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Worker Wellbeing

A GETTING STARTED GUIDE

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Prepared by Mahroo Shahbaz and Stephanie Bertels.

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CONTENTS

Embedding
P R O J E C T

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This guide is part of our series of Getting Started Guides that supports your company to develop an embedded sustainability strategy. Each guide tackles a specific sustainability sub-issue and explores what your company needs to do to support the resilience of the environmental and social systems around you.

In each guide, we address relevant trends, system thresholds, key concepts, key actors, and key resources. We also offer guidance on how to address the impacts of decisions and activities in your operations and value chains as well as developing credible goals and outlining key corporate actions and internal targets that can help to provide clarity on the work ahead.

We recommend you read the first guide in the series, Getting Started Guides: An Introduction, which explains our overall approach and the value of setting a clear strategy anchored in your company's most material issues. It also explains how you can leverage process-based interim targets to clearly outline and track the specific actions that your company needs to take to achieve its high-level goals.

A complete list of focus areas and sub-issues can be found in our guide Scan: A Comprehensive List of Sustainability Issues for Companies.

This guidebook addresses **Worker Wellbeing**, which is part of the broader sustainability issue topic of Rights and Wellbeing at Work.

To address the broad topic of Rights and Wellbeing at Work, we have separated out sub-issues into separate guides, so that we can address them in depth. The table on the next page provides a brief overview of our guides related to Rights and Wellbeing at Work and the key topics each guide covers. For specific information and guidance related to any of the key topics, please refer to the appropriate guide.

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PROJECT

GUIDE	KEY TOPICS COVERED
Human Dignity and Integrity (Tackling Modern Slavery): A Getting Started Guide (forthcoming)	Freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, or punishment; Freedom from violence or exploitation; Freedom from child labour, forced or compulsory labour, debt bondage, prison labour, or other forms of modern slavery; No human trafficking; No deceitful recruitment
Safe and Healthy Working Conditions: A Getting Started Guide (forthcoming)	Right to safe and healthy conditions of work; Right to refuse unsafe work; Occupational hygiene; Occupational health and safety; Appropriate and safe work from home; Natural lighting and airflow
Fair Compensation: A Getting Started Guide (published)	Fair compensation; In-work poverty; Family living wage/income; Equal pay for equal work; Eliminating pay disparities; Predictable payment timing; Useable/regionally appropriate currencies; Fair compensation in piecework jobs
Company-Worker Relations: A Getting Started Guide (published)	Respectfully engaging with workers; Freedom of association; Right to collective bargaining; Avoiding protracted negotiations; Effective social dialogue; Regular, timely, and transparent worker communications; Worker surveys and other input and feedback tools; Works councils; Accessible and transparent worker grievance mechanisms; Whistleblower channels; Psychological safety
Respectful, Equitable, and Inclusive Workplace: A Getting Started Guide (published)	Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI/EDI); or inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA); or justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI); or diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB), and other acronyms; Freedom from discrimination; Freedom of opinion and expression; Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; Right to privacy; Respect for group rights (such as the rights of Indigenous Peoples); Cultural leave; Respect for protections for persons with disabilities, children, women and girls, persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities, migrant workers, LGTBQIA2S+, older workers, and other groups; Workforce representative of broader society
Workforce Planning and Employee Development: A Getting Started Guide (published)	Workforce planning; Avoiding precarious employment; Retrenchment; Employee lifecycle aligned with sustainability; Feedback and performance management; Career planning; Opportunities for capacity building and personal development; Upskilling and reskilling; Building sustainability-related competencies
Worker Wellbeing: A Getting Started Guide (you are here)	Good health and wellbeing; Supporting work-life balance; Right to reasonable working hour limitations; Predictable work hours; Right to paid time off; Compassionate leave; Maternity and parental benefits; Elder or child care leave; Access to child care; Health promotion; Access to leisure and exercise; Accessible design; Healthy and culturally appropriate nutrition; Health and injury insurance and other health benefits; Reintegration support; Retirement benefits to support long term financial wellbeing

Embedding
P R O J E C T

1

SETTING THE STAGE – COMPANY ACTION ON WORKER WELLBEING

Wellbeing is multidimensional and includes physical health, mental health, work-life balance, emotional wellbeing, and financial wellbeing. Wellbeing can be affected by workplace culture and conditions, job responsibilities or workload, the home or community environment, as well as work-life balance. Employees' priorities related to wellbeing typically vary across organisations, influenced by the local context and their individual needs.

