

Wellbeing Activities that Inspire and Reduce Stress in Employees' Lives



When HR professionals speak among themselves these days, they share ideas on what they can do, for free or for cheap, to help their employees feel better. Today every workforce member is impacted by the COVID-19 emergency which puts a strain on relationships, a strain on finances, and emotional strain on the individual who may likely be struggling with additional responsibilities with fewer resources.

One HR professional shared an idea from her company for facilitating an outreach to their staff, asking everyone to share with their fellow workers what they personally were doing in their own families to help themselves or their families cope. The responses were varied and ranged from naming the great shows they were bingeing on streaming services, to meditation, to outdoor activities.

These ideas gleaned from their staff were put into a flyer and distributed to the entire workforce. Soon the flyer became a monthly tool, updated with additional ideas from the employees and it has become a catalyst for staff communication among the employees with workers sharing with each other more ideas to beat stress and improve their lives and their families' lives as this emergency continued. *(Continued)*

Other companies are following suit. One company working on this model created “homeschooling kits” to help parents who suddenly found themselves the teaching their children in addition to working from home. That same company also stepped up to add more financial security to their staff with a more generous emergency leave policy and guaranteed full-time pay for all workers regardless of their circumstances.

There is a clear relationship between financial stress, wellness and job performance. Enlightened management has long known that a workforce needs relationship and financial health to be able to bring their best selves to their work. By addressing financial stress issues directly – through regular workshops on financial topics such as Medicare, retirement planning, and debt – this company has made an impact on their people and on their business.

Other companies are approaching this issue in their own way with free or sponsored yoga classes and meditation breaks. They have observed that any ideas and offers of access to resources that are free to the staff are well received and well subscribed. However, there is somewhat less participation in programs and activities that are to be consumed on employees’ own time and/or with attached fees

Many HR leaders have recognized the increased importance of mental health in this current crisis, considering more robust mental health service packages. Others have dived into less expensive options, such as apps, to relieve stress with meditation or AI chatbots.

Also, HR leadership has put in place more policies of visibly recognizing the good work of the teams continuing to shoulder the work-home-health trifecta of stress. These policies can be as one-to-one ‘human’ as giving staffers a surprise treat of some kind with a note saying that they are appreciated.

Workplace stress can also be reduced through positive leadership which can be improved upon in almost every industry and organization. A positive environment that supports workplace wellness includes basic leadership supports, most of which can be supplied without cost to the employer. These supports include a positive team atmosphere, supervisors available to help and advise when needed, a spirit of cooperation and respect in the workplace, realistic career or job growth opportunities, job security, adequate notice when there is a change in policy or procedure, a pleasant and safe working environment, sufficient physical space to do the job, the employees’ ability to change work hours when needed and to have a say in how tasks are performed, ability and permission to take breaks, and workloads that are reasonable.