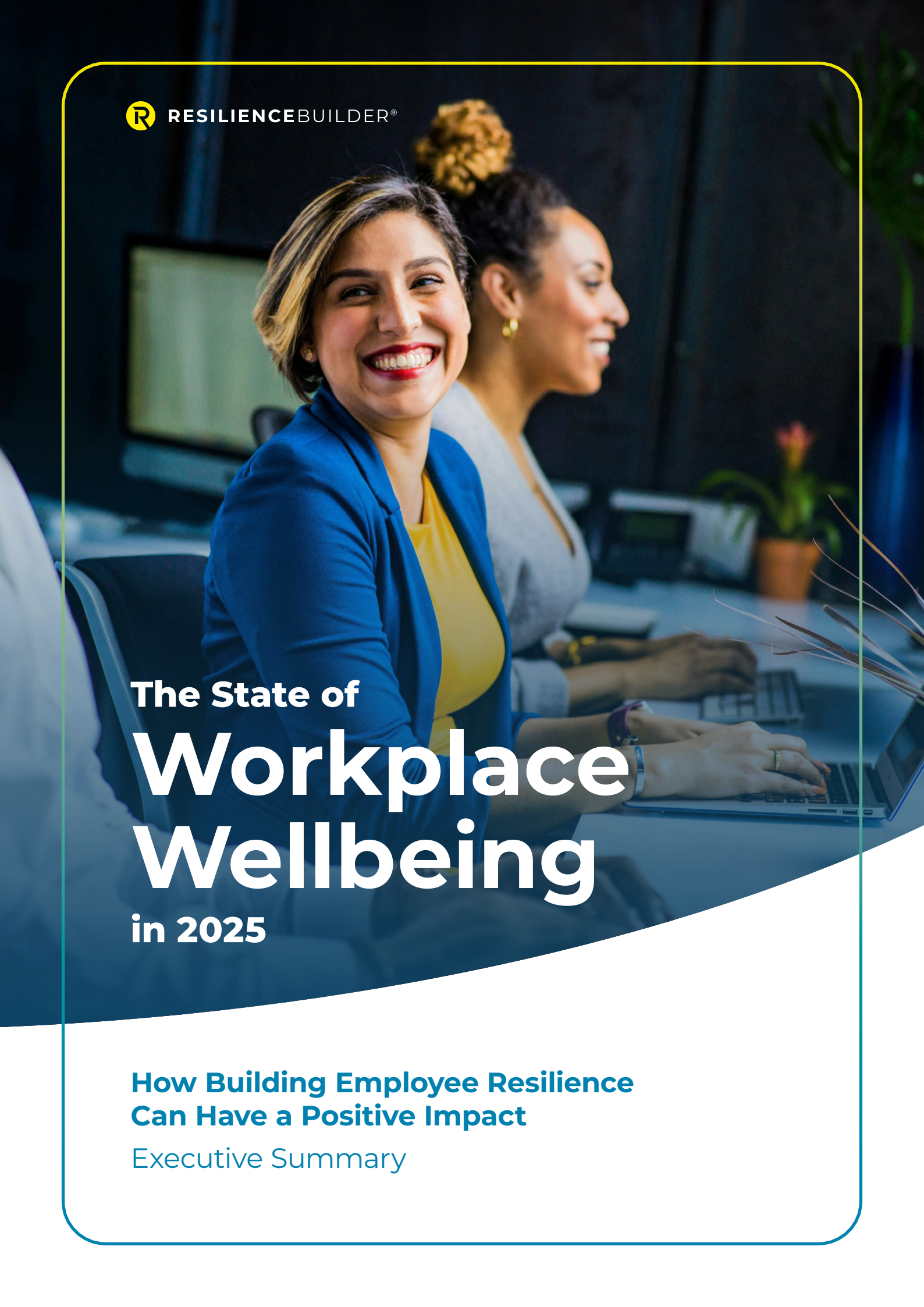


A photograph of two women in an office setting. The woman in the foreground is smiling and looking towards the camera, wearing a blue blazer over a yellow top. The woman in the background is focused on her work, looking at a laptop. The office environment includes computer monitors, desks, and some potted plants.