Companies can support health and wellbeing by ensuring working conditions prevent adverse impacts on the physical health, mental health, and comfort of workers, as well as promoting health as a priority within their workplace culture. Inclusive health and wellness benefits, accessible design, flexible working arrangements, accommodations for cultural needs, and physical and psychological accessibility and safety are becoming increasingly common considerations when designing worker wellbeing programs and plans. Companies also increasingly consider workforce mental health, as nearly a billion people worldwide are living with mental health issues and approximately 15% of working-age adults live with a mental disorder.

Companies should also ensure workers are able to rest, recover, and relax between shifts, have reasonable and predictable work hours, and can enjoy their right to leisure and paid time off. Other aspects of wellbeing at work can include compassionate leave, paid maternity and parental leave, access to childcare, other health and wellness benefits, and reintegration support. To prioritise wellness topics for action, companies will need to engage with their workforce to understand their perspectives, needs, and ideas to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

It is important to note that health and wellbeing are not the same as occupational health and safety – the International Labour Organisation (ILO) clarifies that "workplace wellbeing is to complement Occupation Safety and Health measures" and *must not* be confused with occupational health and safety processes. For more information and guidance on safety and health, read **Safe and Healthy Working Conditions: A Getting Started Guide [forthcoming]**.

Note: Sustainability issues are generally systemic issues, because they are deeply interconnected and rooted in complex environmental, social, and economic systems. In these guides, a system threshold is defined as the point at which the resilience of an environmental, social, or economic system becomes compromised. This occurs when the total impacts imposed on the system exceed its capacity to assimilate those impacts.

SYSTEM THRESHOLD

Workers are the foundation of a productive economy. Employers should not be relying on society to ensure the health and wellbeing of their workers. Companies cannot continue to disregard the impacts of the workplace on employees' access to a healthy and fulfilling life. Companies need to take steps beyond occupational health and safety measures to positively support and advance the wellbeing of workers.

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P R O J E C T

KEY TOPICS ASSOCIATED WITH WORKER WELLBEING

- Good health and wellbeing
- Supporting work-life balance
- Right to reasonable working hour limitations
- Predictable work hours; Right to paid time off
- Compassionate leave
- Maternity and parental benefits
- Elder or childcare leave
- Access to childcare
- Health promotion
- Access to leisure and exercise
- Accessible design
- Healthy and culturally appropriate nutrition
- Health and injury insurance and other health benefits
- Reintegration support
- Financial wellbeing
- Financial planning and literacy
- Retirement benefits, pensions, and retirement planning

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2 KEY CONCEPTS - THE DIMENSIONS OF WORKPLACE WELLBEING

UNDERSTANDING WORKPLACE WELLBEING

Companies use a range of terms for the deeply interconnected issues of health, wellness, and wellbeing. There is not a singular definition that covers all. And, in practice, priorities and understandings can vary significantly between individuals, socio-economic groups, cultures, and geographies.

Health, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), is "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." For more information and guidance on safety and health, read **Safe and Healthy Working Conditions: A Getting Started Guide [forthcoming]**.

Wellbeing, as defined by the WHO, "encompass[es the] quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose."

Workplace wellbeing can encompass many aspects. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) states that "workplace wellbeing relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organization," while the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) describes it as "creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organization."

The WHO's healthy workplace model builds upon the components of workplace wellbeing, providing a step-by-step process and core principles of strengthening healthy workplaces. It highlights the interlinked aspects of safe and healthy working conditions and worker wellbeing – and while the two concepts are distinct, both are crucial pieces to ensure wellbeing across employee experiences.
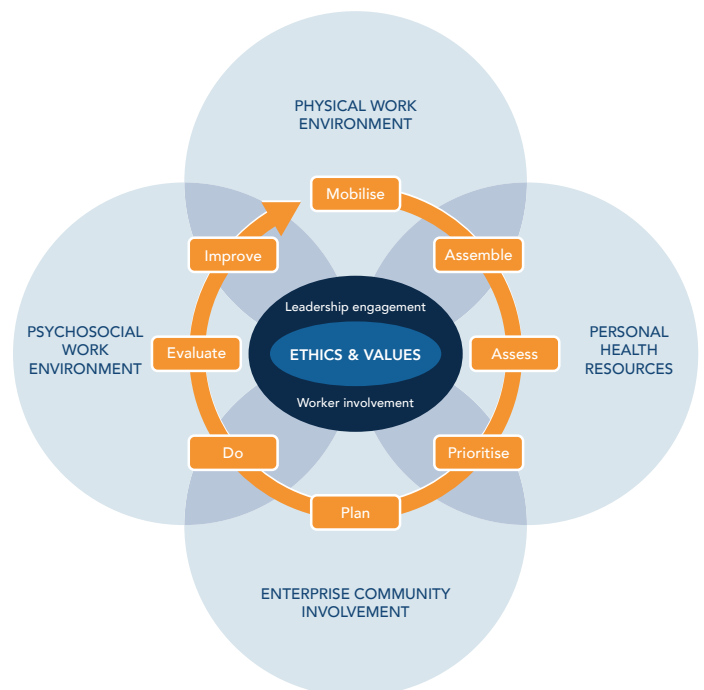
Source: World Health Organisation

