robertson Cooper to roll out the Good Day at Work Assessment to all employees over two years. With an exceptional average response rate of 80%, the Assessment provided robust insights into organisational and departmental pressure points, highlighting *leadership development* and *psychological safety* as the areas with the greatest potential for impact.

After presenting the findings and analysis to stakeholders and all staff, Robertson Cooper developed a bespoke *Manager Programme* to address these priorities through targeted action, both at an individual and a management level. This included a webinar on effective *wellbeing conversations* and *psychological safety*, followed by tailored *Team Reports* for each manager. To support delivery, 20 managers also received *1-2-1 coaching* with a Robertson Cooper Business Psychologist, helping them interpret data and plan next steps.

Managers then engaged with their teams to share findings and co-create action plans, which were reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and fed into sportscotland's wider wellbeing strategy.

This approach *embedded wellbeing* into day-to-day management and culture, leading to measurable improvements, including:

Psychological wellbeing increased by 6.35%, intention to leave reduced by 6.25%, productivity improved by 5.19%.

"The team at Robertson Cooper and their Good Day at Work Assessment have been invaluable for sportscotland... their insights have significantly influenced our people strategy, placing wellbeing at its core."

Chani Caunt,
Learning and Development Manager at sportscotland

Click here to find more case studies on our website

03

What are the key trends across health, wellbeing and engagement?

As part of our GDAW Assessment, we use several measures to understand how workers are feeling in terms of their overall health, psychological wellbeing and engagement. This section reports on the key insights gained across each of these areas.

Key findings:

Health: ***61%*** of workers report periods of constant tiredness, with 1 in 4 experiencing these often.

Positive emotions: Only ***42%*** of workers are experiencing high levels of positive emotions at work, with experiences of energising emotions, such as excitement, particularly low.

Lack of direction: Almost all workers are committed to achieving their job goals, but ***1 in 5*** feel that their goals are not clear, specific or motivating.

Engagement: Most workers are committed to their organisation, but ***1 in 4*** do not feel valued, trusted and motivated.

Psychological Wellbeing

Our measure includes the **two** key components of psychological wellbeing:

01 Positive Emotions

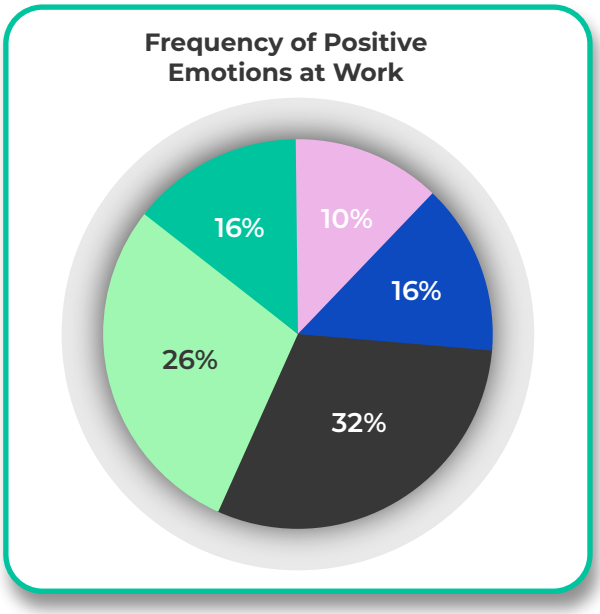
Experiencing authentic, genuine positive emotions at work is associated with better business outcomes, such as higher levels of creativity, job performance and customer satisfaction[15]. That isn't to say that we should try to fully eliminate negative emotions, nor should we try to force or 'fake' our emotions. To experience positive and sustainable levels of wellbeing and performance, we are looking to experience a higher ratio of authentic positive emotions to negative emotions.

02 Sense of Purpose

When people have clear, specific goals which are challenging but achievable, they have a greater sense of purpose and are more likely to feel and perform at their best. To enable this, it is important that people are provided with sufficient time, support and resources and receive regular feedback on their progress.

[15]Diener, Ed, Stuti Thapa, and Louis Tay. "Positive emotions at work." Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior 7.1 (2020): 451-477.

Less than half of workers are experiencing high levels of positive emotions at work



Our analysis found that ***42% of workers*** experience high levels of positive emotions at work[16], with just ***16%*** experiencing positive emotions 'very much'.

The lowest scoring areas relate to the extent to which workers feel excited and inspired at work.

40% report low levels of excitement at work, compared to just 27% who report high levels.

35% report low levels of inspiration at work and 32% report high levels.

The emotions that people are experiencing are those that generally have a more energising effect that drive us to act compared to emotions such as contentment. Both types of emotions are important. If we felt excited all the time, we may become fatigued; on the other hand, if we felt calm and relaxed all the time, we may lack the drive and motivation to achieve our goals.

