A Literature Review

WHAT IF YOUR JOB WAS GOOD FOR YOU?

June 2021

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BACKGROUND TO THIS REVIEW

The structures, practices and principles of working life have been tested during the pandemic. When it comes to supporting and protecting employee wellbeing and mental health, organisations have needed to improvise and innovate in this period as never before - flaws and hidden strengths have been revealed in this time of strain.

To build back better for workplace mental health and wellbeing following the pandemic, we must work from the foundations up, considering core organisational principles and values. This pandemic arose in a world that is fragile, profoundly interconnected, facing grand challenges of inequity and sustainability. We have seen the critical importance of strong leadership, inclusion, and trust. To build back stronger for employee wellbeing, organisations must act from the basis of core values of compassion and empathy, inclusivity and equity, authenticity and trust.

We also need to consider the facets of job design that truly support wellbeing; relationships, treating our employees and individuals as collaborators, prioritising psychological safety and open dialogue. What gets measured, gets done: we must ensure that we measure the most relevant indicators of mental health and wellbeing at work, and we must capture a diversity of voices and perspectives.

The evidence for how to make work better rests upon decades of organisational research. There are many crossovers and linkages in the topics and evidence presented here – equity and sustainability are profoundly linked; safe mental health disclosure relates to trust, compassion, inclusivity and psychological safety. To seize this unique opportunity to make work better, we need a holistic and integrated approach to wellbeing at all levels.
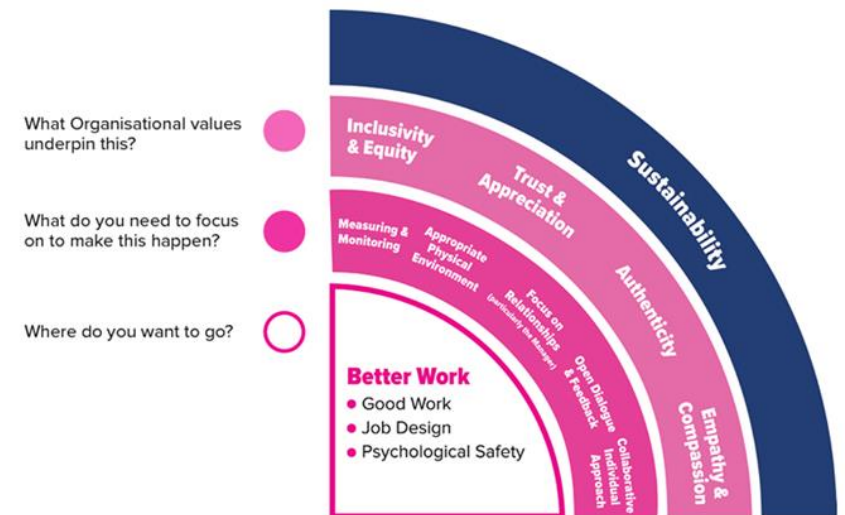
Workwell Model - Better Work

JOB DESIGN THAT PROTECTS AND PROMOTES EMPLOYEE HEALTH

'Good jobs' are good for health and wellbeing and poorly designed work is a risk factor for mental health problems. A large body of evidence developed over two decades demonstrates strong and enduring links between well designed jobs and a broad range of health outcomes over time.

1. Factors including unbalanced job design, occupational uncertainty and lack of value and respect, all contribute to common mental health problems. Harvey, S. B., Modini, M., Joyce, S., Milligan-Saville, J. S., Tan, L., Mykletun, A., & Mitchell, P. B. (2017). *Can Work Make You Mentally Ill? A Systematic Meta-Review of Work-Related Risk Factors for Common Mental Health Problems.*

2. The HSE management standards lay out six areas of work design that, if not properly managed, can result in stress-related work outcomes. Kerr, R., McHugh, M., & McCrory, M. (2009). *HSE Management Standards and Stress-Related Work Outcomes.* Occupational Medicine, 59(8), 574-579.

3. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work provide regular updates on psychosocial risks: around half of European workers perceive work related stress to be common in their workplace https://osha.europa.eu/en/themes/psychosocial-risks-and-stress.

4. The Stevenson/Farmer *Thriving at Work* report sets out what employers can do to support employees, placing a focus on 'good work'. Stevenson, D. (2017). *Thriving at Work: The Stevenson/Farmer Review of Mental Health and Employers.* Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health, London.

5. *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow*, led by Dame Carol Black, highlighted the high contribution of mental health problems to sickness absence, laid out the health benefits of work, and highlighted the need to tackle discrimination https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow-work-and-health-in-britain.

6. The CIPD Health at Work survey consistently finds line managers to be a key barrier to wellbeing. The 2021 survey, capturing

COVID-19 impacts, found challenges for employees in switching off from work, and an increased organisational emphasis on wellbeing https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/health-well-being-work.

Where next? Many organisations are looking at new and different working models. Both research and practice will continue to test and learn which models are optimal. In the meantime, much of the research into what constitutes good job design still holds true such as providing autonomy, manageable demands and positive support to employees.

OPEN DIALOGUE AND FEEDBACK

Being able to invest in yourself fully at work, talk openly and to feedback concerns has important benefits for employee mental health and wellbeing, enabling the employer to make necessary adjustments and the employee to bring their whole self to work. Speaking up (voice behaviour) is also an important form of organisational citizenship behaviour, used to highlight malpractice. Psychological safety is an underpinning condition for open dialogue, and also predicts high performance.

1. Amy Edmondson (1999) introduced the notion of 'team psychological safety', defined as 'when members engage in any risky action in a team, the implementation of these actions is safe (and) can be accepted by colleagues. Psychological safety is high when: employees can freely speak their mind; where risk-taking is encouraged; where employees trust and respect each other and employees share common beliefs.' Edmondson, A. (2019). *The role of Psychological Safety: Maximizing Employee Input and Commitment.* Leader to Leader, 2019(92), 13-19.

2. Psychological safety indicates a belief that is safe to take risks, and can be measured at the individual, team and organisational level. It predicts numerous positive work outcomes, including communications and voice behaviour. Newman, A., Donohue, R., & Eva, N. (2017). *Psychological Safety: A Systematic Review of the Literature.* Human Resource Management Review, 27(3), 521-535.

3. Participants are willing to speak up with suggestions if they perceive organisational support and do not perceive organisational politics. Bergeron, D. M., & Thompson, P. S.

(2020). *Speaking Up at Work: The Role of Perceived Organisational Support in Explaining the Relationship Between Perceptions of Organisational Politics and Voice Behaviour. The Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, 56(2), 195-215.

4. Research on interventions to increase psychological safety and voice has recommended a focus on group/organisational levels, and the visible inclusion of leaders. O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2020). *A Systematic Review Exploring the Content and Outcomes of Interventions to Improve Psychological Safety, Speaking up and Voice Behaviour*. BMC Health Services Research, 20(1), 1-11.

5. Speaking up about one's own mental health at work remains a sensitive topic. It can bring benefits for employees, but also carries the risk of stigmatisation and discrimination. Research shows that inclusive workplace environment is essential. Brouwers, E. P. M., Joosen, M. C. W., Van Zelst, C., & Van Weeghel, J. (2020). *To Disclose or Not to Disclose: A Multi-Stakeholder Focus Group Study on Mental Health Issues in the Work Environment*. Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, 30(1), 84-92.

Where next? This only works in a safe environment and through a deep understanding of inclusivity. Further research to understand how organisations have fostered a safe, open dialogue and attitude change within a variety of contexts is needed to expedite learnings.

AN INDIVIDUALLY FOCUSED, COLLABORATIVE EMPLOYEE APPROACH

A wealth of research has found that, when it comes to protecting and promoting employee wellbeing, one size does not fit all. Giving employees opportunities to individualise their job, and to participate in the specification and implementation of work interventions that affect them, can help to support wellbeing and protect mental health.

