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POINT3 WELLBEING INSIGHTS 2023:

Future fit for purpose

Are you future fit for purpose?

Purpose is a red thread that runs through this report. At a time when unhappiness is at its highest ever level globally, POINT3 exists to empower people in the workplace to *think, feel and behave* to their fullest potential.

Gallup attributes five significant contributors to the rise of global unhappiness: poverty, bad communities, hunger, loneliness and the scarcity of good work[1]. Research shows that if people feel connected to a cause greater than them – if they feel a sense of purpose and belonging – this goes a long way to help them be more resilient and less vulnerable to burnout[2].

This report includes the latest statistics and insight relating to wellbeing in the workplace along with the findings from our own survey of 103 people conducted at the end of 2022[3]. We hope that it serves as a valuable source of insight and ideas to support you as you develop and deliver on your employee mental health and wellbeing objectives this year.

How can we help you? *Our mission is to help people to stress less and smile more.* When people feel better at work and in life, the ripple effects will be felt far and wide.

Sarah, Siôn and Nicky,
The co-founders of POINT3 Wellbeing

Contents

Why wellbeing is business critical.

We are in the midst of a mental health crisis

With 1 in 2 employees globally struggling from burnout[4] and up to 88% of UK employees experiencing at least some level of burnout over the last two years[5], every workplace in the world needs more resilient employees.

A global mental health crisis and uncertainty due to economic, political and environmental instability, means most organisations are now well aware of the problem they're up against regarding employee wellbeing.

They are feeling it on their bottom line and through staff attrition and engagement levels. Wellbeing is a universal problem to solve, yet a global recession is also putting pressure on wellbeing budgets.

But what's the cost of *not* addressing the cause

For individuals - up to 80% of doctor consultations are linked to stress[6] (chronic physical and mental illness). For the economy - mental health problems cost the UK economy at least £117.9 billion annually (equivalent to c. 5% of the UK's GDP).[7]

Burnout and its causes

Burnout is recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an official diagnosis in its International Classification of Diseases. It's the result of chronic workplace stress which manifests as emotional and physical exhaustion, apathy, negativity, cynicism and ultimately reduced productivity.[8]

Burnout is the result of a disconnect with work and/or work relationships[2], due to:

- Unmanageable workloads
- Poor leadership and management
- Unclear and inconsistent communication
- Lack of purpose and feeling undervalued
- Lack of clarity of role, responsibilities and boundaries

Leaders need to create clarity and purpose

With 53% of managers and 48% of employees reporting that they're burned out at work, research[4] indicates that leaders need to intervene to create clarity and purpose for their people, realigning work with the company mission and team goals. The report goes on to say we've reached a point of diminishing returns — if leaders don't intervene, they put productivity in jeopardy.

2022 trends/symptoms of burnout

Quiet Quitting

Languishing was a negative emotion coined in 2021 - and it's likely a symptom of *Quiet Quitting,* which was subsequently coined in 2022.[9] It is considered one of the key cultural issues for employers to be vigilant for right now.

Organisational Psychologist Adam Grant says that *Quiet Quitting* is a new term for an old problem which was previously described as "neglect". Essentially it manifests when people are dissatisfied with their job but they can't risk speaking up and can't afford to walk away; so they stay in the role doing the bare minimum.

Grant goes on to say that during The Great Resignation, many people quit toxic cultures, but those who couldn't leave chose to quiet quit. Grant says the likely cause is down to poor management/leadership.

"Quiet quitting isn't a sign of individual laziness. It's a symptom of organizational dysfunction. Doing the bare minimum is a common response to abusive bosses, bullshit jobs, and poor pay. When they don't feel cared about, people will eventually stop caring."

Productivity Paranoia

The lead finding from a 2022 Microsoft study of 20,000 employees across 11 countries[4], highlights the need for leaders to end what's been dubbed *Productivity Paranoia*.

Microsoft's research shows that 85% of leaders say that the shift to hybrid work has made it challenging to have confidence that employees are being productive, and in response employees feel the pressure to "prove" they're working, resulting in them feeling burnout through the overwhelm of "being seen" to be productive, not to mention the increase of weekly meetings by 153%.

The research suggests leaders need to shift their focus from worrying about whether their people are working enough to helping them prioritise the work that's most important.