The State of Workplace Wellbeing in 2025

**How Building Employee Resilience
Can Have a Positive Impact**

Executive Summary

Foreword

Organisations around the world are facing a growing crisis that significantly affects both employee wellbeing and business outcomes: rising levels of stress, sickness absence, burnout, turnover and attrition. These interconnected challenges not only negatively impact individual health but also erode organisational performance, culture and long-term sustainability. Our research set out to explore the scope and consequences of these issues and to examine the vital relationship between employee resilience and overall wellbeing.

Our focus was to assess the state of the workplace and workforce wellbeing in 2025, with particular attention to stress, burnout, sickness, turnover and attrition. We also evaluated the availability and effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives, including programme content and delivery and the impact of embedding resilience training and coaching.

The analysis drew upon both primary and secondary data sources, including our own findings from the ResilienceBuilder® Assessment tool and a broad range of recent academic, professional and organisational studies and reports.

Our research provided a detailed understanding of how resilience building initiatives and broader wellbeing strategies shape employee behaviour, workplace culture and performance. The findings are intended to offer actionable insights for organisations seeking to enhance employee resilience and stress management, improve wellbeing outcomes and boost overall productivity.

Eight years ago, I left the corporate world where I was a Vice President at Hewlett Packard Enterprise to focus on addressing the challenges of workplace stress and burnout by helping individuals build their resilience and by working with organisations to create an environment where people can thrive. Our ResilienceBuilder® Assessment tool measures an individual's level of resilience and provides recommendations for development, enabling targeted training and coaching for employees, teams and organisations.

Workplace wellbeing is not simply about reducing stress, it's about cultivating the conditions in which people can thrive. This includes fostering psychological safety, ensuring role clarity, promoting autonomy, giving recognition and maintaining a manageable workload.

Wellbeing should therefore be treated as both a strategic priority and a shared responsibility—one that depends on the interplay between individual resilience and the organisational environment in which work is carried out.

This short report summarises the key points from our research document.

Steve Howe

Founder & CEO ResilienceBuilder®



Key Findings



Globally, stress and burnout continue to rise, impacting absenteeism, turnover, engagement and productivity.



The financial impact of stress and burnout is estimated to be over \$322bn globally in terms of lost productivity, turnover and healthcare costs.



Engagement fell to 21% in 2024 costing the world economy an estimated \$438 billion in lost productivity.



88% of employees—particularly Gen Z and Millennials—see wellbeing as important as salary, which impacts retention and attracting new talent.



Wellbeing Programmes positively impact employee mental health, performance and productivity with greater ability to attract and retain staff.



Resilient employees are better equipped to manage stress, learn from adversity and adapt to change.



Employees with high resilience are 9x more likely to perform at an optimal level and 12 times less likely to be impacted by burnout than those with low levels of resilience.



Wellbeing programmes that incorporate Resilience Training provide tangible benefits including a 25% reduction in absenteeism, 25% increase in retention, 32% reduction in stress levels and a 30% increase in job satisfaction.



Resilience training is most impactful when the causes of low resilience can be identified and targeted using a data-driven approach with customised interventions specific to the organisation's challenges.



The visible commitment of leaders is crucial when embedding resilience into organisational culture



A dual approach is required in terms of building individual resilience skills whilst in parallel, addressing environmental workplace stressors.



Leaders require training and support to build their resilience, identify the early signs of stress and burnout in their teams and to create an environment where people can thrive.



Use a data-driven Assessment tool such as ResilienceBuilder® that measures resilience and provides recommendations for development, enabling you to target and customise training into the most impactful areas.

The State of Workplace Wellbeing: The Rising Cost of Stress and Burnout

Workplace stress and burnout continue to rise

Workplace stress and burnout continue to rise, posing significant risks to employee wellbeing, productivity and organisational performance. For leaders and organisations, the data sends a clear signal: employee wellbeing can no longer be treated as a secondary concern. It is central to both talent retention and business sustainability.

Stress and burnout impact absenteeism, turnover, engagement and productivity

In the United States, 55% of employees report missing work due to stress and nearly one-third (32%) are considering quitting due to burnout or mental health challenges (APA 2023). In 2024, 35% experienced high/very high levels of stress, 5% above the 2023 figure (Aflac 2024/25), whilst **96% experienced stress every day (Wellhub 2025)**. In the UK, 91% experienced high stress during 2024 (Burnout Report 2025). Globally, the trend is just as stark—41% of workers reported experiencing “a lot of stress” the previous day, according to Gallup’s 2024 report.