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PROJECT

SUPPORTING A HEALTHY WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Workplaces make up a significant portion of most individuals' everyday life and finding a balance between work and personal lives is often a challenge for many workers. The hours spent at work and how these hours are organised shape the physical and mental wellbeing of workers as well as their connections to their family and friends, personal care, leisure, and overall sense of fulfilment.

Effectively managing work and personal commitments is often referred to as having a 'healthy work-life balance'. Because of its centrality to employee experiences and working conditions, work-life balance is a key priority for action on worker wellbeing, including for the ILO. The ILO embeds it in the Declaration of Philadelphia, recognising that "labour is not a commodity" and that "workers are people with hopes, dreams and aspirations for themselves and their families[, … and that] paid work is about more than just meeting workers' material needs; they also need to have the opportunity to fulfil their personal lives as well."

Good work-life balance offers various benefits to both workers and businesses. It increases employees' job satisfaction, improves their psychological and physical health, reduces stress levels, and more. Businesses that support employee work-life balance also benefit from these actions. The ILO notes that "[c]ompanies that implement work–life balance policies benefit from increased retention of current employees, improved recruitment, lower rates of absenteeism and higher productivity." Furthermore, as Employers for Childcare notes, offering policies to support work-life balance "enhances the company brand and promotes it as an employer of choice. This is important for targeting employees, widening the talent pool, and future-proofing the business."

A healthy work-life balance requires a foundation of predictable and reasonable working hours with clear limitations on hours of work and access to paid time off that aligns with international and national expectations and requirements. Increasingly, companies have also embraced flexible and/or remote work arrangements to help employees better balance their personal lives and ambitions with work requirements. However, as the traditional '9 to 5' working culture is replaced by increasing expectations for employees to be consistently available through technology, companies will also need to adapt and prioritise initiatives that support disconnecting from work.

Companies should also offer employees and contractors paid maternity and paternity leave (including for non-biological parents) as well as other parental benefits such as childcare leave. Depending on the organisational context and workforce makeup, companies may also offer access to on-site childcare or offer support for access to other nearby childcare services so working parents are better able to balance their responsibilities. They should also offer adequate compassionate leave for bereavements, as well as leave to care for elderly family members or a family member with significant risk of death.

HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE WORKPLACE AND WELLNESS BENEFITS

To support worker wellbeing, companies must also engage in health promotion as a lever for action. Health as a component of worker wellness can encompass many different approaches. Distinct from occupational health and safety processes, health promotion focuses on enabling healthy lifestyles and choices. Ideally, health promotion is aligned with your occupational health and safety processes to complement the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases and support the overall improvement of the working environment. As the Urban Land Institute notes, "[t]oday, too many people do not have the opportunity to be healthy because they live in places that make choosing healthy behaviours extremely challenging:

they lack access to healthy foods and places that make physical activity easy" – and health promotion at work can be a key piece in supporting a broader trend towards healthy lifestyles and employee wellbeing.

For many companies, a key component of health promotion is ensuring access to leisure and exercise. Workers should have access to adequate leisure time and exercise, including workers that are employed on vessels, in factory communities, or other settings where they are unable to go home on their personal time. Company efforts can translate into incentives to participate in sports or other outdoor/health promotion activities, offering access to on-site or near-site facilities or fitness programs, or implementing and encouraging walking meetings.

Other aspects include accessibility and nutrition. Work and communal spaces should be designed to be accessible to persons of diverse abilities. Companies should embrace concepts such as universal design, which works to ensure that the design of environments – including workplaces – are able to be equitably accessed and used by people of all abilities. In workplaces where the company provides meals, options should be healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate for workers.

Each approach to health promotion must be based on company context and worker needs – for example, traditional office-based workplaces may need to consider designing ergonomic workstations or implementing time for movement breaks into workdays to prevent employees from sedentary lifestyles, whereas these issues may not be a priority for employees engaged in forms of psychically active work such as construction.