"81% of employees say it's important that their managers help them prioritize their workload, but less than a third (31%) say their managers have ever given clear guidance during one on ones. Solving this issue needs to start at the top. 74% of people managers say more guidance on prioritizing their own work would help their performance, and 80% say they'd personally benefit from more clarity from senior leadership on impactful priorities."

Our survey said...

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 highest), how would you rate your current wellbeing?

It's not all bad news. The data from our annual workplace wellbeing survey reveals that average wellbeing levels improved slightly from 6.4 out of 10 at the end of 2021 to *6.8 out of 10* at the end of 2022. That said, an average of 6.8 out of 10 does not indicate people are 'thriving'. Why is this?

To better understand your score, please explain why you gave the number you did...

The number one reason cited as negatively impacting people's wellbeing was *feeling stressed and/or poor mental health* (37%).

Work-life balance (lack of) and *personal issues at home* came in joint second place, as having a negative impact on people's wellbeing.

By contrast, the number one reason cited as positively impacting people's wellbeing was having *good coping strategies in place* (26%) and a *good work-life balance* came in second place again.

> ## Unrealistic workloads
> ### Poor leadership and management
> ## Menopause
> ### Unclear and inconsistent communication
> ### Lack of purpose and feeling undervalued
> **Lack of clarity of role, responsibilities and boundaries**
>
> ## Grief / personal trauma / illness
> ## Work/life balance
> ### Feeling stressed / poor mental health
> ## Home life

Our survey said...

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your current wellbeing? ∨
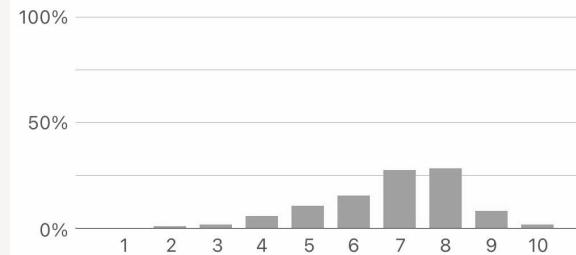
Avg Rating   6.8

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your general engagement level at work. ∨
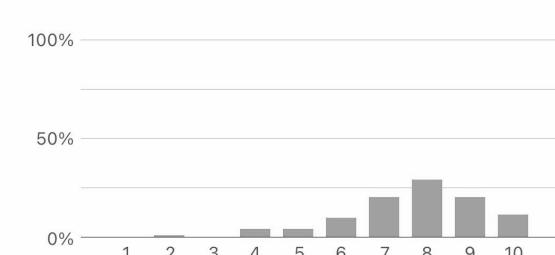
Avg Rating   7.7

How much do you feel that having a work-life balance is valued at your place of work? ∨
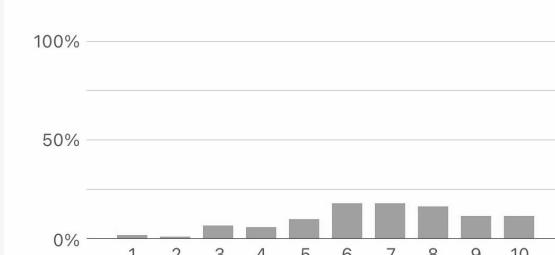
Avg Rating   6.8

How comfortable do you feel discussing stress + mental health issues with your line manager? ∨
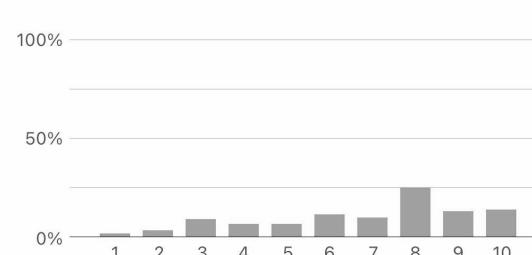
Avg Rating   6.8