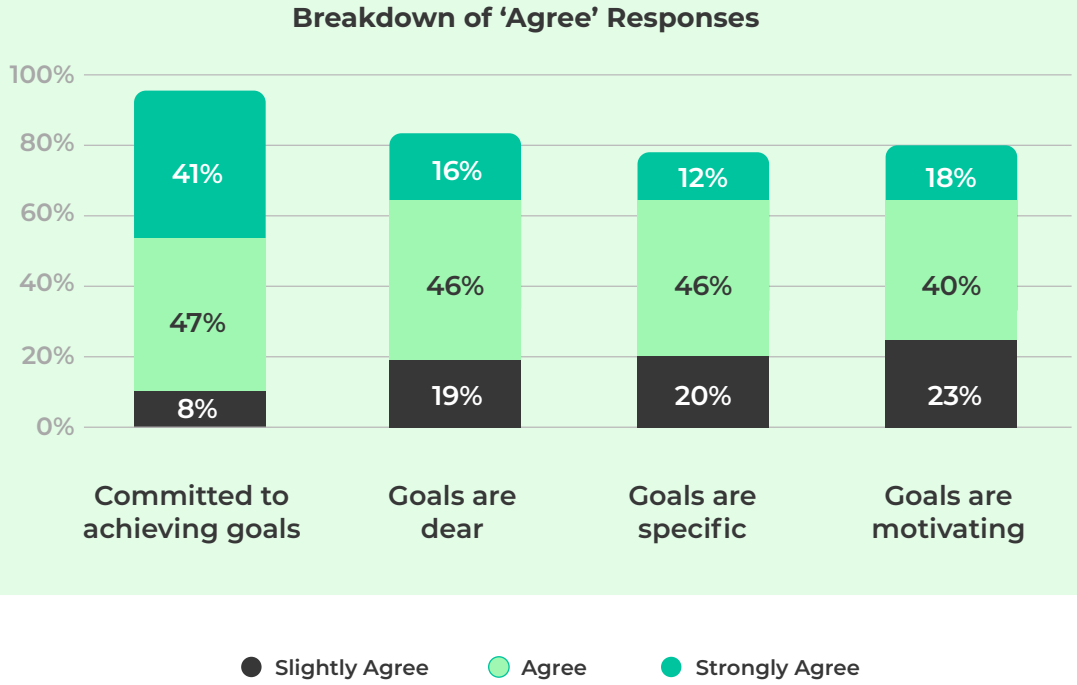
It is therefore important that organisations build opportunities for people to experience a balanced range of positive emotions through their work. Consistent with our previous findings, a sense of control at work emerged as the most important factor driving psychological wellbeing. Our analysis also suggests that having opportunities to learn new skills, that support professional growth, may also help workers to experience positive emotions.

Almost all workers are committed to achieving their job goals, but 1 in 5 feel that their goals are not clear, specific or motivating

Our findings suggest that most workers have goals which support their sense of purpose at work. However, there is room for improvement.

The chart on the next page presents a breakdown of responses for those who agreed, to some extent, that their job goals were clear, specific and motivating and that they felt committed to achieving them[17].

[16]Workers indicate how often they experience a range of positive emotions on a 5-point scale. Low levels = 'Very slightly or not at all' or 'A little'. Moderate levels = 'Moderately'. High levels = 'Quite a bit' or 'very much'.
[17]Workers indicate level of agreement on 6-point Likert scale.



An overwhelming proportion (96%) of workers are, to some extent, committed to achieving their job goals, with 41% reporting that they are strongly committed. However, responses suggest that organisations could be doing more to create effective goals.

21% of workers feel they lack specific job goals and 18% feel that their goals lack clarity.

19% of workers do not feel motivated by the level of challenge within their goals.

This suggests that whilst almost all workers express a desire to achieve their job goals, around ***1 in 5*** feel their organisation could create clearer and more specific goals that have a motivating effect.

Our analysis found that people experience higher levels of wellbeing when they are involved in decision-making and have an influence over their goals at work. This is particularly relevant to our sense of purpose. Taking a collaborative approach to goal-setting, where workers have some level of influence over the goals that they are working towards, can help to improve wellbeing and, in turn, improve business outcomes. Goals that also present opportunities for growth and development in line with a worker's own ambitions, may also help to drive more positive emotions, as discussed above.

Health

When it comes to measuring health, our Good Day at Work Assessment looks at whether workers are experiencing physical and mental symptoms of stress. The measures do not provide organisations or workers with any form of clinical diagnosis but provide an insight into some of the health challenges that people may be facing. This can help organisations to provide their workers with more targeted support.

Between 20 – 25% of workers experience aches, pains and constant tiredness on a regular basis

The physical symptoms that workers report experiencing the most are muscular tension, aches and pains and insomnia or sleep loss[18].

