

# Making Workplace Wellness a Daily Habit

Workplace wellbeing is achievable for all organisations, but requires a genuine, continuous commitment across all levels of the workplace.

Workplace health and wellbeing requires a state of balance between organisational, team and individual needs. Wellbeing is achieved through a combination of improving 'how work is organised' and the working environment, promoting the active participation of employees in health activities and visible engagement from leaders.

Wellbeing has historically been a difficult concept to define and measure, however in recent years there has been a distinct focus in developing an effective framework for wellbeing to be defined and measured against.

Gallup and Healthways have nominated the following five elements that directly impact your personal wellbeing and everyone's around you.

**Purpose (or Career)** Liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals.

**Social** Having supportive relationships and love in your life.

**Financial** Managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security.

**Physical** Having good health and enough energy to get things done every day.

**Community** Liking where you live, feeling safe, and having pride in your community.

Employers and workplaces can play an active role in developing and maintaining the health and wellbeing of their workers; as well as supporting the recovery of staff with both physical and mental wellbeing concerns.

Individuals frequently identify work as providing a sense of purpose, acceptance within society, and opportunities for development, therefore playing a pivotal role in a person's

wellbeing.

Developing a mentally healthy workplace requires an understanding of the key issues of job design, team and organisational factors, combined with home/work conflict and individual factors.

An individual's work performance and engagement is highest when, reported levels of both physical and psychological wellbeing, and job satisfaction are high.

**There are many things that we as individuals can do to positively contribute to the wellbeing of our workplaces and as individuals in the workplace.**

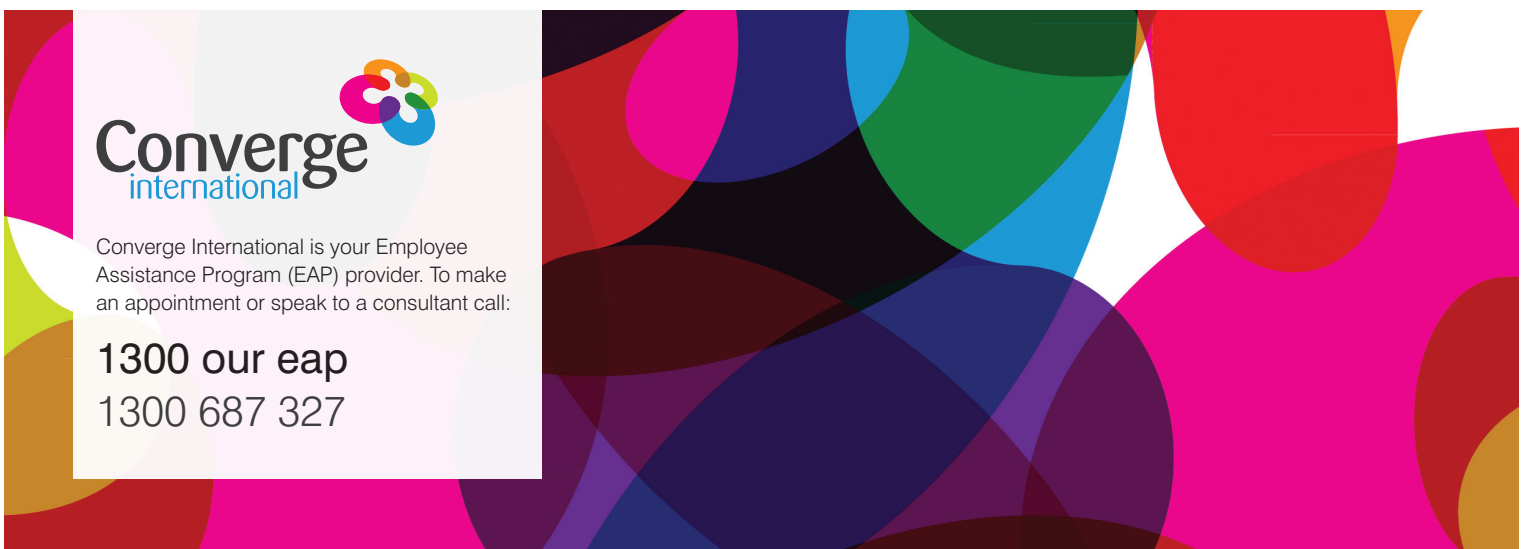
## Maintain your health

What you eat and drink impacts on both your short-term and long-term physical health as well as your immediate state of mind. Your mind and body are two parts of the same system. Keeping fit reduces your chance of becoming physically ill, but also can help you feel calmer, happier and more in control. Your own positivity and calmness is highly contagious so don't underestimate what a massive difference it can make to the overall functioning of your team or organisation.

## Manage your stress

This isn't just about leading by example. Think about how your stress levels impact on your employees. When you are more stressed, you become more irritable. Under stress we find ourselves becoming more distant or disconnected from the people around us.

If you are seen to be operating under stress, you project the message that stress is normal and it's acceptable to be irritable, distant, make poor quality decisions and blame it on stress. None of this contributes to a positive workplace, or to positivity in general.



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## Keep growing

When you consciously work on making your own life more meaningful it changes the way you interact with the world around you. It affects your relationships, the decisions you make, the things you do, the goals you aim for and the skills you develop. Take on extra opportunities at work, read books, listen to audio, use the internet as a resource where you can learn almost anything, embark on leadership or other training or make an EAP appointment to help set a path to achieve the changes you want to make.

## Manage your work life balance

By working unreasonably long hours, you support a culture that encourages others to do the same, impacting on yours and their wellbeing. It's important to acknowledge that you are giving out an unspoken message. Even if you are proactive in communicating to others in your workplace (particularly as managers and team leaders) that they are not required to work unreasonably long hours, if you are demonstrating a conflicting behaviour they are likely to be more influenced by what you do and not what you say.

## Diversify your focus

The effect on your mental health of engaging in hobbies or relaxing activities will change the way you think, behave and work. Being part of social circles outside of the workplace will allow you to step outside of your work identity, experience relationships of a different dynamic and interact with people with broadly varying perspectives.

## Invest in your relationships

Investing in your relationships, both personal and professional, involves reflection and learning about yourself. The way you interact with and treat other people will be an example to others of how they can do the same. Your relationship with colleagues and managers can have a significant positive impact on your, and their

emotional and physical wellbeing.

## Communicate Well

Everything you do is affected by how well you communicate. Being an excellent strategist, a visionary or a whizz with the finances won't make your colleagues, stakeholders or employees feel valued and happy in the workplace. Being an excellent communicator will enable people to feel connected to you and trust you, contributing to a happier and healthier environment.

## Genuinely listen

When you listen to your colleagues or employees questions, concerns and ideas, you can choose how to respond to them. You will pick up on changes that you can easily make, to improve workplace wellbeing and you'll become tuned in to how your decisions and behaviours affect overall performance, health and wellbeing.

## Build connections in the workplace

It is difficult to feel connected to others if you are seen to be absent or aloof. If you don't feel connected to others in your workplace, you are less likely to build trust or feel valued – these are important components in feeling engaged at work and enjoying good levels of wellbeing. Reach out and be present with your work colleagues, employees and managers. Take time to connect, ask questions and build rapport. Even if it is only possible have this kind of contact with a small fraction of your workplace, your reputation and the effort that this engagement takes will pay dividends.

Notice that these points require no budget and are all easily actioned by you. All of them can be done without permission or agreement from anyone else and can be started immediately.



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