How well supported do you feel by your colleagues/team? ∨
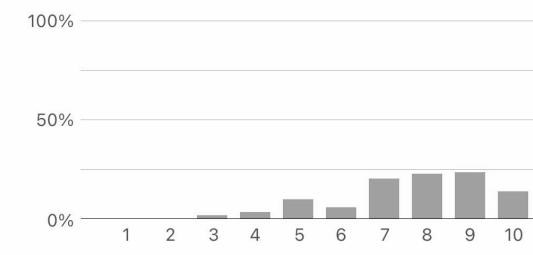
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How well supported do you feel by your organisation? ∨
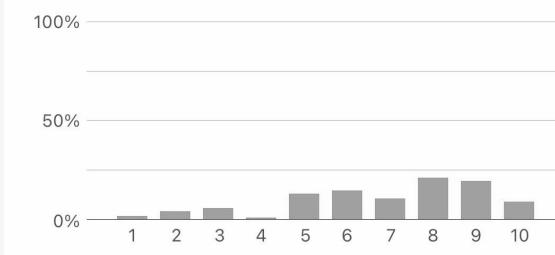
Avg Rating   6.9

No one is average...

While averages give us a benchmark to report, they don't help us understand what impacts wellbeing directly. So, we've tried to dig a little deeper to see if there is any relationship between perceived wellbeing levels and other aspects in the workplace.

What can we learn from those who rated their perceived wellbeing at an *8 or above* (out of 10)?

38% of the survey gave themselves a perceived wellbeing score of 8 or above. What can we learn from this cohort?

- **76%** are highly engaged
- **54%** have engaged with their organisation's mental health & wellbeing programme
- **54%** said a work-life balance is valued highly at their workplace
- **69%** feel well supported by their manager
- **62%** feel well supported by their organisation
- **69%** feel well supported by their team

We also know that this cohort report having good coping strategies in place and a good work-life balance.

What can we learn from those who rated their perceived wellbeing at a *6 or below* (out of 10)?

34% of the survey gave themselves a perceived wellbeing score of 6 or below. What can we learn from this cohort?

- **34%** are less engaged
- **40%** have engaged with their organisation's mental health & wellbeing programme
- **60%** said a work-life balance is less valued at their workplace
- **54%** feel less supported by their manager
- **54%** feel less supported by their organisation-
- **31%** feel less supported by their team

We also know that this cohort report feeling stressed and/or having poor mental health.

There is a correlation between those that report higher levels of wellbeing and other aspects in the workplace, such as engagement levels and feeling supported by their manager and organisation. By contrast, when you look at those that report lower wellbeing levels, this doesn't necessarily translate into lower engagement levels in the same way. That said, Gallup's research (overleaf) indicates that those that are engaged but aren't thriving, are 61% more likely to experience burnout often or always.

Wellbeing + engagement

Wellbeing impacts employee engagement

Gallup research reveals the following comparison between employees who are engaged *but not* thriving with those who are engaged *and* thriving.

Those who aren't thriving report the following risks:

- 61% more likely to experience burnout often or always
- 48% more likely to report daily stress
- 66% more likely to experience daily worry

Gallup concludes that where organisations intentionally address both wellbeing and engagement, the effects are additive and mutually beneficial for employees and business outcomes alike.

Our survey said...

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 highest), how would you rate your current engagement levels?

The average score in our survey was *7.7 out of 10* with the following reasons for the scores...

Reasons for disengagement:

An individual's state of *mental health & wellbeing* was the largest contributing factor to disengagement in the workplace (cited by 22% of those feeling disengaged). This was closely followed by *poor leadership and/or management* (18%) alongside *too much work* (14%) and a *lack of trust* (10%).

Reasons for engagement:

When it comes to what contributes to positive engagement, people cited an overall sense of *loving their work* (25%), *feeling supported by their team/colleagues* (18%) and *feeling a sense of purpose/meaning in their work* (18%). A *manageable workload* is the reason for engagement cited by 14% of respondents and trust continues to be a theme with 12% of those feeling engaged citing *feeling trusted* as the reason .Of note, *good mental health* and *good management/leadership* (the two main factors cited above as contributing to disengagement) weren't explicitly identified by any individual in terms of what contributes to positive engagement.

We can conclude, when good leadership + management and good mental health is in place - it's not necessarily cited as a reason for engagement. But when those things are not in place the impact is clearly felt and contributes to disengagement.

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" 4 day week

Two-way communication with leadership

Less glorification of long working hours

Mental Health / wellbeing resources, support, training etc.

A wholesale change on perception of Mental Health in the workplace "

Our survey said...