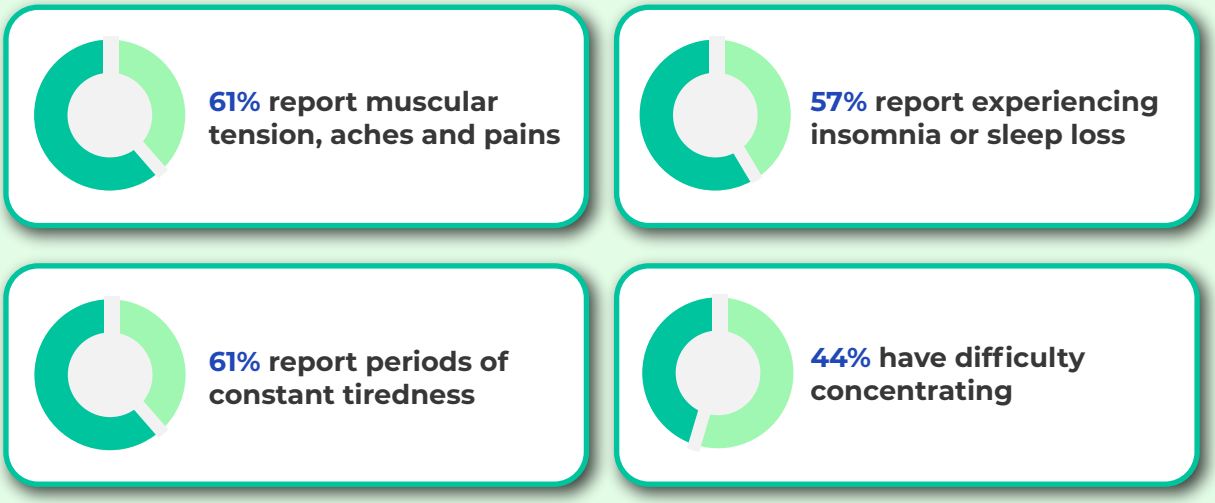
61% report muscular tension, aches and pains, with ***23%*** experiencing this often.

57% report experiencing insomnia or sleep loss, with ***22%*** experiencing this often.

Physical and mental health are interconnected, which is evident within our findings. The symptoms most commonly reported in relation to workers' mental health have a clear link to the sleep disturbances reported in relation to their physical health.

61% report periods of constant tiredness, with ***25%*** experiencing these often.

44% have difficulty concentrating, with ***8%*** experiencing this often.



Work-related musculoskeletal disorders are still one of the leading health challenges in the UK, after work-related stress, depression and anxiety[19], which is reflected in our findings. Our findings also show that many workers are struggling to get sufficient quantity and quality of sleep, with 1 in 4 experiencing constant tiredness on a regular basis.

Poor health can sometimes be a sign of too much pressure or stress at work - for example, fatigue can be a sign of burnout. However, poor health isn't always caused by work stress. There may be other factors at play, such as underlying health conditions, lifestyle choices or personal life situations. There is, therefore, a shared responsibility when it comes to employee health. This is where having a supportive culture plays a crucial role. When organisations show that health is a priority through healthy working practices and regular signposting to relevant support and resources, workers are more likely to feel empowered to take action to look after their own health.

[18]Workers indicate the extent to which they have experienced health symptoms over the past 3 months. Figures presented represent those who experience symptoms 'sometimes' or 'often'.
[19]Health and Safety Executive (2024). Health and safety at work: Summary statistics for Great Britain 2024.

"An important message, and something I often speak to our clients about, is remembering that health and wellbeing in the workplace is not the sole responsibility of the individual or the organisation, it's a shared commitment. We know that sustainable health and wellbeing comes from a culture where leadership, teams, and individuals all play a role.

This will look different from organisation to organisation, and this is why it's important for organisations to take a strategic, data-driven approach to understand the health needs of their workforce."



Tamara Hughes,
Business Psychologist

To effectively support employee health, a strategic approach is needed. This involves collecting and utilising internal data to identify the unique needs across different groups and levels within the organisation. An important aspect for organisations to consider is that often it is the already healthy and well workers who participate in available health interventions. Organisations should reflect on how they can target those populations who are in need; for example, through identifying any barriers to access, utilising multi-channel communication methods and building supportive and trusting working relationships.

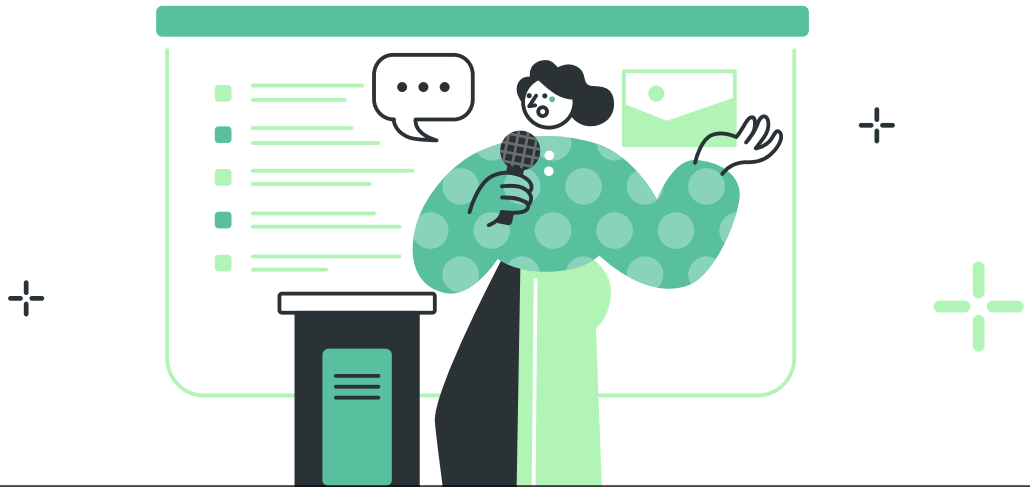
Engagement

Our measure of engagement encompasses three key components:

- **Motivation:**
How driven workers feel to do their job to the best of their abilities.