Beyond health promotion, companies should offer robust and inclusive employee health insurance, as well as health and wellness benefits. At minimum, the insurance and benefits offered should be sufficient to match employees' basic physical and mental health needs. Consider offering mental healthcare coverage separate from physical healthcare coverage to avoid forcing a choice between them. Understand different employee needs and ensure your company's benefits program covers specialised wellness support for employees who need it and can be accessed through culturally competent and inclusive providers.

SUPPORTING LONG-TERM FINANCIAL WELLBEING

For many individuals, financial worries are often the leading cause of stress. With rising costs of living and economic uncertainty in many regions around the world, financial stress can significantly impact workers' mental health and wellbeing. Furthermore, some findings suggest that employees dealing with stress about their financial situation can be "twice as likely to report poor overall health [and] four times as likely to suffer from sleep problems, headaches, and other illnesses." Continued stress can also build to result in chronic health issues.

Employees' financial stress can have compounding impacts on your business. Mounting stress can negatively impact workers' performance and ability to focus during the workday. It can also result in low morale, poor decision-making, decreased productivity, increased costs, and impact worker relationships or workplace culture.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) describes financial wellbeing as "an employee's ability to make the most of their money and finances on a day-to-day basis, while also being able to deal with the unexpected, like a bill for a car or household appliance breakdown, and being able to plan and save for the future." Broadly, it can be thought of as an employee's financial resilience and feeling of control over their finances.

Embedding
P R O J E C T

Financial wellbeing is impacted by an individual's:

Mindset	Abilities
eg. financial confidence, spending control, engagement with money, saving orientation, digital engagement, and so on	eg. financial numeracy, understanding of financial concepts, knowledge of where to access advice

Behaviour	Connections
eg. managing money, planning ahead, proactively seeking advice	eg. access to reputable financial guidance

Source: CIPD

Companies should consider how they can support employee's financial wellbeing as a key component of their worker wellbeing strategy. Employers can help to build and strengthen financial literacy within their workforce to ensure employees are better equipped with the knowledge and confidence to effectively manage their finances so that financial stress does not adversely impact their wellbeing or performance at work. These financial wellness programs will need to be flexible and tailored to employee's unique needs and contexts.

Everyone should be able to afford to live with dignity in retirement. Globally, there is a growing and concerning retirement savings gap. Most workers do not have access to pension plans or savings products, and even among those who do, many are not saving. Among those workers who do set aside funds for retirement, many are still not saving enough to meet their basic needs in retirement. Increases in longevity have – and will – put these retirement savings under further strain, particularly for women, who tend to live longer. Financial wellness programs will need to extend to cover retirement readiness and planning for the long-term.

While retirement planning is the responsibility of each employee, as an employer, you can help to support your employees' long-term financial wellbeing. Employers should communicate the importance of early and proactive retirement planning, provide access to financial and retirement planning advice, and offer a pension option. In the UK, the Living Wage Foundation is encouraging employers to commit to providing a living pension that helps employees save enough to meet their everyday needs in retirement.

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3 KEY PLAYERS

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) aims to promote social justice and internationally recognised human and labour rights. They address health promotion as a key complementary practice to traditional occupational health and safety measures.

The World Health Organization (WHO) aims to lead global efforts to give everyone, everywhere an equal chance to live a healthy life. They address worker wellbeing through various resources and initiatives across the world.

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) is a nonprofit organisation with a mission to empower wellness worldwide by educating public and private sectors about preventative health and wellness.

Embedding
P R O J E C T

4

COMMITTING TO TAKE ACTION – MID- AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS

Committing to take action on **Worker Wellbeing** can include addressing many of the key topics listed above. The mid- and long-term commitments that your organisation elects to make should be based on your identified priorities, areas of greatest impact, and your capacity to undertake the work required. It is important to note that this section does not provide *all* possible mid- and long-term goals related to this issue, but rather a sample of the goals that were most frequently adopted by companies in our research.

Common mid- and long-term goals and/or commitments on **Worker Wellbeing** include variations of the following:

Long-term commitment: Foster and promote health and wellbeing in the workplace to support workers' ability to thrive.

- We will provide employees with benefits and programs that support their holistic physical and mental wellbeing.
- We will provide a benefits program that covers specialised wellness support for employees who need it and can be accessed through culturally competent and inclusive providers.

Long-term commitment: Promote and support healthy lifestyles.