6. Job crafting refers to the ways that employees use opportunities to customise their jobs. Job crafting has been found to enhance employee wellbeing over time. Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2013). *The Impact of Job Crafting on Job Demands, Job Resources and Wellbeing*. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 18(2), 230.

7. Research has found that perceived organisational support for autonomy works synergistically with job crafting and positive wellbeing, indicating that individual context and individual factors matter. Slemp, G. R., Kern, M. L., & Vella-Brodrick, D. A. (2015). *Workplace Wellbeing: The Role of Job Crafting and Autonomy Support.* Psychology of Wellbeing, 5(1), 1-17.

8. Enabling employees and line managers to participate in interventions to improve work is a central consideration for their effectiveness. Nielsen, K. (2013). *How Can We Make Organisational Interventions Work? Employees and Line Managers as Actively Crafting Interventions.* Human Relations, 66(8), 1029-105.

9. Participation can mean being part of the intervention process or choosing the content of an intervention. Abildgaard, J. S., Hasson, H., von Thiele Schwarz, U., Løvseth, L. T., Ala-Laurinaho, A., & Nielsen, K. (2020). *Forms of Participation: The Development and Application of a Conceptual Model of Participation in Work Environment Interventions.* Economic and Industrial Democracy, 41(3), 746-769.

10. It helps to get employees and line managers involved from the start of designing an intervention. Tafvelin, S., von Thiele Schwarz, U., Nielsen, K., & Hasson, H. (2019). *Employees' and Line Managers' Active Involvement in Participatory Organisational Interventions: Examining Direct, Reversed, and Reciprocal Effects on Wellbeing.* Stress and Health, 35(1), 69-80.

11. Taking an individualised approach to return to work is key to ensuring it is successful and sustainable and will likely benefit employees' return to the physical workplace https://www.som.org.uk/Returning_to_the_workplace_COVID-19_toolkit_FINAL.pdf.

Where next? As millions of employees return to the workplace, we can draw from learnings of absence management. Future research may helpfully consider which policies and practices support an individualised approach to managing the transition to a new way of working post-pandemic.

A FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS (ESPECIALLY THE MANAGER)

Work relationships play an important role in protecting the mental health and wellbeing of employees or undermining wellbeing when behaviour is bad. The role of the manager is especially well established, but general work support from colleagues is also important.

1. Leadership behaviour has been found across multiple studies to relate to employee mental health, including stress and burnout. A range of positive leader behaviours are linked to reduced stress and burnout and negative behaviours to increased stress and burnout. Harms, P. D., Credé, M., Tynan, M., Leon, M., & Jeung, W. (2017). *Leadership and Stress: A Meta-Analytic Review*. The Leadership Quarterly, *28*(1), 178-194.

2. Specific line manager behaviours can prevent and reduce stress at work. These are being respectful and responsible (managing emotions and having integrity), managing and communicating existing and future work, managing the individual within the team, reasoning/managing difficult situations. Yarker, J., Lewis, R., & Donaldson-Feilder, E. (2021). *Management Competencies for Health and Wellbeing*. In Eds. Paula Brough, Elliroma Gardiner and Kevin Daniels in Handbook Series in Occupational Health Science. Handbook on Mangement and Employment Practices https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/line-manager.

3. Cooperative and cordial relationships with colleagues also reduce work stress. Nappo, N. (2020). *Job Stress and Interpersonal Relationships Cross Country Evidence* from the EU15: A Correlation Analysis. BMC Public Health, *20*(1), 1-11.

4. Relationship factors, including organisational and family support, were found to relate to reduced stress in a previous epidemic, with implications for the importance of relationships in the COVID-19 pandemic. Brooks. S. K., Dunn, R., Amlôt, R., Rubin, G. J., & Greenberg, N. (2017). *A Systematic, Thematic Review of Social and Occupational Factors Associated with Psychological Outcomes in Healthcare Employees During an Infectious Disease Outbreak*.

5. For an overview of healthy leadership, see the Affinity Health at Work research hub topic: Healthy Leadership http://affinityhealthhub.co.uk/explore-evidence-and-tools/healthy-leadership.

