

Press release
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World Mental Health Day – How work-life balance continues to impact employees' mental health

Sydney, October 2022 – In recognition of World Mental Health Day on 10 October, specialised recruiter [Robert Half](#) explores the impact of work-life balance on Australian employees' mental health and the steps employers can take to improve workplace wellbeing.

Work-life balance allows for better mental health

Flexibility and work-life balance initiatives have become commonplace in many organisations today. Hybrid/remote work, flexible working conditions, being able to work from abroad, but also more holidays, family and domestic violence leave, volunteering days, and increased parental leave all signify an employer's commitment to embrace a healthy relationship between work and personal life.

Flexibility in the workplace and work-life balance generally lead to increased employee satisfaction, help reduce burnout and work-related stress, offer more time to pursue personal goals, and improve focus and concentration, all of which contribute to a positive impact on employees' mental health.

Mental health has increasingly become top of mind for Australian workers and businesses, particularly off the back of the COVID-19 pandemic. Independent research from Robert Half finds flexible working arrangements are seen as a sign that an employer supports work-life balance. Almost half (46%) of Australian candidates value flexible working conditions – in some form - the most in an employer in today's market. The continued emphasis placed on flexible working in a post-pandemic world helps position organisations as an employer of choice, facilitating an ongoing healthy relationship between work and personal life, thereby also contributing to overall mental health.

"World Mental Health Day is an important reminder to check in with your employees and mobilise efforts in supporting mental welfare in the workplace. When it comes to employee wellbeing, employers need to take a broader approach and commit additional resources to help employees enjoy their jobs and perform at their best, not only in the month of October, but all year round."

"Employers have accelerated their initiatives like mental health days or weeks and enhanced counselling benefits, placing more emphasis on providing advice, onsite counselling, meditation breaks, guest speakers, and employee support programs. Additionally, open discussions about mental health are becoming more frequent with many managers acknowledging the importance of promoting healthy and frequent conversations about mental health throughout the year," said **Nicole Gorton, Director Robert Half** in reflecting on World Mental Health Day.

"Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is critical to overall wellbeing. Flexibility, often in the format of hybrid and remote working arrangements, has proven to not only help maintain or increase employee productivity, it also has a positive impact on employee satisfaction, helps reduce stress, prevents burnout and improves mental health. The importance of flexibility accelerated since the COVID-19 pandemic with many employers acknowledging the positives it brings to the business. Organisations who support mental health awareness and implement initiatives to support employee wellbeing are likely to build trust with their staff as well as improve their attraction and retention efforts," concluded **Gorton**.

Robert Half's tips to address mental health in the workplace (aside from offering flexibility)

As an employer, there are steps you can take to create a safer, more supportive work environment for your staff.

Tip #1: Talk about mental health and workplace wellbeing openly

The more you talk about mental health and workplace wellbeing, the safer your employees will feel to do the same. Talking about these topics can also help to reduce stigma.

Tip #2: Create an employee assistance program

By talking about mental health, you may find that employees come forward to share their experience with mental health. It's important to have strategies in place to support these employees when they trust you with this information, in the form of a formal employee assistance program.

Tip #3: Invest in wellbeing initiatives

Wellbeing initiatives are well received by employees. These can include supplying fruit to offering discounted gym memberships, time off for counselling, or creating a social club. Ask your employees which wellbeing initiatives would make the biggest difference to their mental health and [work-life balance](#), and implement them (if possible).

Tip #4: Make workplace happiness a top priority

Employer-driven mental health initiatives are key to creating safe, supportive work environments and reducing stigma around mental health. What's more, happier, healthier employees are likely to be more productive, engaged, and loyal, which has a direct impact on your company's bottom line.

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Notes to editors

About the research

The Australian worker study is developed by Robert Half and was conducted online by an independent research firm in June 2022, surveying 1,019 office workers from across Australia.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the global, specialised talent solutions provider that helps employers find their next great hire and jobseekers uncover their next opportunity. Robert Half offers both contract and permanent placement services, and is the parent company of Protiviti, a global consulting firm. Robert Half Australia has offices in Brisbane, Melbourne, Mount Waverley, Perth, and Sydney. More information on roberthalf.com.au.

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