Nearly half of employees (47%) identify work stress as the primary cause of their deteriorating mental health (Wellhub 2025) and in 2024 over 80% of employees worldwide were at risk of burnout (Mercer Global Talent Trends 2024).

In the UK, **absenteeism has surged, rising from 5.8 days in 2019 to 7.8 days per employee**, with mental ill-health now the leading cause of long-term absence (CIPD 2023; UK Gov 2025). 76% of organisations report stress-related absences, most commonly driven by unmanageable workloads (CIPD 2023).

Burnout doesn’t just lead to time off, it drives disengagement and attrition. Gallup’s research shows that burned-out employees are 63% more likely to take a sick day, 2.6 times more likely to be actively job hunting and **6 times more likely to leave their job** in the next 3-6 months (Gallup 2018, 2024, McKinsey 2022). In Japan, highly stressed employees are up to 2.86 times more likely to leave their jobs (Kachi et al., 2020), echoing a global trend of turnover linked directly to chronic stress. In the UK 49% of respondents stated their employer does not have a plan to spot and support those dealing with chronic stress, whilst only 29% do (Burnout Report 2025).

Presenteeism—working while unwell—is a hidden threat to performance. In the UK, employees lose an average of 50 productive days a year, with 90% of that linked to working while sick. **Those at risk of burnout lose up to 96 days annually to presenteeism** (Vitality, 2023).

Employees working in companies with bad management practices are 60% more likely to be stressed (and disengaged) than those experiencing good management practices (Gallup 2024). **Globally, employee engagement dropped to 21%**—only the second decline in 12 years—with managers hit hardest as they navigate between employee needs and executive demands (Gallup, 2025).

The financial impact of stress and burnout

The financial consequences are staggering. **Burnout has been estimated to contribute to over \$322 billion in annual global losses** through lost productivity, turnover and increased healthcare costs (World Economic Forum 2019). **Low engagement**—one of the most significant outcomes of poor wellbeing—**accounts for \$438 billion in lost productivity** and a fully engaged global workforce could boost the economy by \$9.6 trillion—about 9% of global GDP (Gallup, 2025).



96% of US workers experience stress every day in 2024 (Wellhub 2025)



Absenteeism in the UK has risen to 7.8 days per employee (UK Gov 2025)



Burned out employees are 6x more likely to leave their job (McKinsey 2022)



Burnout contributes to global losses of \$322 billion through lost productivity and attrition (Gallup 2024)



Low engagement costs the global economy \$438 billion in lost productivity (Gallup 2025)

Employee Expectations Around Wellbeing: A Strategic Imperative for HR

As the workforce continues to evolve, so too do employee expectations. A growing body of global research shows that wellbeing is no longer a “nice to have”—it is now as important to employees as salary and has become a critical factor in both recruitment and retention.

Wellbeing is becoming as important as salary, impacting both retention and recruitment

According to the 2025 Wellhub Report, **88% of employees worldwide believe that wellbeing is as important as their salary**, yet many feel their employers are not meeting expectations. This perception has tangible consequences: 83% of employees say they would consider leaving their current employer if there is insufficient focus on wellbeing—a significant increase from 68% in 2022.

Furthermore, while 88% believe employers have a responsibility for employee wellbeing, only 59% rate their company’s wellbeing programme as good or excellent. For talent acquisition teams, these insights are particularly relevant. **89% of job-seeking employees say they will only consider companies that prioritise wellbeing** (Wellhub 2025).

Failure to meet these expectations increases the risk of disengagement, attrition and the financial burden of recruiting and re-staffing.

Gen Z and Millennials consistently place greater emphasis on wellbeing

Generational shifts add another layer of complexity. Gen Z and Millennials consistently place greater emphasis on wellbeing compared to Gen X and Baby Boomers. For example, **34% of Gen Z employees in the US reported considering quitting due to the impact of work on their mental health**, compared to only 21% of Baby Boomers (NAMI 2024).

Stress, burnout and depression are more prevalent in Millennials and Gen Z

Burnout, fatigue and depression are also more prevalent in younger generations. The 2023 Vitality Survey (UK) found that Gen Z reported the highest levels of burnout (17.0%), depression (14.6%) and fatigue (55.6%). While **Millennials were the group most affected by burnout overall—66% experienced burnout**, compared to 56% of Gen Z, 60% of Gen X and 39% of Baby Boomers (Aflac 2024 Workforces Report).