Where next? While much is known of the ingredients of good working relationships, a key question is: how do colleagues and managers build relationships in virtual and hybrid environments? How do we equip and support managers to change and sustain their behaviour over time? What provisions should we put in place to support managers under incredible pressure to support others as we exit the pandemic?

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

An appropriate physical work environment has been found to support many aspects of wellbeing, buffering against mental ill health, enabling flourishing, supporting productivity, and supporting inclusion. The research highlights the benefits of natural environments, such as green designs and natural light as well as workspaces that encourage movement. More recently agile workspace designs, with a mix of quiet workspaces and communal social spaces, have been evaluated. However, research suggests that while these spaces provide employees with affordances to work differently and effectively, behaviour change and support is needed to ensure that people optimise the use of space. Pre-pandemic and pandemic research on teleworking indicates mixed experiences, suggesting that individual differences, job role and autonomy over working styles are important factors in influencing telework preferences.

1. Positive associations between worker productivity, reaction times and sick leave are associated with workspaces with plants and access to natural landscapes. BITC (2021) *Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Emergency* https://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/the-power-of-nature-for-employee-wellbeing/.

2. There is significant evidence to suggest that light, temperature, air quality and noise can impact employees' experience of the workplace and comfort levels. Al Horr Y., Arif, M., Katafygiotou, M., Mazroei, A., Kaushik, A., & Elsarrag, E. (2016). *Impact of Indoor Environmental Quality on Occupant Wellbeing and Comfort: A Review of the Literature*. International Journal of Sustainable Built Environment, 5(1), 1-11.

3. Biophilic (nature-orientated) building design: the incorporation of elements such as plants, water and wood can support wellbeing. Gillis, K., & Gatersleben, B. (2015). *A Review of Psychological Literature on the Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Biophilic Design*. Buildings, *5*(3), 948-963.

4. Reconnecting people to nature in their work environment can also support productivity and is stated as a priority by many workers *Human Spaces: The Global Impact of Biophilic Design in the Workplace*, London.

5. Providing a positive physical environment provides affordances but extra efforts may be required to change behaviours to enable employees to optimise their physical environment. Munir, F., Yarker, J., Duckworth, J., Chen, Y., Brinkley, A., Varela-Mato, V., Lewis, R., and Clemes, S. (2021). *Evaluation of a Natural Workspace Intervention with Active Design Features on Movement, Interaction and Health*. Work (in press).

6. Studies examining the impact of remote working and agile environments show mixed results. It is important to note that the majority of telework research has examined the telework under conditions of voluntary, partial uptake, often in response to demands for work flexibility. Shockley, K. M., Clark, M. A., Dodd, H., & King, E. B. (2020). *Work-Family Strategies During COVID-19: Examining Gender Dynamics Among Dual-Earner Couples with Young Children*. Journal of Applied Psychology, *106*(1), 15–28 https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000857

7. Working from home is often identified as a work adjustment or accommodation to enable the workability of employees with chronic illnesses through reduced commuting time and effort, better ability to manage breaks and movement, or for neurodiverse employees due to the opportunities to control their environment and reduced sensory stimulation. However, despite a widely recommended accommodation by work and health practitioners, there is very little research evidence available to inform practice and it is important to recognise that individuals have unique needs https://www.acas.org.uk/work-adjustments-for-mental-health-a-review-of-the-evidence-and-guidance-html#3.-the-findings.

8. Some employees with neurodiverse conditions may benefit from the opportunity to work from home.

9. It is important to remember that working from home is not safe for all. Over 1.6 million and 786,00 men experience domestic abuse in 2019. BITC have developed a toolkit to help employers take action https://www.bitc.org.uk/toolkit/covid-19-domestic-abusesupporting-employees/.

Where next? Developing our understanding about what works, for whom, under what circumstance will be important as organisations, particularly as many people move to working in hybrid teams. While no one size fits all, research that examines best practice in hybrid meetings, presenteeism, power distance relationships, maintaining perceptions of fairness and potency of organisational culture across on-site and work from home populations, and the role of green and communal physical spaces are likely to be prioritised by organisations.