- We will offer access to on-site or near-site fitness facilities or programs.
- We will implement policies that support employee's physical exercise during the workday.
- We will offer healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate options for meals provided at the workplace.
- We will ensure that workplace and communal areas are designed to be accessible to persons of diverse abilities.

Long-term commitment: Support a good work-life balance.

- We will ensure predictable and reasonable working hours with clear limitations on hours of work and access to paid time off.
- We will offer flexible and/or remote work arrangements, where possible.
- We will offer paid maternity and paternity leave (including for non-biological parents) as well as other parental benefits such as childcare leave.
- We will offer access to on-site childcare (or subsidise access to nearby childcare facilities).

Embedding
PROJECT

Long-term commitment: Support employee long-term financial wellbeing.

• We will offer a financial wellness program that strengthens workers' financial literacy and resilience.
• We will provide access to financial and retirement planning advice and offer a pension to all employees.
• All employees will be enrolled in a living pension by 20[XX].

Are you setting new goals or interested in benchmarking your goals against leading practice? Explore our Sustainability Goals Database for more mid- and long-term goals on Worker Wellbeing.

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5

HOW TO GET THERE – PROCESS-BASED INTERIM TARGETS

Note: The following proposed timelines are only for guidance and are based on the pace outlined by other companies. The timeframe for actions and work for each step needs to be embedded in your organisational context, which may require different time allocations.

UNDERSTAND THE PRIORITIES OF WORKERS

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to employee wellbeing – each employee will have varying needs and priorities related to their wellbeing and the role that your company may play in supporting it. Create opportunities for employees to provide their input to gain a better understanding of their priorities for wellbeing and their experiences with the current policies and resources. Depending on the scale of your organisation and its communication culture, this can include anonymous surveys, focus groups, or other communication channels that your employees prefer. Aim to understand employee needs and priorities on physical, mental, and financial wellbeing.

> **Examples of process-based targets:**
>
> - By 20[XX], we will use employee listening exercises to understand our workforce's perspectives, needs, priorities, and ideas to support wellbeing at work.
> - By 20[XX], we will establish a health council and/or other worker feedback mechanism to understand employees' health and wellbeing needs.

DEFINE WHAT WELLBEING MEANS FOR YOUR ORGANISATION

Inventory and examine your current wellbeing policies, programs, and offerings to understand where your organisation is on its wellbeing journey. Include efforts towards physical, mental,

and financial wellbeing as well as supports for a healthy work-life balance. Then, based on your understanding of employees' priorities and your current actions, clearly define what components of wellbeing are most relevant to your organisation.

Wellbeing has many dimensions that may be viewed as residing within different departments. According to the ILO, "workplace wellbeing relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organization." Is it clear within your organisation who this work resides with? Is this communicated and integrated into relevant policies and structures? Building this organisational understanding will be crucial for aligning on intent.

> **Examples of process-based targets:**
>
> - By 20[XX], we will inventory and examine our current wellbeing policies and offerings.
> - By 20[XX], we will define what wellbeing means for our organisation.

ALIGN YOUR INTENT

Alignment on intent helps individuals and teams across your organisation to assess how their efforts can best support the company's vision and objectives for worker wellbeing. This work tends to be more effective if your leaders have a foundational understanding of worker wellbeing and a clear sense of your employees' needs (and

Embedding
P R O J E C T

at later stages, the challenges and opportunities in your value chain). Ask key questions such as: What is your company's vision and philosophy related to employee wellbeing? What role does your organisation want to play in long-term financial wellbeing? Why does mental health need to be a key component of your wellbeing strategy? How does your organisation currently approach work-life balance and how would changes to this approach benefit employees and the company? Articulate an internal vision for the future state of wellbeing in your organisation to align on intent and purpose – and throughout this process, keep the needs and priorities of your employees at the center of the conversation.

> **Examples of process-based targets:**
>
> • By 20[XX], we will develop an internal position statement on wellbeing at work and its relevance to our organisation.

IDENTIFY GAPS IN YOUR OFFERINGS

Take some time to identify where you already meet expectations. Understand your organisational strengths by identifying which key roles, processes, practices, and initiatives already contribute to success in fostering employee wellbeing, and your capacity to undertake new work.

Then, leverage your inventory of wellbeing offerings and understanding of employee priorities to identify any gaps in your current programs. This could include determining if there is room for improvement regarding compassionate leave, paid maternity/parental leave, access to childcare, health and wellness benefits, and more. Also consider accessibility – does your current workplace and its physical or virtual design pose any barriers for people with differing abilities? Identify whether your current efforts towards inclusivity align with the 7 principles for universal design and where there may be room for improvement.