Wellbeing is a strategic priority, generational differences need to be addressed

These trends underline a pressing need for HR leaders to reimagine wellbeing strategies through a generational lens and recognise that younger employees, who now make up the largest share of the workforce, have higher expectations and greater mental health vulnerabilities.

The message is clear: prioritising wellbeing is not just a moral obligation—it is a strategic necessity to attract, retain and engage top talent across all generations.



88% of employees worldwide believe that wellbeing is as important as their salary



89% of job-seeking employees say they will only consider companies that prioritise wellbeing



Millennials were the group most affected by burnout overall—66% experienced burnout

Wellbeing Programmes: A Strategic Investment With Proven Impact

Wellbeing programmes have measurable advantages

Wellbeing programmes are a key strategic priority in supporting a healthy workforce and strengthening organisational performance. In 2025, companies with dedicated wellbeing programmes that had the support of senior leaders had measurable advantages over those without, including greater ability to attract and retain staff, improved employee health, performance and productivity.

Recent data from Wellhub (2025) reveals that **employees with access to a wellbeing programme are significantly more likely to describe their wellbeing as good or thriving than those without (69% compared to 53%)** and more likely to report an improvement in their wellbeing over the past year (59% vs. 38%). Holistic wellbeing programmes that address multiple dimensions of wellbeing—mental and physical health, nutrition, fitness and sleep—are showing particularly strong outcomes.

Wellbeing programmes are also positively impacting workplace culture and engagement. One in three HR and L&D professionals report improvements in morale, employee engagement and inclusivity as a result of their wellbeing initiatives (CIPD 2023). The impact on motivation is notable: **89% of employees working in organisations with wellbeing programmes report feeling motivated and engaged, leading to increased job satisfaction and loyalty (APA 2023).**

Mental health and resilience are the primary focus

Organisations are increasingly focusing on mental health and resilience, with **54% of HR leaders identifying mental health as a primary focus** of their wellbeing activity. Looking ahead, **77% of companies plan to increase their emphasis on resilience and stress management** (Wellable 2023) and 37% already offer resilience training to help employees to better manage work-related stress (CIPD 2023). In the 2025 Wellhub survey, 87% of HR leaders stated their wellbeing programme is key to increasing employee resilience.

Strong return on investment with improved absenteeism, turnover, engagement and productivity

Crucially, these initiatives are delivering a strong return on investment. As of 2024, **95% of organisations tracking ROI on their wellbeing programmes reported positive results**, including higher productivity and lower healthcare costs, an increase from 90% in 2023. More than half (56%) reported a return of at least \$2 for every \$1 spent. The broader impact is equally compelling: HR leaders cite outcomes including increased productivity (99%), reduced turnover (98%), fewer sick days (89%), increased employee satisfaction (88%), talent acquisition (88%) and employee resilience (87%). (Wellhub 2024).