MEASURING, MONITORING AND TAKING ACTION

The importance of measuring, monitoring and taking action to guide targeted change and development in relation to job design has long since been recognised by policy makers, health and safety professionals and academics; yet the translation into organisational practice has been slow. While organisations have prioritised measures of engagement, measuring specific features of the work and job design known to cause harm is likely to drive targeted action to improve health and wellbeing. An extensive body of evidence has been used to inform the key measures and monitoring frameworks.

1. The Affinity hub topic on measurement of reviews some of the multifaceted methods for measuring wellbeing http://affinityhealthhub.co.uk/explore-evidence-and-tools/measuring-psychological-wellbeing.

2. The Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards for Work Stress provide a framework and tool for monitoring and reporting on features of work and job design known to cause harm https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/.

3. The What Works Wellbeing research teams have conducted extensive research to identify the range of measures that can be used by organisations to measure wellbeing in the workplace https://whatworkswellbeing.org/resources/workplace-wellbeing-questionnaire-methodology/.

4. The ISO 45003 for occupational health and safety management, psychological health and safety at work guidelines for managing psychosocial risk will provide a framework to support the monitoring of psychosocial risks i.e., aspects of job design and culture that impact wellbeing https://www.iso.org/standard/64283.html.

5. WELL building standards considers wellbeing and the built environment https://www.wellcertified.com/.

6. There are a number of local frameworks that organisations may find useful, including the London Healthy Workplace Award https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/london-healthy-workplace-award.

Where next? Less is known about the individual differences in the experience of a healthy work environment. As organisations improve monitoring processes, it is important to consider the role of intersectionality. The evolution of measures will be from outcome related measurement, to process related measurement reflecting a more embedded approach to wellbeing.

VALUE: EMPATHY AND COMPASSION

Compassion, and particularly compassionate leadership, is increasingly being considered in the workplace. Compassion is an ancient concept, with roots in religion, sociology and philosophy. Compassion means recognising suffering in others and towards the self; its active component entails acting to make suffering more bearable. In a workplace context, both compassion and self-compassion are related to improved wellbeing and performance.

1. In a review of compassion at work, compassion is said to have six components relating to the process and outcomes within an organisation; shared values, shared beliefs, norms, practices, structure and quality of relationships, and leaders' behaviours. Dutton, J. E., Workman, K. M., & Hardin, A. E. (2014). *Compassion at Work. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behaviour* 1(1), 277-304.

2. Compassion has been related to skills including attentiveness, listening, understanding, confronting, and providing prognostic information sensitively and clearly. Interventions to increase compassion at work have found improvements in employees measures of mental health Sinclair, S., Norris, J. M., McConnell, S. J., Chochinov, H. M., Hack, T. F., Hagen, N. A., ... & Bouchal, S. R. (2016). *Compassion: A Scoping Review of the Healthcare Literature*. BMC Palliative Care 15(1), 6. 0.

3. Interventions aimed at increasing compassion outside of work have found reductions in depression, anxiety and psychological distress. Kirby, J. N., Tellegen, C. L., & Steindl, S. R. (2017). *A Meta-Analysis of Compassion-Based Interventions: Current*

State of Knowledge and Future Directions. Behavior Therapy, 48(6), 778-792.

4. See the Affinity Health at Work research hub topic 'Compassion in the Workplace'.

5. This value of compassion has been well researched through the lens of leadership. Compassionate leadership focuses on building a culture where help seeking is not just acceptable but is a normal part of working life. See Roffey Park's Compassionate Leadership booklet and The King's Fund blogs and reports on Compassionate leadership.

Where next? Learning more about how organisations build empathy and compassion into their processes and practices such as leadership will be key to making sure that compassion stays and doesn't fall away as we move to hybrid work environments.