Some organisations encourage employees to fill out health risk assessments to understand and design appropriate wellness programs for their workforce – however, it is crucial that the company only has access to aggregated, anonymised results to ensure that workers' confidential information is protected. Leveraging feedback mechanisms to ask for employee feedback can help your organisation to understand perspectives on a more in-depth qualitative level.

> **CASE STUDY: Patagonia's understanding of shifting employee health needs**
>
> Recognising that women's reproductive rights and transgender rights were increasingly restricted in certain jurisdictions where they operated, Patagonia – an American outdoor clothing and gear company – understood the impacts this would have on employee's ability to access the care they needed. To address this emerging gap in access to care, the company committed to covering travel costs related to abortion care and gender-affirming surgeries for employees residing in impacted regions.

> **Examples of process-based targets:**
>
> • By 20[XX], we will identify which existing roles, processes, practices, and initiatives already contribute to success in fostering employee wellbeing.
> • By 20[XX], we will identify gaps in our offers to better support employee health and wellness.
> • By 20[XX], we will offer our employees an option to complete a health risk assessments to better understand and design appropriate wellness programs.

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IDENTIFY INTERNAL CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

To build a credible strategy, you will need to anticipate internal challenges that may stand in the way of meeting your employees' needs and priorities for wellbeing. Understand if there are logistical challenges or a lack of resources that will constrain your efforts and how you may work past them towards a more comprehensive approach to wellbeing. For example, for companies with a limited budget, you may choose to start small and build up employee wellbeing programs over time and strategically leverage free or existing resources to expand your efforts on education-related aspects of work-life balance and financial literacy.

> **Examples of process-based targets:**
>
> • By 20[XX], we will identify internal challenges and constraints to our wellbeing approach and develop approaches to work past them.

DEVELOP TARGETS AND AN ACTION PLAN TO FOSTER WORKFORCE WELLBEING

Identify key goals, outline the timeframe, and detail the interim steps your company needs to take to get there. Your interim targets should be realistic and reflect the key investments needed to meet your goals. Break down your efforts into the key dimensions of wellbeing such as physical, mental, financial, and social wellbeing, and work-life balance. Some organisations may benefit from creating individual action plans and targets for each subset to enable a more targeted approach.

Implement organisational interventions that assess, address, and eliminate workplace risks to physical and mental health not covered by health and safety processes. This can include actions such as supporting employee fitness and health goals through access to exercise equipment and

introducing the ability to take walking meetings or cycle to work, or implementing programs to prevent violence and harassment at work. Overall, the changes your organisation needs to make can be wide-ranging, including both employee benefits such as parental leave and additional wellbeing programs as mentioned above. Topics can include:

• Promoting employee health and wellness through communication, organsiational culture, and training
• Ensuring reasonable working hour limitations, providing predictable work hours, and adequate paid time off to support work life balance
• Offering adequate paid maternity/parental leave or other parental benefits such as adoption support to all employees, regardless of gender
• Offering compassionate leave and elder or childcare leave
• Providing access to on-site or near-site childcare
• Providing healthcare and wellness benefits
• Providing retirement benefits
• Providing access to group insurance and health and injury insurance
• Providing reintegration support for employees returning to work
• Offering employees access to leisure and exercise opportunities, either through facilities on-site or through other incentives such as reimbursements or discounts for off-site facilities
• Offering flexible and/or remote work arrangements
• Providing healthy and culturally appropriate nutrition for meals on-site
• And more.

Many organisations are also focusing on strengthening capacities for identifying and acting on mental health issues, such as by providing training on mental health awareness and providing resources for managers to identify and support workers who may need them. Consider whether offering employee assistance programs or mental healthcare coverage separate from physical

Embedding
P R O J E C T

healthcare coverage is feasible for your organisation so that workers are not forced to choose between addressing their physical and mental wellbeing. There is no one-size-fits-all solution – you should co-design plans around the issues that employees have experienced and the needs they have shared to ensure their priorities are incorporated.

Finally, explore a financial wellbeing policy or action plan. Offer information or resources to build financial literacy, confidence with finances, and retirement planning and pensions. Different employee groups will likely require varying interventions – rather than implementing a whole-workforce approach to financial wellbeing, your company may choose to prioritise addressing the needs of specific employee groups.