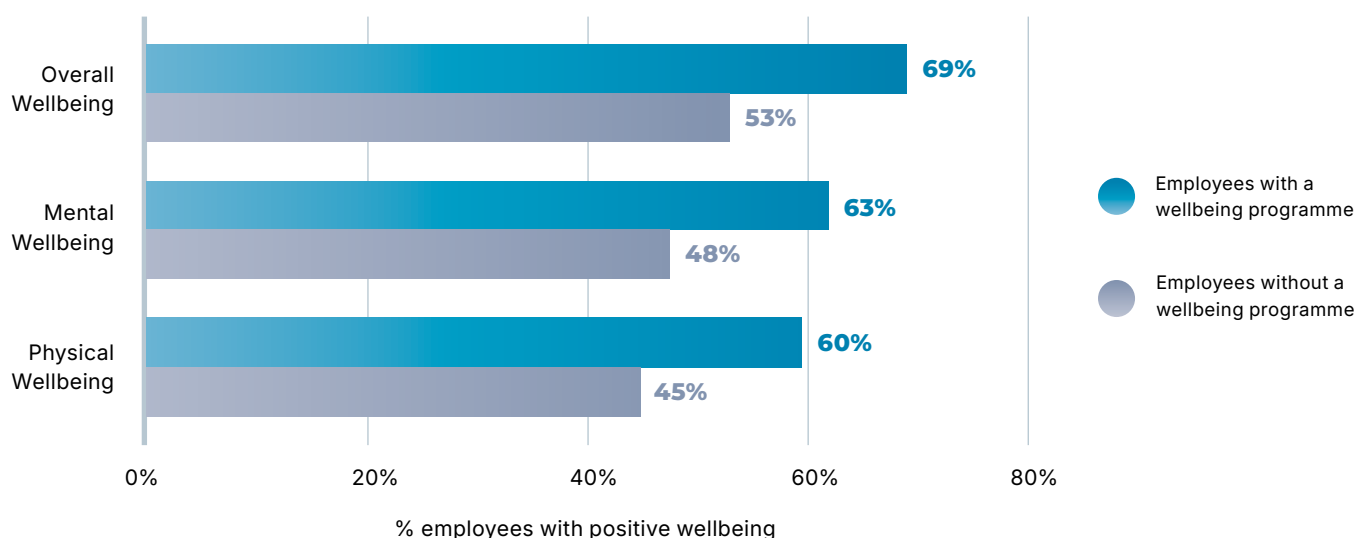


Figure 1: The positive impact of access to a wellbeing programme on employees. (Data source: The State of Worklife Wellness 2025 Wellhub).

Building a Resilient Workforce: Why Employee Resilience Matters

In today's high-pressure work environment, employee resilience has become a critical factor. Defined as **an individual's capacity to manage workplace stress, bounce back and learn from setbacks and adapt to ongoing challenges while maintaining health and performance** (Malik & Garg, 2018), resilience plays a central role in navigating the demands of modern work life.

Resilient employees are better equipped to manage stress, learn from adversity and adapt to change

Employees are increasingly exposed to heavy workloads, tight deadlines and shifting priorities—further amplified by economic uncertainty and organisational change. Resilient employees are better equipped to handle these pressures, learn from adversity and continue performing without compromising their wellbeing. In fact, resilience is closely linked to greater engagement and commitment, stronger mental health and reduced risk of stress-related illnesses.

The case for resilience training in wellbeing strategies

Integrating resilience training into wellbeing programmes is a strategic priority. Research shows these interventions not only enhance resilience but also lead to broader improvements in productivity, job satisfaction, psychological wellbeing, adaptation to stress, positivity and workplace relationships. Additionally, they help reduce burnout, absenteeism and turnover, while boosting confidence, adaptability and motivation (Karatsoreos & McEwen 2011; Southwick & Charney 2012).

Significant benefits when resilience training is incorporated into wellbeing programmes

Evidence from case studies is compelling: organisations that embed resilience training into their wellbeing programmes and culture, report strong returns on investment—ranging from \$2.40 to \$2.71 for every dollar spent.

Google's 'Wellness at Google' programme, saw a 25% increase in retention, a 30% increase in overall job satisfaction, a 90% annual engagement score, a 32% reduction in stress levels, a 25% reduction in absenteeism and an ROI of \$2.71 after implementing such initiatives.

Unilever's 2020 'Wellbeing Roadmap' saw a 15% reduction in absenteeism, 15-20% reduction in turnover, 25% increase in job satisfaction, reduced stress and burnout, 90% of their employees felt more engaged leading to a 22% increase in productivity and employee retention a 20% reduction in healthcare spend with an ROI of \$2.44.

British Telecom's 'Work Fit' programme—focused on building resilience and reducing stress—has resulted in an 80% employee 'return to work' rate compared to 20% nationally, 30% reduced absenteeism, cost savings and increased productivity. (Source: publicly available data)

Google

Wellness at Google Programme

25% increase in retention

25% reduction in absenteeism

32% reduction in stress levels

\$2.7 ROI of \$2.71



Unilever

2020 Wellbeing Roadmap

15% 15 - 20% reduction in turnover

25% increase in job satisfaction

22% increase in productivity and employee retention

20% reduction in healthcare spend

\$2.4 ROI of \$2.44

Building a Resilient Workforce: The Importance of Leadership and Culture

Leadership commitment and organisational culture play a vital role

Employee resilience isn't built in isolation. Leadership, culture and workplace design play a vital role. Leaders can foster resilience through goal setting, clear roles and responsibilities, inclusive and supportive environments, coaching, skills development and resource management. **In 2023 85% of leaders said they will become more involved in workforce wellbeing in the next 2 years** and 72% believed their bonuses should be tied to wellbeing metrics. The visible commitment of senior leaders is especially crucial to embedding resilience into an organisation's DNA.