- **Employee Commitment:**
How committed workers are to their organisation.

- **Organisation Commitment:**
The extent to which workers feel that their organisation is committed to them.





91% of workers are committed to their organisation, but 1 in 4 do not feel valued, trusted and motivated.

A large majority of workers feel committed towards their organisation. However, workers are less likely to feel that their organisation is committed to them, expressing a lack of trust, recognition and motivation which creates a barrier to engagement.



1 in 4 (26%) workers do not feel fully valued and trusted and would not describe their organisation as motivating.



1 in 5 workers (20%) are not happy overall with their organisation.



Only 13% strongly agree that they feel valued, trusted and happy with their organisation overall.

When there is an imbalance between the level of commitment a worker feels they are putting in and the level of commitment they feel that their organisation shows towards them, this can have a negative impact on engagement and performance.

To address this imbalance, organisations need to show their workers that they are valued and trusted. Consistent with our previous findings, our analysis found that providing a greater sense of control at work has a strong influence over engagement. By providing workers with autonomy, an organisation demonstrates a level of trust in its workforce. Furthermore, inviting workers to share views and influence future decisions about their job indicates that people are valued.

Another factor found to impact on engagement relates to training and development. Providing workers with sufficient training and opportunities for growth and skill development demonstrates an organisation's commitment to its workers and is likely to have a motivating effect.

04

What factors in the work environment impact a Good Day at Work?

Throughout this report, we have discussed the key workplace factors that are driving health, wellbeing and business outcomes. We refer to these as the Six Essentials: Balanced Workload; Control; Resources and Communication; Job Security and Change; Job Conditions; and Work Relationships.

The Six Essentials are the organisational factors within the worker's environment that can, and do, have a big impact on whether they have a healthy, happy and productive time at work. There are, of course, other factors to consider, such as personality, but the Six Essentials are the tangible areas that managers, leaders and organisations can directly influence to create more Good Days at Work.

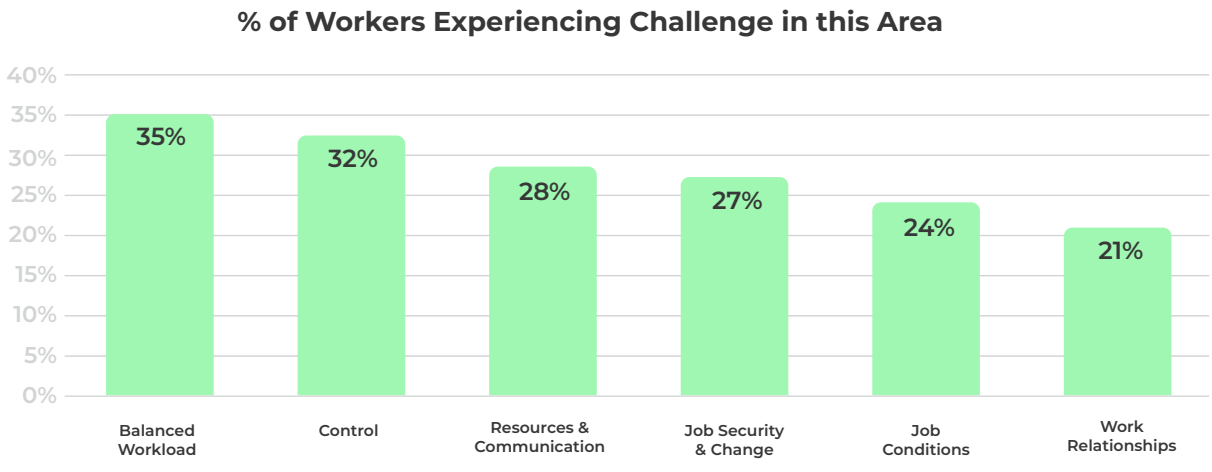
This section provides an overview of how workers are currently experiencing pressure across the Six Essentials areas within the GWP. It is important to remember that this might not reflect the challenges faced within your organisation. The most effective way of driving improvements is to assess the Six Essentials within your own organisation, which is carried out as part of the Good Day at Work Assessment. If workers are reporting difficulties across any of these areas, taking focused action as an organisation can help to improve health, wellbeing and business outcomes, creating more Good Days at Work.

Experiences across the Six Essentials

The table below shows the proportion of workers who are reporting challenges across each of the Six Essentials areas[20].

The areas that workers report most challenges with relate to Balanced Workload and Control. Around 1 in 3 workers are reporting challenges with their workload and level of control at work.

Work Relationships is the area that workers are reporting the least difficulties with. Around 1 in 5 workers report challenges in this area.



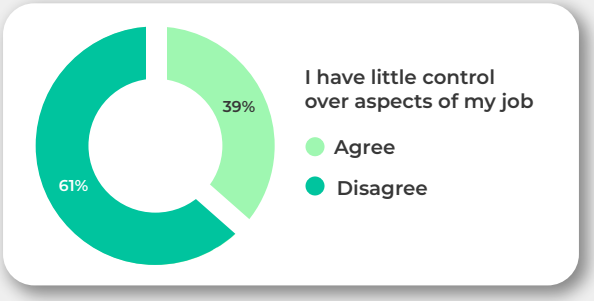
[20]Workers indicate level of agreement on six-point Likert scale. Responses grouped into two categories; 'agree' and 'disagree'.