It is important to note that your strategy should address the work needed to move baseline working conditions along as well. A company can introduce a well-funded wellbeing program and benefits, but if working conditions and workplace culture do not enable workers to fully engage with the program, its impact will be minimal. For example, even if the option to integrate short movement breaks is available to workers, many are unlikely to use it if such breaks are looked down upon by management or impact the perception of their performance. The components of worker wellbeing are not isolated – robust strategies must address all aspects of worker wellbeing, including the ability to use such programs to their fullest extent without fear or stigmatisation.

CASE STUDY: Mars 'Be Well Together' framework

Mars, an American multinational food company, developed their 'Be Well Together' framework for "holistic health and wellbeing [that] reflects [a] long-term, evidence-based investment to continue building a culture at Mars where health

& wellbeing is a priority. It acknowledges that all aspects of health are interconnected and recognizes the importance of social health. And it invites everyone to join in and improve their health in whatever way is best for them." Mars has also developed an internal certification for healthy worksites, measuring progress against 10 identified fundamentals, including support for physical activity, nutrition, energy management and recovery, as well as preventative care, mentally healthy workplaces, facility design, and more.

Examples of process-based targets:

- By 20[XX], we will develop an action plan to foster employee wellbeing.
- By 20[XX], we will develop an internal definition and criteria for healthy workplaces that addresses our organisational context. We will then set targets for [X] sites to meet these criteria.
- By 20[XX], we will implement a healthy eating policy at all our sites.
- By 20[XX], we will offer all employees nutrition support and information that is tailored to their local and cultural context.
- By 20[XX], all employees will have access to an employee assistance program.
- By 20[XX], we will establish an onsite exercise space for employees or offer employees incentives to engage in active exercise such as a fitness allowance/reimbursements or discounted gym memberships.
- By 20[XX], we will offer employees daycare allowances, discounts with nearby care facilities, and/or access to on-site or near-site childcare.
- By 20[XX], we will upgrade workplace design to ensure natural lighting, airflow, and accessibility.

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ESTABLISH A BASELINE FOR WELLBEING METRICS

Establish or refine your current data gathering processes – understand what is currently measured, by who, when, and whether/where this information is reported. Establish a baseline for relevant wellbeing metrics within your organisation, including physical, mental, and financial wellbeing. Draw on learnings gained from engaging with your employees to identify relevant metrics.

Examples of process-based targets:

- By 20[XX], we will establish metrics to measure wellbeing.
- By 20[XX], we will establish a baseline for wellbeing metrics to measure progress.

EXPLORE HOW YOU COULD SUPPORT WORKER WELLBEING IN YOUR VALUE CHAIN

Engage with your value chain to understand the current state of worker wellbeing, including existing programs and initiatives. Share insights from your own journey to build strong narratives around the importance of supporting worker wellbeing.

Where feasible, set expectations for your suppliers – for example, this can include expectations to go beyond minimum legal requirements on worker wellbeing or asking suppliers to undertake processes to identify and meet worker needs. Partner with suppliers to support this work towards greater wellbeing in your workforce. This can take various forms, such as providing funding for strategic wellbeing work or co-developing initiatives.

CASE STUDY: Lululemon supports maker wellbeing

Lululemon – a Canadian athleisure clothing company – established a Mental Wellbeing Global Advisory Board to help develop best practices and influence a global conversation to improve mental wellbeing outcomes for both employees and communities around the world. To support maker wellbeing, the company provides annual grants to vendors to implement projects that meet the wellbeing needs of their employees, families, and communities.

CASE STUDY: Levi Strauss & Co. sets wellbeing expectations for suppliers

To align with its long-term vision for its supply chain, Levi Strauss & Co. "sets more holistic expectations for suppliers. Over time, […the company] expects that all its vendors implement worker programs that go beyond legal and Terms of Engagement (TOE) requirements and that respond to workers' needs that often manifest themselves beyond factory walls. [It] asks that vendors communicate with workers, identify local challenges, develop and implement appropriate worker programs and forge partnerships to generate and sustain lasting impacts." The guiding principles and vendor expectations are "flexible and [do] not dictate the types of worker programs to be created … [but rather] seek consistency and integrity in the approach to [worker wellbeing …] to help catalyze and scale successful vendor programs."

Examples of process-based targets:

- By 20[XX], we will engage with our value chain on worker wellbeing.
- By 20[XX], we will set expectations for suppliers to engage with worker wellbeing, and where feasible, integrate these expectations into our vendor selection processes.
- By 20[XX], we will partner with key suppliers to better support worker wellbeing in our value chain.
- By 20[XX], we will offer $[X] in grants to support the implementation of worker wellbeing programs in our value chain.