Many C-suite executives (c.83%) believe setting goals for the wellbeing metrics and making them public would improve employee wellbeing and attract top talent. However, 53% had not made public commitments in 2023 due to fear of failure, reputational damage, lack of Government frameworks and lack of senior backing. Companies with young leadership are more likely to have public commitments: 91% of Gen Z/Millennial versus 74% of Gen X/Baby Boomer leaders (figures from Deloitte 2023).

A transformational leadership style

When C-suite engagement is high (>70%) employee engagement rises to 80%. Conversely, if C-suite engagement is low (<30%) employee engagement is only 44% (Wellhub Return on Wellbeing 2024). Leaders who actively promote and prioritise wellbeing, set a positive example and play a vital role in motivating employees and driving a culture of wellbeing within organisations. This leads to enhanced employee wellbeing as well as organisational productivity.

Equip leaders and managers with the tools to build their resilience and create an environment where people can thrive

To build resilient individuals and teams, leaders and managers must first develop their own resilience. Equipping them with the right tools and training enables them not only to manage their own stress effectively, but also to recognise signs of wellbeing issues in their teams and respond supportively.

A key part of this is creating an open, transparent culture—where wellbeing is prioritised and policies and workloads are aligned with healthy work behaviours. Leaders play a critical role in shaping this environment. With access to meaningful wellbeing metrics, they gain the insight needed to intervene early and appropriately, helping prevent burnout and supporting sustained performance.

When leaders are empowered in this way, they can create the conditions for employees to thrive—building trust, supporting mental health and strengthening resilience across the organisation.

Embed wellbeing in organisational culture

A supportive organisational culture is essential for the long-term success of programmes. **When wellbeing is embedded as a core value, employees see it as integral to their workplace experience** rather than an 'add-on', driving participation rates, long-term commitment and fostering a sense of belonging. Employees become more engaged and productive.

A dual approach: build individual skills and optimise workplace culture and environment

For resilience strategies to be effective, organisations must take a dual approach—supporting individuals in building personal resilience while also assessing and adjusting workplace conditions, including job design, workload management and access to resources. Studies show that both individual and systemic interventions are necessary for sustained wellbeing and performance. (Fox et al 2022, Lovejoy et al 2021, NICE 2022).



The Impact of Resilience on Performance and Wellbeing

Resilience has emerged as a powerful predictor of both individual performance and overall wellbeing.

Strong link between resilience, performance and wellbeing

Our recent research, using the ResilienceBuilder® Assessment tool across a sample of 1,751 employees, confirms a strong correlation between levels of resilience, performance and wellbeing, making the case for resilience-building as a critical component of any wellbeing strategy.

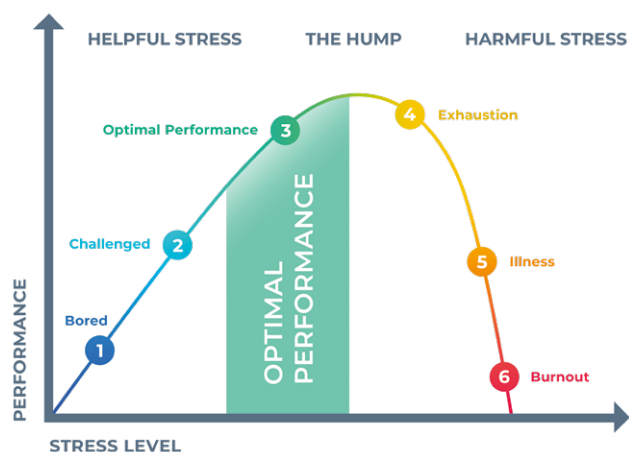


Figure 2: Stress v Performance Curve

As part of the ResilienceBuilder® Assessment, we ask people to assess themselves against the stress v performance curve (see Fig. 2) which, when combined with resilience data, enables us to make the connection between resilience, performance and wellbeing.

We all need a level of pressure to get to the sweet spot of optimal performance, but when the stress is prolonged or intense, it becomes detrimental to performance and wellbeing.