VALUE: INCLUSIVITY AND EQUITY

Good mental health and wellbeing for whom? For organisations to truly answer 'all of our people', they must recognise the personal and demographic characteristics that pose a barrier to wellbeing and take measures to overcome these barriers. Inclusivity means being responsive to different needs, tailoring our mental health and wellbeing approaches to the needs of different groups. A commitment to equity means that our goal is equal health outcomes for all. While inclusivity and equity is clearly a high level priority for business leaders, and there has been a surge in activity in response to global discussions on race, gender and health equality, there remains a lack of granularity in research connecting inclusivity, equity and wellbeing.

1. Health equity is defined as the absence of unfair and avoidable or remediable differences in health among population groups defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically. WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_3.

2. There have been striking disparities in the health risks and outcomes of COVID-19 by ethnicity, gender and socio-economic group. The mental health and wellbeing of Black people and

other minority ethnic backgrounds has been more severely affected. Public Health England. (2020). *Disparities In the Risk and Outcomes of COVID-19*.

3. The relationship between diversity characteristics and exclusion from the mainstream work community provides one explanation for why diversity and poorer work wellbeing may go hand in hand. Barak, M. E. M., & Levin, A. (2002). *Outside of the Corporate Mainstream and Excluded from The Work Community: A Study of Diversity, Job Satisfaction and Wellbeing*. Community, Work & Family, *5*(2), 133-157.

4. Incorporating the values of inclusivity and equity into workplace wellbeing means targeted efforts to ensure the wellbeing of low pay groups, and disaggregating health uptake data by race and ethnicity. Sherman, B. W., Kelly, R. K., & Payne-Foster, P. (2020). *Integrating Workforce Health into Employer Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts*. American Journal of Health Promotion, 0890117120983288.

Where next? We are at the beginning of developing a fully integrated research agenda and there is an urgent need to deepen understanding.

VALUE: TRUST AND APPRECIATION

Trust and appreciation are key aspects of positive working life. We need to trust because we depend on others in various ways to accomplish personal and organisational goals; appreciation conveys our respect and esteem for the efforts of others.

1. Trust involves the trustor taking a risk and is argued to be a function of the trustee's perceived ability, benevolence, and integrity. It is also a function of the trustor's propensity to trust. Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). *An Integrative Model of Organisational Trust*. Academy of Management Review, 20(3), 709-734.

2. Appreciation communicates respect, recognition and esteem, which contribute to positive experiences at work, such as feelings of success and job satisfaction. Pfister, I. B., Jacobshagen, N., Kälin, W., & Semmer, N. K. (2020). *How Does Appreciation Lead to Higher Job Satisfaction?* Journal of Managerial Psychology.

3. Over time, having an appreciative leader helped to moderate the negative effects of stressful work situations on employees' wellbeing (job satisfaction, self-efficacy, job-related depressive mood, and sleep problems). Stocker, D., Keller, A. C., Meier, L. L., Elfering, A., Pfister, I. B., Jacobshagen, N., & Semmer, N. K. (2019). *Appreciation by Supervisors Buffers the Impact of Work Interruptions on Wellbeing Longitudinally.* International Journal of Stress Management, 26(4), 331–343.

4. Trust is an essential component of a high functioning workplace. Both leaders and team members can actively assist in supporting the development of trustworthy environments by practicing benevolence, competence, reliability, honesty, vulnerability and openness. Hungerford, C., & Cleary, M. (2020). *'High Trust' and 'Low Trust' Workplace Settings: Implications for Our Mental Health and Wellbeing.* Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 1-9.

Where next? Many factors influence our perceptions of trust and more than ever the social and societal factors have played a role. Considering how we build trust and demonstrate our appreciation of employees in a virtual and hybrid environment will be key.

VALUE: AUTHENTICITY

Being authentic means knowing and valuing ourselves and acting in line with that self-knowledge. Research indicates that the concept of authenticity can be complex - we may change over time, and we may bring different versions of ourselves to different contexts, such as work. We may consciously modify ourselves to meet group needs, or in certain cultural contexts. Nonetheless, feeling able to be our authentic selves at work is associated with wellbeing and engagement, and research also finds a relationship between authentic leadership and follower wellbeing.