The Six Essentials can act as enablers or blockers of a Good Day at Work. When the conditions across each of these areas are set optimally, we are more likely to experience Good Days at Work. However, when we are experiencing difficulties across these areas, it is more difficult to achieve a Good Day at Work. The main challenges that are being faced within each area of the 6 Essentials by the GWP are summarised below.

Control

Lack of control over job: ***39% of workers*** feel they have a lack of control over many aspects of their job.

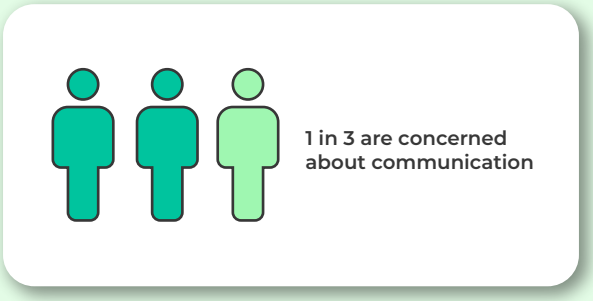
Lack of involvement in decision making: ***37% of workers*** feel that they are not involved in decisions affecting



Resources and Communication

Lack of information: ***32% of workers*** are troubled that they are not informed about what is going on in their organisation.

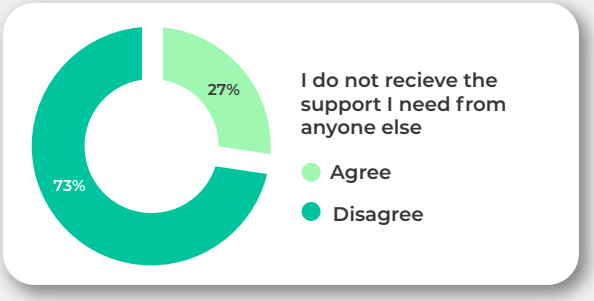
Lack of recognition: ***31% of workers*** feel that they are never told if they are doing a good job.



Work Relationships

Other people's efforts: ***42% of workers*** are troubled to some degree that other people at work are not pulling their weight.

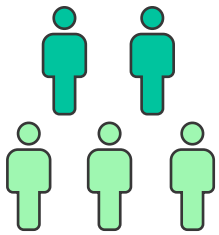
Support from others: ***27% of workers*** feel that they do not receive the level of support from others that they would like.



Balanced Workload

A lack of time: ***44% of workers*** feel that they do not have enough time to do their job well.

Poor work-life balance: ***41% of workers*** feel that their work interferes with their home and personal life, with 38% troubled by long working hours.

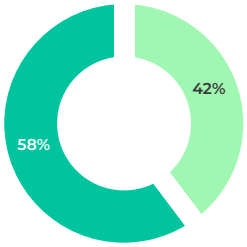


2 in 5 report issues with work-life balance

Job Conditions

Pay and benefits: ***42% of workers*** feel that their pay and benefits are not as good as others doing similar work.

Lack of job enjoyment: ***26% of workers*** are troubled that they do not enjoy their job.



My pay & benefits are not as good as other people doing the same or similar work

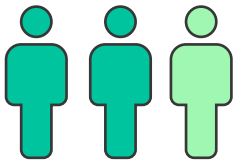
Agree

Disagree

Job Security and Change

Role uncertainty: ***32% of workers*** are concerned that their job is likely to change in the future.

Perceptions of change: ***35% of workers*** feel that their organisation changes for change's sake.



1 in 3 are concerned about change

What are the main pressures workers are currently experiencing?

Whilst the majority of workers report positive experiences across the Six Essentials, there are still a significant number who are experiencing challenges. If pressures are left unaddressed, they can become blockers to achieving positive psychological wellbeing and Good Days at Work, which in turn impact negatively on performance.

The main pressures reported by workers relate to workload and control. Both areas were identified as key drivers of the business outcomes and Good Days at Work; therefore, we know these are important areas to focus on to help workers feel and perform at their best. However, ***44%*** of our GWP report concerns around not having enough time to do their job well and ***41%*** feel their work interferes with their personal lives. Over a third of workers also express concerns relating to a lack of control at work and a lack of involvement in decision-making.

"Our data shows many workers struggle with not having enough time to do their jobs well, often working longer hours. In relation to the 6 Essentials, key questions to ask are: Do workers have the right resources? Do they receive sufficient feedback? Can they contribute ideas on how work is done?

Addressing these factors can ease workload pressures and restore a sense of control and balance. When work interferes with home life, it creates personal and professional strain, so setting healthy boundaries is vital to protect wellbeing and create more good days at work."



Tamara Hughes,
Business Psychologist

Supportive relationships are key for a Good Day at Work and have an important part to play when it comes to driving business outcomes. However, whilst work relationships are the least reported challenge overall, some issues remain. For example, over a quarter of workers feel that they lack support at work and ***41%*** have concerns about uneven contributions among colleagues.

How do the Six Essentials Interact?