Resilient employees—9x more likely to perform at an optimal level

Employees with the **highest levels of resilience were nine times more likely to perform at an optimal level** compared to their less resilient peers. This aligns with the well-established stress-performance curve, which shows that while some stress can enhance performance, excessive or chronic stress impairs it—unless individuals have the tools and capacity to manage it effectively. (See Fig. 3 below)

Resilient employees—12x less likely to experience burnout

The protective benefits of resilience go even further. Those with high resilience were **three times less likely to experience exhaustion, seven times less likely to suffer from illness and a striking twelve times less likely to experience burnout** than those with the lowest resilience levels. These findings underscore resilience not just as a wellbeing enhancer, but also as a vital buffer against the most common drivers of absenteeism and disengagement.

Resilient employees are more effective at managing stress, workload and change

Our analysis revealed that those with strong resilience reported high levels of stress management (94%), effective workload prioritisation (90%), self-confidence (98%), adaptability (99%) and a positive mindset (99%). They also prioritised self-care (72%) and had a strong sense of purpose (94%)—all factors closely tied to long-term sustainability and engagement.

For leaders, the implications are clear: building resilience is a strategic priority that supports both individual and organisational success. It enhances performance, protects wellbeing, reduces turnover and fosters a culture of adaptability and self-leadership.

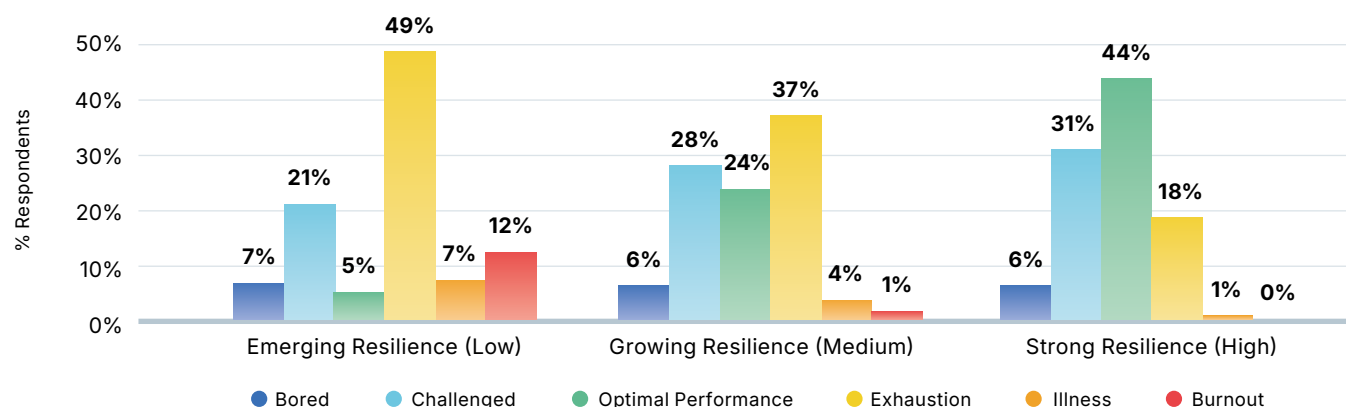


Figure 3: The case for Building Resilience in the Workplace (n = 1,751, 2024)

Key Recommendations for Implementing Resilience Training Within Your Wellbeing Programme

Our research into resilience interventions highlights several critical factors for ensuring resilience training delivers meaningful outcomes. Simply offering generic training is rarely enough. To create lasting impact, resilience initiatives should be targeted, supported by leadership and embedded in a culture of learning.

1. Resilience training is more effective when the causes of low resilience are identified and targeted



Resilience training is significantly more effective when it addresses the root causes of low resilience. Assessing individual and team resilience levels before training allows organisations to tailor interventions where they're most needed—delivering far better results than one-size-fits-all approaches (Grant et al., 2009; Lioassis et al., 2009).

2. Take a data-driven approach by using a resilience assessment tool



Taking a data-driven approach to building resilience in the workplace starts by selecting a resilience assessment tool that measures an individual's level of resilience and identifies areas for further development. Identify resilience assessment tools that provide a holistic understanding of resilience across multiple areas including Mental Agility, Purpose, Self Care, Emotional and Social Support.

3. Data insights to target and customise interventions



When working with teams and organisations, use collective data to provide insights for targeted and customised interventions that may typically include 1:1 coaching, team workshops, webinars, self-learning and company-wide programmes incorporating many of these components.

