

Over half of professionals think employers should be doing more to help with workforce wellbeing

2 years ago



55% of professionals think employers should be doing more to help with employee wellbeing – whilst over two-fifths of senior leaders feel their increased spending on wellness benefits is going by largely unnoticed.

A new poll from international recruitment firm [Robert Walters](#) has found professionals in the UK & Ireland are increasingly feeling that their employers are falling short in providing help with workplace wellbeing.

Chris Eldridge, CEO of [Robert Walters UK](#) comments:

“We are seeing that the onus has shifted in recent years, ‘it’s no longer what can I do for a company?’ – professionals are beginning to ask ‘how can my company help me?’”

“The rise in awareness in terms of employee wellbeing has not only caused employees to become more outspoken in terms of their own expectations in the workplace – but also shifted the spotlight onto employers, increasing expectations around what the leaders of companies should be doing to help their employees. Whilst budgets may be tight, 2024 is evidently not the year to turn a blind eye to money being spent on employee wellbeing.”

Efforts Go Unnoticed?

According to [research from WTW](#), over a third of companies (36%) at the beginning of the year were planning to double their current spend on employee wellbeing initiatives, despite a turbulent economy and concerns around inflation.

In spite of this only 11% of professionals feel that workplace wellbeing has become a priority for their employers – according to a recent Robert Walters poll.

In fact, an overwhelming two-fifths (41%) of employers stated that their employees barely noticed the new interventions they've introduced to boost employee wellness.

Companies 'Wellbeing Washing'

Pressure mounts as companies are increasingly being accused of 'wellbeing washing' – the act of outwardly showcasing support for wellbeing awareness and mental health causes (such as via social media posts or celebrating awareness days) whilst not actively working to improve the wellbeing of their own workforce all year-round.

In fact, Claro Wellbeing found that despite 7 in 10 workplaces 'celebrating' mental health awareness days – less than half of these companies actually offer adequate mental health support.

Employees Demanding Change

A resounding 70% of professionals stated they now expect more (e.g. benefits, working culture, empathetic leadership & ESG contributions) from their employers compared to 18 months ago – with less than a fifth stating otherwise.

Interestingly, when asked, over half (58%) of managers thought their employees had become more outspoken in the workplace over the last three years.

Findings from the poll also revealed that almost two-fifths (39%) of managers feel that employees are becoming more vocal when it comes to getting their needs met – with a further quarter (26%) claiming that employees are actually taking matters into their own hands.

When asked how employees were 'taking matters into their own hands' in order to manage their own wellbeing in relation to work, some of the most popular methods were:

- picking the days they are in-office (56%)
- setting their own work hours (24%)
- pushing back on workload (10%).

Chris comments: "For professionals in an increasingly hybrid world, having autonomy in deciding the days they are in the office & setting their own work hours can help them avoid burnout – which right now, is enemy number one in terms of productivity and satisfaction levels.

"Whilst we are definitely seeing more of a push to return to the office, caution must be taken as to whether this is a positive or negative move for employees mental health and work-life balance."

When asked, over a quarter of employees stated that wellbeing had become a priority for them over the past year – however, almost two-fifths noted not believing it had become one for their employers.

Chris comments: "Upscaling wellbeing interventions can be as easy and inexpensive as flexible work arrangements, improving access to mental health resources, setting up mental health employee resource groups (ERGs), offering paid sabbaticals, or even adding plants or introducing more natural light into the

workplace.”