It is important to highlight that the Six Essentials do not operate in isolation. For example, the pressures felt by workload ***can affect our experiences of support and connection at work***. When people feel overloaded, they are less likely to take time to connect and collaborate with others. Similarly, when communication is effective and people have the opportunity to shape what is happening within their organisation, they are likely to feel a ***greater sense of control and influence*** over their work environment.

Whilst we have highlighted factors that emerge as key drivers within our dataset, it is important for employers to consider how each of the Six Essentials play out and impact each other within their own organisation.

What are the Implications for Organisations?

Neglecting these areas carries significant risk, not only to the wellbeing of the workers but to business performance. So, what can organisations do?

We can see a clear message from our data. If organisations want to enable more Good Days at Work and improve engagement, retention, and productivity, they must prioritise creating an environment where workers feel ***involved, recognised, informed and supported***. That means giving people greater ***autonomy***, equipping managers to build ***supportive relationships***, ensuring ***workloads are balanced***, and reinforcing a culture where people's contributions are seen and valued.



Next Steps: Summary of Key Recommendations

Intuitively, we all want to have more Good Days at Work. As an employer, understanding the evidence-based steps to take to create more Good Days at Work will benefit both the bottom line and the wellbeing of all who work within the organisation.

The following recommendations are based on the key drivers of business outcomes from our analysis. These are aspects of the work environment that are known to impact our health and wellbeing. They are also factors that organisations and managers generally have the power to change.

To improve advocacy...

Communication is key. Good communication is not just about the messages an organisation is sharing – it's about how well it is listening to the views of its workforce and taking ideas on board. ***Adopting a 'two-way' approach to communication***, where workers are kept up to date with what is happening within the organisation and are invited to share their own feedback and ideas, is likely to improve advocacy.

Management style also has an important impact. Providing managers with ***valid and reliable insights*** into their style of leadership, alongside leadership development initiatives tailored to specific levels of management, can help to improve capability in this area.

To reduce intention to leave...

Organisations should look to increase a sense of control and autonomy. Involving workers in decision-making and taking their feedback into account helps to strengthen a sense of control and demonstrates that their views are valued. ***Providing flexibility*** (such as, for example, providing flexibility around work hours or location) is also likely to improve retention and can help people to work in a way that enables them to be at their most productive.

Having supportive relationships with managers and colleagues also helps to reduce intention to leave and increase Good Days at Work. Taking a long-term, strategic approach to building a ***supportive, inclusive and psychologically safe culture*** provides the conditions for supportive relationships to flourish.

To increase productivity...

Organisations should strive to provide a challenging, but manageable, level of workload that supports work-life balance. Managers should provide clear expectations, allocate work fairly and regularly monitor workload, providing ***support and guidance*** for those who may be struggling with workload pressure. This also helps to create more Good Days at Work, as well as reducing ***absenteeism and presenteeism***.

Strengthening a sense of control and autonomy can help to improve productivity. For example, productivity can also be improved by empowering workers to make ***autonomous decisions***, where appropriate, without unnecessary levels of approval which may impair productivity.

Taking a Strategic Approach to Drive Improvements

To embed wellbeing successfully within your organisation, actions should form part of a co-ordinated, strategic approach which is based around your own data insights. 'Quick fixes' are unlikely to result in sustainable improvements. Strategies which demonstrate a long-term commitment to embedding wellbeing across all layers of the organisation are required to drive impactful, lasting change.

Utilising Data Insights

Throughout this report, we have provided recommendations for improvement based on the key drivers of business outcomes within the General Working Population. However, the factors which have the biggest influence on health, wellbeing and business outcomes can vary between organisations.

Measurement within your own organisation is recommended to:

Throughout this report, we have provided recommendations for improvement based on the key drivers of business outcomes within the General Working Population. However, the factors which have the biggest influence on health, wellbeing and business outcomes can vary between organisations.

Measurement within your own organisation is recommended to:

- **Establish your baseline across health, wellbeing and business outcomes**
- **Understand how your business performs compared to others**
- **Identify the most important factors within your work environment which are driving these results**

Our Good Day at Work Assessment provides these insights, enabling organisations to make informed decisions when it comes to improving wellbeing, based on what is likely to have the biggest impact within your organisation. These insights should inform the direction of your wellbeing strategy.

Taking Targeted Action

Everyone in the organisation has a part to play when it comes to creating more Good Days at Work. Therefore, it is important that organisations take targeted action when it comes to embedding wellbeing and Good Days at Work, taking into account the different level of capability and support that is needed across the various layers .

To get started, it can be useful to consider ***three key questions***:

01 What do our workers need to create their own Good Day at Work?

02 What do our managers and leaders need to create Good Days at Work for themselves and their teams?

03 What do we as a business need to put in place to create an infrastructure which unlocks more Good Days at Work?

Considering what is needed across each layer of the business helps to ensure everyone in the business has what they need to play their part in driving more Good Days at Work.

The guidance outlined in this section reflects the approach that our solutions are based upon to help organisations achieve long term improvements across health, wellbeing and performance.

Our case studies provide real-world examples of how our clients have taken a strategic approach to embed wellbeing and Good Days at Work within their organisation.



How They Did It: Reducing Staff Turnover at Dalkia Facilities

When *Dalkia Facilities* doubled in size to almost 2,000 employees across healthcare, nuclear, education and government, it created both opportunities and challenges: uniting a diverse workforce, managing the pressures of growth, and building a strong, cohesive culture to support future success.