4. Multi-component interventions



Multi-component interventions that cover various aspects of resilience have been shown to outperform single-focus ones since they target different aspects of cognitive function. (Hendriks, 2019; Luthans, 2010). These include assessments, workshops, exercises, role-play, coaching, webinars and self-learning.

5. Secure leadership commitment and a supportive culture



Leadership buy-in is crucial. Senior leaders must champion the programme, signalling its importance and encouraging participation. A supportive, psychologically safe team environment, openness to learning and readiness for change are also essential to sustain momentum (Carr, 2013; Caniels, 2022; Holt, 2010).

6. Prioritise customisation and relevance



Outcomes improve when content is clearly linked to employees' real-world challenges. Tailoring workshops and programmes to the specific context of your teams ensures relevance and increases engagement (Rogerson et al., 2016).

7. Design for depth and duration



Short interventions can boost resilience, but greater impact is seen with longer-term programmes that cover the core elements of resilience such as mental strength, stress management, positivity and social connection (Luthans et al., 2010; Rogerson et al., 2016).

8. Integrate coaching and mentoring



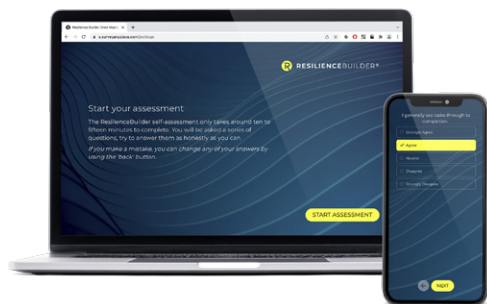
Adding coaching to resilience training strengthens results. Coaching supports mindset shifts, goal setting and the development of practical strategies—improving not only resilience but also wellbeing, performance and job satisfaction (Grant et al., 2008 & 2009; Taylor et al., 1997; Dweck & Yeager, 2019).

9. KPIs for measuring resilience as part of a wellbeing programme



In addition to the typical KPIs used to measure Wellbeing Programmes (sickness absence rates, staff retention and employee engagement) consider other KPIs such as resilience levels, stress/performance levels and improvements to work/life balance.

ResilienceBuilder® – a Data-Driven Assessment Tool



Our innovative ResilienceBuilder® Assessment Tool helps individuals and teams assess their resilience levels, providing data-driven insights and practical recommendations for growth, delivered through a personalised report.

Whether you're an individual looking to enhance your resilience or an organisation striving to reduce burnout and improve employee well-being, we provide tailored coaching, training and workshops to create lasting impact.

Unlike traditional resilience training, we take a data-driven approach. Our ResilienceBuilder® Assessment Tool identifies specific areas that impact resilience, allowing us to deliver customised, targeted coaching and training. This ensures that every intervention is highly effective, providing measurable improvements at an individual, team and organisational level.



The ResilienceBuilder® Model

At the heart of the tool is our ResilienceBuilder® model, grounded in extensive research and built around 5 core factors that underpin resilience: Mental Strength, Purpose, Physical Stamina, Emotional Intelligence and Social Support. Each of these factors are scored and results are provided at an individual and group level.



How The Process Works



1. Personal Resilience Assessments

Each employee completes an online assessment which generates a personalised report, detailing their current resilience level across five key areas with clear, targeted recommendations for personal development.



2. Group-Level Data Insights

We anonymise and aggregate assessment data to identify common team challenges, environmental stressors and development themes across the organisation.



3. Customised Workshop Delivery

We design and deliver a resilience workshop (half-day, one-day, two-day or modular), either onsite or virtually, tailored to your organisation's challenges and the data insights from your team.



4. Ongoing Support and Coaching

For sustainable impact, we offer 1:1 or group coaching, webinars and self-learning to support individuals in working through key resilience challenges over time.

ResilienceBuilder® Services:

1:1 Coaching through experienced resilience coaches who specialise in resilience and stress management.

Team Workshops focused on targeted, customised resilience training for teams.

Resilience Programmes that are part of a broader wellbeing initiative, typically over a 6-12 month period.

Resilience Training for Leaders, designed to build personal resilience, identify early signs of team stress and burnout and foster a thriving work environment.

ResilienceBuilder® provides a smarter, data-driven approach to building resilience across your workforce—enhancing wellbeing, engagement and performance through targeted training and coaching tailored to both individual and group challenges.



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