



MODULE 7:

IMPROVING

MANAGEMENT

BUY-IN



Management Buy-in

By the end of this module you will: →

- 👍 Understand the role management plays in creating a culture of wellness.
- 👍 Understand the importance of having management endorsement of the wellbeing strategy.
- 👍 Learn how to improve management buy-in.

A key aspect of implementing an effective wellbeing strategy is to create a culture of positive attitude towards wellbeing. **Management plays a large role in this.** Typically, a lot of effort is put into convincing senior management to support the wellbeing movement. Senior management are the leaders of the organisation and they mould the aims and attitudes. If wellbeing is not seen as important, then it will not become important to the organisation. But if senior management adopt a wellbeing-positive stance, it will ‘trickle-down to the rest of the organisation.

However, just as much effort should be put into convincing line managers to buy-into the wellbeing culture as well. Whilst senior management should endorse the programme, it is the line managers who have the most contact with the employees and therefore can best lead by example. If a line manager is seen to be actively engaging in and endorsing the wellbeing culture (i.e. taking part in the initiatives, promoting them etc) then the employees are more likely to engage as well. Once again, it will have the ‘trickle-down’ effect that is required in order for wellbeing to fully permeate an organisation.

In order for wellbeing to become a priority for management, it needs to be highlighted as a **business tool**. As has been established, wellbeing decreases absence and turnover as well as increasing engagement productivity. This needs to be made clear to management; not only are they looking out for and taking care of their employees but they are also helping the business to thrive.

Fun Facts:



Nearly 50% of Finance Directors spend only a **week or less per year** on employee wellbeing decisions. ¹

Less than half

of HR professionals believe that line managers are considered important in workplace wellbeing. ²

Sources:
¹https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/234061/file-2366762580-pdf/Module_5_1_0_ways_to_win_over_your_finance_director.pdf?t=1529951655506
²<https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/line-managers-support-wellbeing-engagement>

Practical Solutions

	Practice	Benefits
Initial Support	Use strategic language	When making your case, use the kind of language that a business-orientated case should use, such as linking it to business strategy and underlying vision. This will emphasise how it is not just a matter of making your employees happier, but also a useful tool to maximise efficiency in the organisation (as well as impressing senior management).
	Set goals	Seeing as how wellbeing has positive effects on absence, retention, engagement and productivity, use current employee data to set out clear goals that relate to these effects. Furthermore, emphasise how these effects can influence return-of-investment to really highlight the business-related benefits.
	Present both potential and exhausted ideas	When presenting the ideas that should work the best to address wellbeing, also present the ideas that have been explored but disregarded. This will highlight how the final plan has been comprehensively constructed and carefully thought-out.
	Case studies	Use case studies as supporting evidence. Many organisations are now catching on to the benefits on wellbeing and have made great progress in implementing it into their organisations. Use them to show not only that it works but also that in order for a business to stay relevant in a modern setting it too needs to adopt a wellbeing culture.
Continuous Support	Track your progress	Once the wellbeing strategy has been implemented, you would expect to see some positive changes around the workplace. Show this to management to let them know their support is well-founded. Report back on the progress made to reach the goals set at the beginning and use this to inform the ROI. This could lead to an increase in support and therefore opportunity to further build the wellbeing programme.
	Share stories of success	Encourage employees who have been positively affected by the wellbeing strategy to meet with and share that with senior management. Whilst a wellbeing strategy is a useful business tool, it can also help to put a human-touch to it.

Case Studies



At Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust they offer services to adults and elderly people with mental health issues, those with substance abuse disorders, and care for people with learning disabilities. They found that stress levels were high amongst employees and that their health and wellbeing initiatives were seriously lacking with little funding, low awareness, and minimal guidance from managers. They wished to change this and so they reviewed their current benefits and staff data including sickness-absence data, turnover information, and occupational health data. On top of that they conducted their first health and wellbeing survey which assessed things like their general lifestyle and wellbeing, smoking cessation, awareness of benefits, and what more they feel the trust can do for staff wellbeing. They constructed a business case using this information as well other trust data. Initially it was shown to senior management to ensure they had support for the initiatives they were aiming for. They were then able to get £8,000 in funding and now offer resilience courses, physical activity classes, staff benefits packages, and much more.

Expert Opinions

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Although buy-in is necessary from all internal stakeholders in the organisation, it is vital to convince senior managers and leaders firstly of the benefits of the programme as it is unlikely that any wellbeing programme will be successful without their backing. It is important to convince this group that the health actions being proposed will add value in terms of better attendance, employee engagement and retention, and ultimately productivity.

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Dr Chris Tomkins, leads Proactive Health Services at AXA PPP Healthcare

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Employers obviously want to maximise productivity as well as support their employees. Therefore it is important that line managers understand how to create conditions that support and encourage good mental health whilst also recognising signs of ill health and providing the appropriate support.

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Jane Nathan, Founder and Clinic Director at Healthcare On Demand

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²<https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/line-managers-support-wellbeing-engagement>

Ask Yourself...



- How strong is the support of wellbeing from your current management?
- How does management currently influence the culture of wellbeing in your organisation?
- Is the management in your organisation aware of the benefits of wellbeing?
- What can be done to improve management buy in to wellbeing in your organisation?

Exercise One

Take some time to think about how you would put together the content and structure for a case to be presented to management to gain support for a wellbeing strategy.

Exercise Two

Now using the notes you have made for the content and structure, ask a colleague to act as management and practice how you would present this. Record any feedback from this exercise.

Useful Links/Resources

Time To Change, an organisation committed to reducing mental health stigma and increase awareness, have developed a template for a business case relating to delivering mental health training:

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/sites/default/files/BusinessCaseForTraining.doc>

CIPD have written an article on the role that line managers play when it comes to implementing and supporting wellbeing:

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/news-articles/line-managers-support-wellbeing-engagement>



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