Working with Robertson Cooper, *Dalkia* took a long-term, strategic approach to *health, safety and wellbeing*. *Leadership workshops* set out a clear vision for an *inclusive culture*, while a Cultural Maturity Assessment and the Good Day at Work Assessment – completed by almost 70% of employees – provided solid insights into health and wellbeing, and business outcomes such as advocacy, productivity and resilience. Every employee also received a personalised Wellbeing Snapshot, offering advice to *manage stress and prevent burnout*.

From these insights, a tailored programme was designed to support *leadership capability* and create *psychological safety* across teams. Managers took part in webinars and coaching with Robertson Cooper psychologists, received personalised feedback on their leadership style, and used team-level reports to hold open conversations with their people. Over 250 local action plans were co-created through these discussions, strengthening resilience, team performance and employee voice.

To sustain progress, employee forums, recognition initiatives, and a dedicated Good Day at Work hub ensured wellbeing remained visible and accessible. Manager and employee broadcasts were produced to build on leadership skills and employee awareness to *embed wellbeing into everyday culture*.

The impact has been significant:

Staff turnover reduced from 19.5% to 15.1%

New starter turnover in the first 3 months dropped from 24% to 13% - "we've not been below 20% before"

"Good Day at Work" is now part of Dalkia's cultural DNA

"Following on the back of the initial GDAW survey it has been pleasing for me to note that a number of contracts that were not performing at a high level of health and safety compliance have shown significant improvement in performance over the last three business quarters in key measurable areas of safety, which link into the survey."

Neil Marley,
QSHE Director at Dalkia Facilities

"Partnering with Robertson Cooper gave us confidence that we were in expert hands. Their support provided us with robust, insightful data that has been instrumental to help build a more engaged team, ultimately contributing to a safer and more productive business."

Christabel Mensah-Stapleton,
Head of Employee Experience and Communications at Dalkia Facilities

Click here to find more case studies on our website

Conclusion

Good Days at Work and wellbeing are good for business

Our findings show that wellbeing and Good Days at Work play a key role in helping organisations to solve common problems and achieve business goals. There is a clear link between psychological wellbeing and performance in our data; those experiencing more Good Days at Work and higher wellbeing are more productive, advocate for their organisation more and are less likely to say they are thinking about leaving. A key part of an employer's moral and legal responsibility to workers involves addressing workplace factors that may cause poor health and wellbeing and creating the conditions to help workers thrive. Addressing these factors benefits both the worker and the bottom line.

Pressures within the work environment may be impacting on health, wellbeing and engagement

Our findings suggest that conditions in the work environment may negatively impact health, wellbeing and engagement. Workload, communication, control and supportive relationships are key when it comes to creating more Good Days at Work.

Workload needs to be challenging enough to motivate, but it is vital that the level of challenge remains positive and does not tip over into burnout. Workers need to feel a sense of control and their voices heard in decision-making. Communication is key; not just transmitting messages to workers, but truly welcoming and listening to feedback and suggestions. The role of managers is critical; a good working relationship can help identify factors that could lead to poor wellbeing at an early stage, when they may be easier to address. Giving managers the tools to build their confidence and capability to talk about wellbeing supports this. Managers also play a key role in ensuring people feel a sense of purpose and meaning through their work, through collaborating with teams to set clear, specific and motivating goals which have a strong link to the bigger picture.

Our data identifies a gap between what workers believe they are giving their organisation and what they receive in return. Over time this, mismatch in beliefs between employer and employee may erode trust and could be costly. Taking early steps to address workplace factors in a proactive and preventative way is more economical than intervening once pressures have become excessive.

There is a shared responsibility when it comes to employee health and wellbeing

A lack of energy can impede Good Days at Work; aches and pains, and poor sleep contribute towards this. Health is complex and its management and maintenance sits with the individual. Organisations, however, can play a significant role in providing a supportive culture and flexibility for workers. When organisations show that employee health is a priority through healthy working practices and regular signposting to health and wellbeing support and resources, workers are more likely to feel empowered to take action to look after their own health. As outlined in this report, the benefits go beyond the individual and impact positively on business outcomes including productivity, absenteeism and retention.

In a complex world, with a backdrop of economic, political, environmental and societal challenges, identifying factors within our control and focusing on making positive change in those areas can make a real difference to our wellbeing. By asking workers what factors help or hinder a Good Day at Work, and co-creating solutions, organisations can make a real tangible difference to workers and to performance.

Appendix 1: Methodology

What is the Good Day at Work Assessment?

The data within this report comes from Robertson Cooper's Good Day at Work (GDAW) Assessment.

The GDAW Assessment is based on A Shortened Stress Evaluation Tool (ASSET). ASSET is a validated and reliable stress risk assessment tool, developed over two decades ago by leading academics[21] [22] in the field and adapted over that time for use in practice. Whilst ASSET was initially focused on identifying risks to mental health at work, it has been enhanced over the years to include measures of psychological wellbeing[23]. Since its creation, the Assessment has been used by many organisations to understand the drivers of health and wellbeing in their workplace and use the actionable insights the data provides to make improvements.

What does the Good Day at Work Assessment measure?