RESOURCES

GUIDANCE

TAKING ACTION ON WORKER WELLBEING

Workplace equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is a complex and rapidly evolving space, and increasingly, companies are interested in understanding how to meaningfully advance EDI in their organisations. To help them do so, the Embedding Project consulted EDI research and guidance, reviewed the practices of over 100 companies, and sought input from practitioners across a range of industries and geographies. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Leading Practices Guide offers a comprehensive framework with practices, case studies, and resources to help organisations embed EDI into their strategy, structures, and culture. Some of the tactics outlined in this guide can support your work on worker wellbeing.

This Office Guide to Building Health will help you to create a healthy, welcoming environment, and offers guidance to support the health and productivity of your team through evidence-based design and operational approaches - regardless of budget, capacity, or expertise. This manual is a good starting point for understanding the essential factors that create a health-promoting workplace, and is specifically directed towards company leaders, officer managers, and design teams from tenant companies in commercial projects.

The Framework for Corporate Action on Workplace Women's Health and Empowerment by UN Global Compact provides a four-step framework for both buyers and suppliers that will help you to address women's health, advance protection from violence and harassment, and support their economic empowerment. It provides recommendations, rationales, and examples throughout, as well as references to other relevant resources.

Work Wellbeing Playbook by World Wellbeing Movement offers a high-level summary of various strategies to increase the wellbeing of employees across diverse work environments. It covers actions across 12 categories of action: achievement; appreciation; compensation; energy; flexibility; inclusion and belonging; learning; management; purpose; stress; support; and trust.

SUPPORTING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Decent Working Time: Balancing Workers' Needs with Business Requirements by International Labour Organisation (ILO) provides a framework for policies and practices that can help you to advance the goal of decent work in the area of working time. It introduces and explains five dimensions of "decent working time," including healthy working time, family-friendly working time, gender equality through working time, productive working time, and choice and influence regarding working time. It also provides tangible and practical actions that your company can take immediately to advance these dimensions.

OFFERING FAMILY SUPPORTS

Studies show that employees with a supportive employer are most satisfied with their work-life balance. How to be Family Friendly: A Guide for Employers from Employers For Childcare introduces an 8-step process (with supporting considerations and questions) that will help you to develop and implement a family-friendly workplace culture.

Embedding
P R O J E C T

The Work + Family Researchers Network has compiled a large repository of resources, organisations, and projects that are focused on supporting work-family balance. It is organised into eight sections based on their origin, including universities and corporations. It is ideal for decision makers within organisations who would like to familiarise themselves with both the benefits and steps of implementing workplace flexibility practices.

SUPPORTING FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Employee Financial Wellbeing by the CIPD offers a quick overview of financial wellbeing and provides a five-step process to developing an effective policy that supports employees' financial wellness.

Financial Wellbeing: How Reducing Workforce Money Worries Can Bolster Your Bottom Line by PWC makes the business case for supporting financial wellbeing and explores what employers should be doing to support their workforce. It also offers a simple "5 steps to success" approach to provide a quick overview of the process towards supporting financial wellbeing in your organisation.

TOOLS

The WELL Building Standard resource from the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) will help you to create and support thoughtful and intentional spaces that enhance human health and well-being. WELL draws upon the expertise of medical professionals, public health experts, building scientists, and thousands of other practitioners and WELL users to advance the quality of life of workers. The standard addresses ten key concepts such as air, light, thermal comfort, movement, and materials in the workplace, and provides evidence-based recommendations for performance-testing and optimisation.

This Health and Climate Change Data Explorer from the Lancet Countdown can help you understand the impacts of climate change on human health and the economy through data visualisation. It assesses a wide range of topics, including climate health hazards, adaptation measures, the health co-benefits of mitigation, the financial cost of climate change, and trends in the discourse around climate and health. This is a good resource for sustainability and enterprise risk managements teams that need to communicate climate impacts to business leaders, peers, and suppliers.

The Workplace Strategies for Mental Health platform provides a broad range of tools and resources for workplace mental health and psychological safety. Designed for workers across the corporate spectrum, this one-stop shop includes resources on organisational strategy materials for leaders, such as policies, programs, and preventative strategies; materials to help manage employee concerns and improve leadership and teambuilding; and materials to support employee well-being both at work and at home. They also provide assessments, workshop slides, and facilitator guides to help you with sharing the information.

Explore more curated resources on Worker Wellbeing here.

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