If there was one thing that would make your life easier, what would it be?

28% of respondents have cited *less work* as the one thing that would make their life easier and 16% are looking for *more people resource.* Both would solve the same problem of unmanageable workloads.

Flexibility of course is a workplace notion set to stay, with 12% of respondents citing *more flexibility* as the one thing that would make their life easier.

Communication is key - nearly 10% of respondents are looking for *better communication* to make their life easier, with *greater management support* (6%), *greater trust + psychological safety* (6%) and a *greater work/life balance & boundaries* (6%) following on.

Anything else that would help you and your colleagues with their mental health?

The themes opposite came out in response to this question.

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Our survey said...

Not only are people looking to their manager and leadership for support with workload prioritisation and clarity of purpose, they also need the time, permission and tools to help them manage the overwhelm more effectively. Our survey reveals the following topics people feel are most relevant and of interest to them right now.

Work-Life Balance - 78% of respondents selected this as the area most important to them right now. In response to the question "How much do you feel that having a work-life balance is valued at your place of work?" the average score was 6.8 out of 10[3].

Managing Stress, Burnout + Mental Health - in second place, 70% cited building awareness and learning tools to manage stress, burnout and mental health as relevant and of interest to them right now.

Healthy Habits + Boundary Creation - in third and fourth place respectively with 55% and 52% of votes, survey respondents would like to learn more tools to help them build healthy habits and better boundaries into their lives.

Performance + Productivity, Resilience + Change - Received 42%, 27% and 23% votes respectively.

Financial Wellbeing - perhaps unsurprisingly given the current cost of living crisis, 50% of respondents voted that this was an area of interest/relevant to them right now.

Research indicates that if people can't learn and grow within their organisation, they'll leave. And in a still-tight talent market, leaders who were hoping for the tide to turn have so far been disappointed. Rather than ignore or fight these trends, the best leaders will prioritise learning and development to help both people and the business grow.[4]

"My current Wellbeing is relatively high as I am setting boundaries both in work and my personal life. Despite working in a high-stress industry, I am able to take time for me, whatever that may look like - a 5 minute mindful break or a long walk to clear my mind. I've been having regular team catch-ups too, which is helpful to delegate / share the workload and set out clear goals. I have been protective of my social calendar too, making sure I have an equal balance between social time & down-time. This has been really helpful, particularly around this time of year when things can get really busy socially."[3]

What now? Where now? How?

Treat the cause, not the symptoms

We started this report highlighting the prevalence of burnout. The top causes of which are unmanageable workloads and a disconnect with a relationship with work - be it with management, the work itself or something else[2].

This might be an indicator as to why traditional wellbeing programmes aren't as impactful as they could be. Many wellbeing programmes are opt-in and ask people to do additional things on top of their work. This attracts those that are already interested in personal development and wellbeing.

Employers need an approach that targets everyone (not just those that are already interested) within the workforce – tackling the root causes of burnout at work instead of treating the symptoms.

So, how do we tackle burnout moving forward?

It starts with culture and behaviour change

It's unrealistic to easily solve the workload issue, but a culture of **communication, trust, empathy, compassion, awareness and understanding** will go a long way to support your people.

When leaders and managers consider the whole person at work - not just the employee - they encourage a culture of trust, vulnerability and shared responsibility, one which leads to high performance and success for individuals and business alike.

Creating a culture of emotional intelligence

Remembering that burnout is often caused by a disconnect between the employee and their relationship with work/management, it starts by leaders/managers honing their emotional intelligence (EQ).

The best leaders/managers possess high EQ[10] and are passionate about developing their teams to fulfil their potential, knowing that their success will come by coaching others to succeed.

Research shows that only 14% of employees feel comfortable speaking to their manager about their stress levels.[12] That means 86% do not, demonstrating an excellent opportunity for organisations to close this gap. Upskill your managers in their EQ skills, and this will go a long way to solving your business challenges. The ripple effects will be felt far beyond your managers.

"The most meaningful way to succeed is to help others succeed." Adam Grant, Organisational Psychologist

Leaders + Managers leading by example...