The measures included in our assessment provide an insight into how people are currently feeling at work, how they feel towards their organisation, and how this may be impacting on several business performance metrics. To help organisations take meaningful action, the survey identifies the key factors within the work environment that are driving these outcomes.

The measures included within the Good Day at Work Assessment fall under the three broad categories below:

Health and Wellbeing Drivers

How we feel at work is influenced by a range of drivers at an organisational and individual level. We report on some of the key drivers that can be developed or improved through organisational and individual efforts.

Health & Wellbeing

These act as a temperature gauge for health and wellbeing within the workplace. If the organisation is experiencing high levels of health and wellbeing, we tend to see a positive impact on business outcomes. If health and wellbeing is low, referring to your health and wellbeing drivers can help to identify some of the root causes.

Business Outcomes and Good Days at Work

As well as feeling good about themselves, workers with higher levels of wellbeing deliver better outcomes for their employers. We report on a range of business level outcomes to which we know to be related wellbeing, as well how often workers are experiencing good days at work.

[21]Faragher, E. B., Cooper, C. L., & Cartwright, S. (2004). A shortened stress evaluation tool (ASSET). Stress and Health: Journal of the International Society for the Investigation of Stress, 20(4), 189-201.
[22]Johnson, S. & Cooper, C. (2003). The construct validity of the ASSET stress measure. Stress and Health 19(3), 181-185.
[23]Robertson, I. T. & Cooper, C. L. (2010). Full Engagement: The Integration of Employee Engagement and Psychological Well Being. Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 31(4), 324–336.

Where does the data within this report come from?

The data analysed and presented within this report are from our most recent General Working Population (GWP) Norm Group dataset. The dataset is made up of data collected from approximately 70,000 workers between 2019 and 2025 inclusive. The data includes insights across a wide range of industries within private, public and third sectors, including: education; healthcare; energy and utilities; retail; construction; transport and logistics; local authorities; and legal, amongst several others.

The vast majority of surveys were administered online, using Robertson Cooper's Good Day at Work platform, and a small percentage were administered as physical paper surveys which are then later uploaded to the platform.

How is the dataset analysed as part of the Good Day at Work Assessment?

Responses to each item are converted to a 0-100 scale, where higher scores are always better. When reviewing data at an organisational level, the scores presented are the mean of the aggregated responses collected within that organisation.

To help contextualise results, we compare each organisation's results to our GWP benchmark. The GWP benchmark score for each item is calculated by taking the median of scores in our GWP norm group. The benchmark is, therefore, the score where 50% of those in the norm group have a result below it and 50% have a result above it.

We also carry out additional analysis to help organisations identify the workplace factors that are having the biggest impact on personal and business outcomes.

How have you developed the recommendations presented within this report?

Within this report, we present recommendations organisations can take to create more Good Days at Work and improve business outcomes. These recommendations are developed through analysis of our GDAW Norm Group dataset. The factors highlighted as having an important impact across each of the areas below are based on the output across regression analyses, which identify the factors within the Six Essentials that are having the biggest impact on health, wellbeing and business outcomes. This is not to say that other factors are not important; they just have a lesser impact than the factors that are mentioned within this report.

It is important to note that the recommendations we present are based on our analysis of the data across the GWP. The factors which have the biggest influence on health, wellbeing and business outcomes can vary between organisations. Measurement within your own organisation is required to understand the factors that are driving these outcomes within your workforce.

Appendix 2: Next Steps – Turning Insight into Impact

The findings within this report show the clear link between ***wellbeing*** and ***Good Days at Work***, and ***improving business outcomes***. To move from evidence to impact, organisations need tailored insight into their own workforce and a structured pathway for improvement.

Here are the next steps we would suggest taking:

1. Assess – Understand your starting point

This is often a ***great first step*** if you're looking to understand the biggest workplace wellbeing challenges in your organisation and practical insights on how to address them. Our Good Day At Work Assessment:

- Covers all aspects of workplace wellbeing, giving you a ***complete*** and ***balanced*** picture.

- Shows if people are having Good Days at Work, linking directly to outcomes like ***productivity*** and ***retention***.

- Identifies the conditions and processes that enable or block Good Days, so you know ***where to focus***.

- Benchmarks results against our General Working Population, showing ***how you compare to "good"***.

- Meets ***HSE Stress Risk Assessment*** requirements, reducing compliance risk.

- Delivers tailored insights and clear next steps from our business psychologists, so you know exactly ***what needs to happen*** and ***how it can be achieved***.

2. Address – Take targeted action

Once you have an idea of the areas you need to address – whether through our Assessment or through your own data or insights – it's time to take action that will create impact.

At Robertson Cooper, our experts will create a clear and bespoke roadmap to address the workplace wellbeing challenges your organisation is facing. It's what we call your "pathway" to more good days at work. Our Good Day At Work Pathways:

- Flow directly from the Good Day at Work model, ***breaking down barriers*** and ***driving measurable business benefits***.

- Provide impactful programmes ***grounded in business psychology***, combining ***consultancy, strategy, training, resources and expert support***.

- Offer tailored ***modules for leaders, managers, employees and organisational systems***, ensuring every stakeholder has what they need to create more Good Days at Work.

Ready to take your next step?

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