1. Authenticity is associated with an increase in positive wellbeing, with buffering strain and distress, and with work engagement. Sutton, A. (2020). *Living the Good Life: A Meta-Analysis of Authenticity, Well-Being, and Engagement.* Personality and Individual Differences, 153, 109645.

2. Authentic leadership is seen to be the product of positive leadership capabilities - such as being ethical and aware within a highly developed organisational context. It is found to build a sense of purposeful wellbeing and authenticity in followers. R.,

Morgeson, F. P., & Nahrgang, J. D. (2005). *Authentic Leadership and Eudaemonic Wellbeing: Understanding Leader – Follower Outcomes.* The Leadership Quarterly, 16(3), 373-394.

3. Perceptions of authentic leadership have been found to relate to lower levels of burnout in a high stress profession. Laschinger, H. K. S., & Fida, R. (2014). *New Nurses Burnout and Workplace Wellbeing: The Influence of Authentic Leadership and Psychological Capital.* Burnout Research, 1(1), 19-28.

4. Whilst important for employee wellbeing, authenticity has to be set in the context of organisational culture and social norms. Cha, S. E., Hewlin, P. F., Roberts, L. M., Buckman, B. R., Leroy, H., Steckler, E. L., ... & Cooper, D. (2019). *Being Your True Self at Work: Integrating the Fragmented Research on Authenticity in Organisations.* Academy of Management Annals, 13(2), 633-671.

Where next? New research will need to examine what authenticity looks like in the new working world both in processes and practices, along with an appreciation of the risks of authenticity in an unsafe working environment.

UNDERPINNING: SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability means valuing interconnected approaches and thinking for the long-term. In a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous organisational (VUCA) world, there are multiple, changing threats to employees mental health and wellbeing. These must be addressed through long-term approaches to manage psychosocial health and safety and risk mitigation, and to long-term funding streams that prioritise wellbeing. Environmental sustainability is also key: green buildings and sustainable transport methods can improve health and wellbeing as well as environmental sustainability. While there is a clear intention to realise the connections between sustainability and wellbeing, research is still in its infancy. Sustainability can be considered at different levels.

1. **Individual:** how can we build a fund of positive health, enabling workers to flourish, and building resources that protect against psychosocial risks? Di Fabio, A. (2017). *The Psychology of Sustainability and Sustainable Development for Wellbeing in Organisations.* Frontiers in Psychology *8*, 1534.

2. **Organisation:** how we build and invest in longer-term approaches to wellbeing that mitigate for our VUCA environment, moving away from reactive interventions? Ochoa, P., Lepeley, M. T., & Essens, P. (Eds.). (2018). *Wellbeing for Sustainability in the Global Workplace*. Routledge.

3. **Organisation:** how can we assess and manage risks? Guidelines for managing psychosocial risk will provide a framework to support the monitoring of psychosocial risks i.e., aspects of job design and culture that impact wellbeing. The ISO 45003 for Occupational Health and Safety Management https://www.iso.org/standard/64283.html

4. **Environment:** how do environmental sustainability and wellbeing agendas intersect? Green building design research indicates improvements in physical wellbeing, but areas for refinement. Thatcher, A., & Milner, K. (2014). Changes in Productivity, *Psychological Wellbeing and Physical Wellbeing from Working in a 'Green' Building*. Work, *49*(3), 381-393.

5. **Environment:** how can we achieve health equity alongside net zero emissions, including through workplace measures? Munro, A., Boyce, T., & Marmot, M. (2020). *Sustainable Health Equity: Achieving a Net-Zero UK*. The Lancet Planetary Health, *4*(12), e551-e553.

Where next? The conversation around sustainability is at the forefront of board activity. There has been significant progression but there is need for careful thought and decisive action if organisations genuinely want to reduce their carbon footprint and create a positive impact on society.

READ THE FULL REPORT

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