Insight: Culture change requires both a top down and bottom up approach to succeed. Everyone has a role to play, but it starts with leaders and managers, leading by example and modelling the desired behaviours.[13]
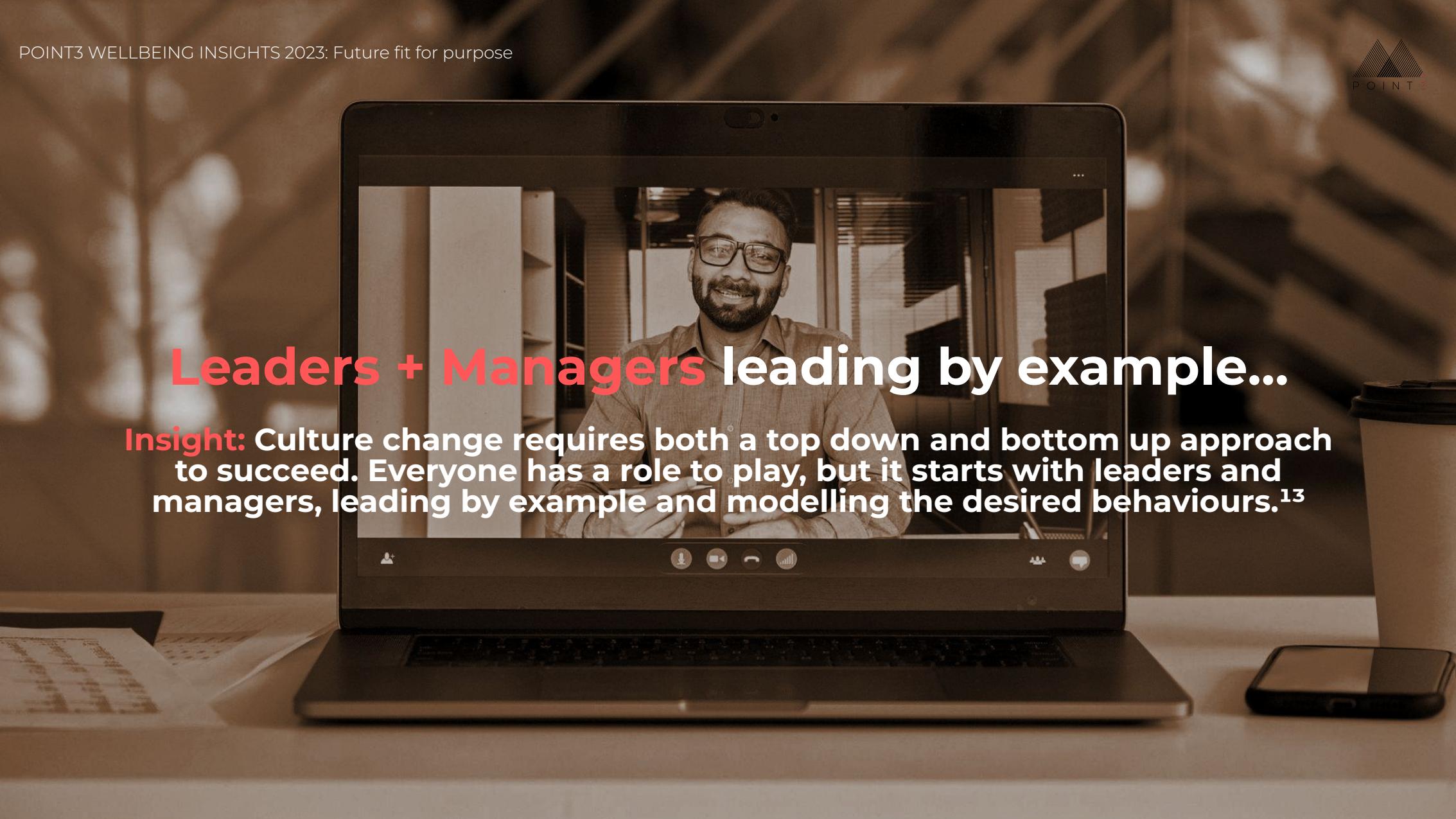
Who? How? Why?

Encourage Psychological Safety and Vulnerability

Culture change requires both a top down and bottom up approach to succeed. Everyone has a role to play, but it starts with leaders and managers leading by example and modelling the desired behaviours.

The Culture Code's Daniel Coyle[11] reveals that **Psychological safety** is the #1 ingredient of a high performance workplace culture - one where people feel comfortable contributing ideas, asking questions, trying new things - without fear of being judged badly if they get things wrong. This then encourages a culture of **vulnerability** - the #2 ingredient to high performance - being honest and open, particularly when you get things wrong or don't know the solution to a challenge. When vulnerability is recognised as data sharing, the team and business benefits.

Clarity, Purpose and Community

And finally. When people feel connected to the overall mission and a community at work - they feel a sense of purpose and belonging. When they are clear about how their contribution ladders up to the overall mission, they understand their individual and team priorities, they feel valued and cared about and more in control.

And when people have positive relationships with their team, they feel more supported and a sense of belonging. In response to the question "How well supported do you feel by your team?" the average score was 7.7 out of 10 with 59% giving a score of 8 or higher and 20% scoring 6 or below[3]. This all contributes to preventing burnout, even when the perceived workload is too much.

"Without clarity and trust, uncertainty festers, purpose dissipates and connection drops." Simon Sinek

"I have a lot of empathy for people and find I need to be stable, consistent and strong for my team. Finding ways to allow myself to be vulnerable at times, in front of the team, would be very helpful. Especially as I am now at the peri menopause time of my life."[3]

"Feel connected to my role and the impact it has, would appreciate more time with my line manager focused on my role and it's direction."[3]

"Sadly, I have stopped loving my role due to my relationship with my manager but I love my colleagues who are consistently brilliant and supportive."[3]

Supporting your Employees...

Insight: employees need interventions by their manager/leader to help them prioritise workloads but also the permission to prioritise their mental health and wellbeing. Those that report having a good worklife balance and good coping strategies in place, are more engaged and have higher wellbeing scores.[3]

Mental health + discrimination

Who's most at risk?

Mental health does *and does not* discriminate in the sense that everyone - regardless of who they are *can* experience poor mental health. That said, there are some risk factors to consider amongst your people. Those that experience/have experienced the following are more likely to experience poor mental health[14]:

- prejudice and discrimination, making mental health a core consideration for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI).
- abuse or trauma (childhood and/or adult)
- social isolation or loneliness
- financial and/or social disadvantage
- unemployment or losing your job
- bereavement
- severe or long-term stress
- long-term physical ill health
- being a long-term carer for someone
- drug and alcohol misuse
- domestic violence, bullying or other abuse
- being the victim of a violent crime

34% of our survey respondents are interested in learning more about DEI and 17% cited Grief as a subject of interest to them.[3]

Menopause, mental health + stigma

There is still much stigma and unknown around the menopause and perimenopause - which directly affects more than 50% of the population (women and trans-gender men) between the average age of 45 and 55 (though it can start earlier) – the largest growing demographic in the workplace.

Symptoms include[15] (but aren't limited to) hot flushes, sleep deprivation, joint pain, low mood and cognitive changes - all natural - but all potentially distressing and isolating for those who are experiencing them in the workplace.

Anxiety and/or depression, memory fog and reduced confidence as a result of menopause can have a major impact on someone's performance in the workplace and can be very distressing for the person experiencing those symptoms, especially if they aren't aware why and if their manager isn't aware why.

With more awareness and understanding, people can get the necessary support and flexibility that's right for them.

27% of our survey respondents said that the menopause is relevant and of interest to them right now.[3]

In summary...

At a time when budgets are tight and wellbeing programmes are difficult to justify if not everyone is engaging with them, what's the most impactful way to help people prevent and reverse the effects of burnout?

The number one reason people say they aren't thriving is that they are stressed and have poor mental health - due to too much work and not enough clarity of direction from their manager.

We can't blame the manager. We need to train the manager.

Often managers are people who have been promoted into the role because they are good at something - which is likely to be a specific expertise, that isn't managing people.

Too few managers are given the training to help them manage their people to their fullest potential.

So, if you're looking to get the best impact for your people's wellbeing, invest in your managers as a priority - give them the skills to help their people succeed.

The positive ripple effects will then start to be felt by the rest of the organisation (and beyond) too.
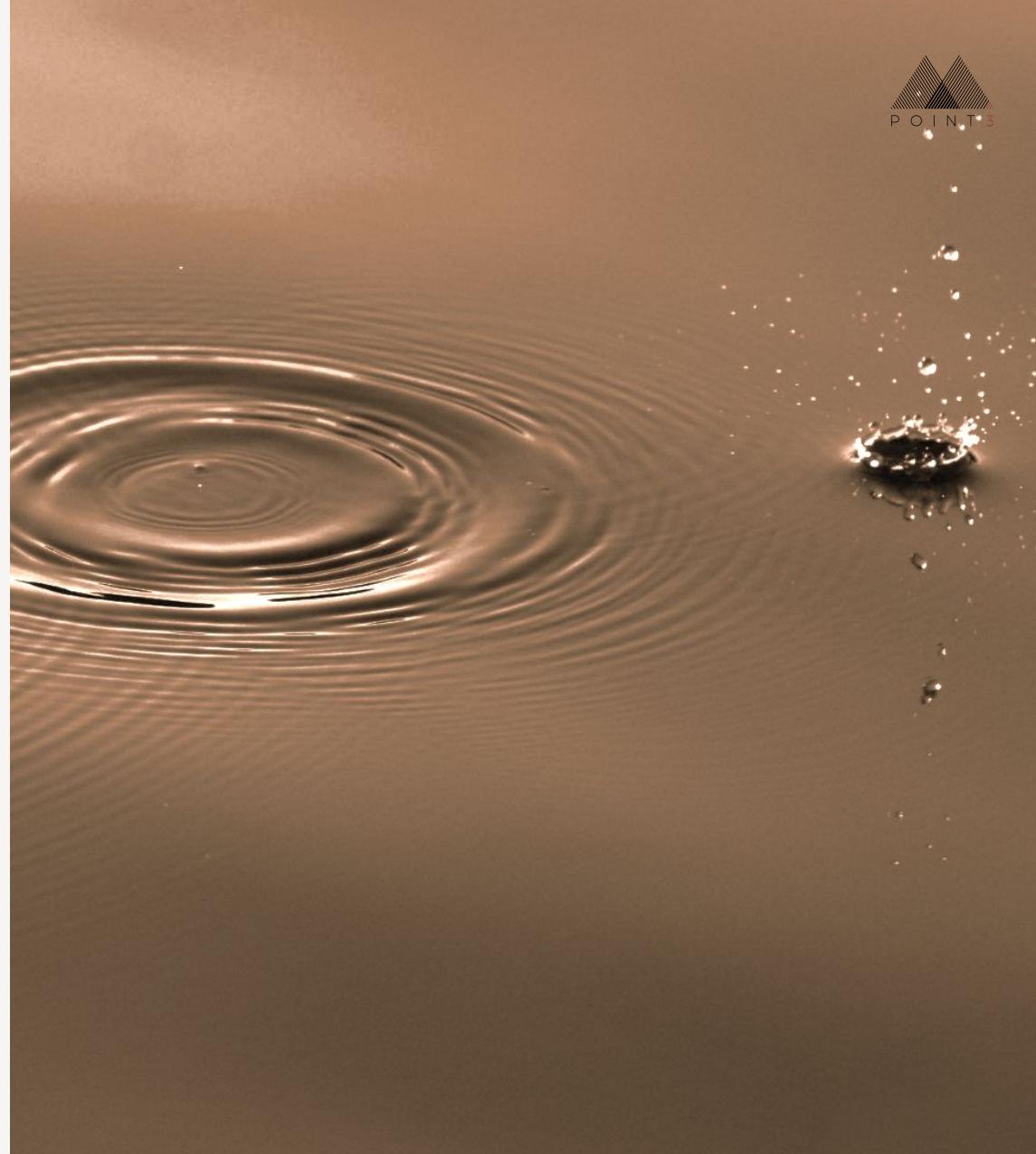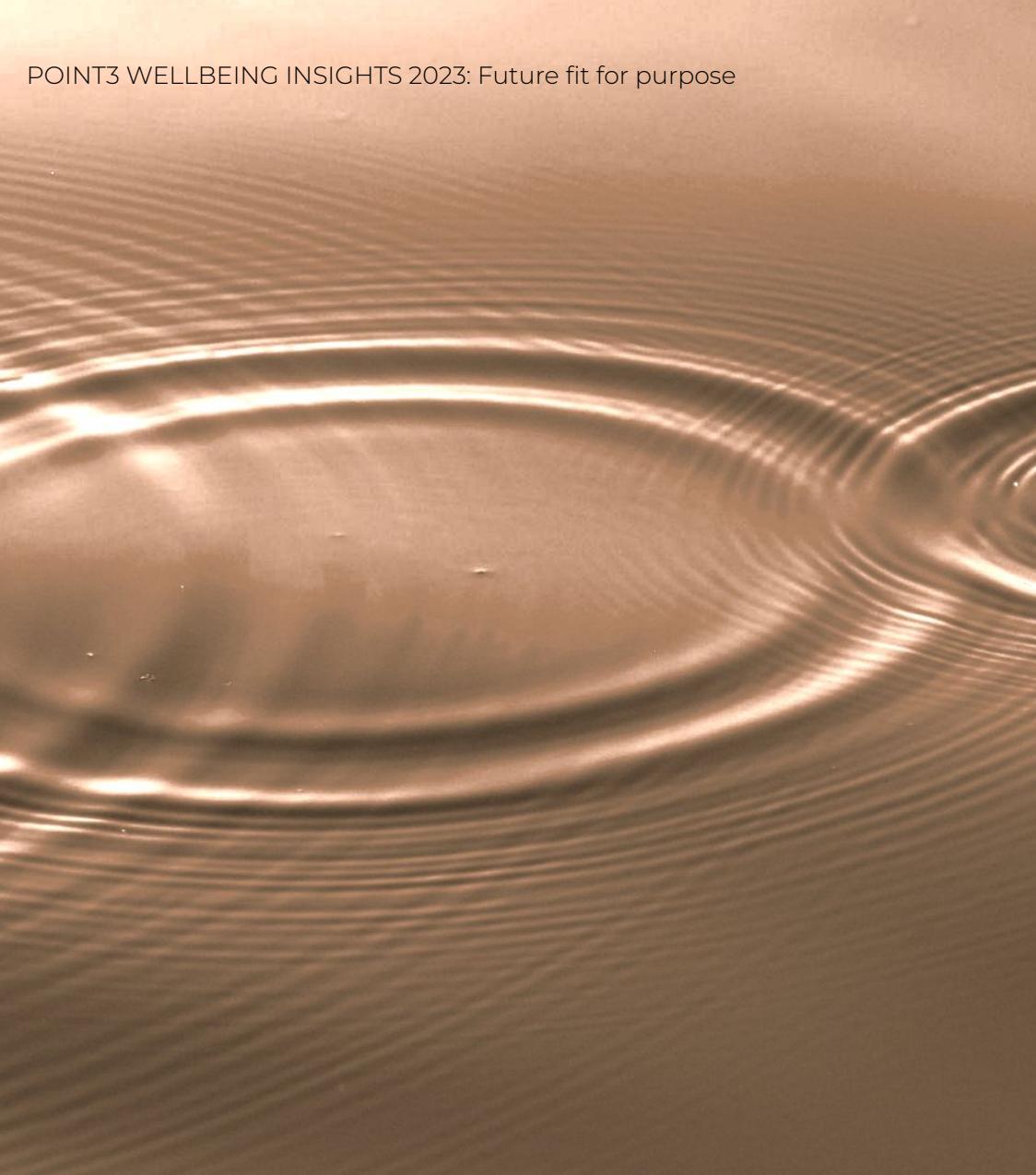
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At a time when unhappiness is at its highest ever level globally, POINT3 exists to empower people in the workplace to think, feel and behave to their fullest potential.

We dream of a world where discrimination is extinct - and everyone has an equal opportunity to fulfil their human potential and purpose.

So, our mission is to help people to stress less and smile more. When people feel better at work and in life, the ripple effects will be felt far and wide.

Whatever your business challenge this year - burnout, quiet quitting, productivity paranoia, recruitment and/or retention, how can we help you and your people stress less and smile more at work (and in life)?

From culture and communications to learning and development, we are here to support your business with our bespoke services and/or mental health and emotional intelligence training programmes that deliver with impact.

Get in touch with someone from the team today - **0208 0773130**.

Let's talk!

References, Reports and Resources

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