

Let there be change

With employee burnout on the rise, there is plenty employers can do to help, writes Patrick Tadros

Whether at home or in the office, eight in 10 Australian workers are feeling more burnt out in 2022.

And with 40 per cent planning to join “The Great Resignation”, a national poll by recruitment agency people2people has found the hard truths as to why.

When asked the main reason for leaving their current job, one in three said it was due to poor leadership, with working beyond their job duties (20 per cent) and a lack of work-from-home flexibility (16.9 per cent) also of concern.

People2people recruitment NSW managing director Catherine Kennedy says stress and poor mental health in the workplace are also getting worse.

“It’s clear that organisations are struggling with leadership, defining clear job descriptions and providing the flexibility that many employees became accustomed to during the extended lockdowns over the past two years,” she says.

“Now is a crucial time for employers to up their game, focus on leadership and cement clear guidelines and practices for their employees.”

Kennedy offers tips to help improve the workforce’s wellbeing and create solutions for everyone.

CREATE A WELLBEING SERVICE

People2people’s research shows that 44 per cent of employees consider mental health very important when looking for a new job, and 70 per cent consider work-life balance even more important.

A specialised wellbeing provider is a great place to start when looking to implement a wellbeing program, although Kennedy highly recommends using a customised approach.

It is essential to identify the roadblocks and challenges employees from all walks of life face in your organisation to best understand how to support them.

ASSIGN EXTRA RESOURCES

It is important first to understand who needs help and who feels overwhelmed.

Transparent communication, trusted leadership and regular one-to-ones will enable managers to identify where workloads are the most significant and where resources need to be reallocated.

Once identified, organisations can create collaboration between teams so the teams who are struggling get supported by those with less heavy workloads.

However, this isn’t always the best solution. When



**People2
people
recruitment
NSW
managing
director
Catherine
Kennedy.**

the team overwhelmed by work is highly specialised and focuses primarily on technical tasks, hiring a skilled temporary worker is one of the best ways to support them without asking them not only to cope with their own workload but to train someone else.

Australia has seen a rise in temporary work in 2022, and part-timers are becoming more common as organisations require specialist workers with technical skills to support their overburdened teams.

LET EMPLOYEES KNOW THEIR WORTH

Supportive and trusted managers will make a significant difference in the daily life of their teams.

While making a big deal of the significant milestones is important, it’s also about the little wins and ensuring employees understand how they impact the wider business and how their contribution is valued.

Company awards and other special occasions are one great solution to get teams together, showcase everyone’s accomplishments and successes in the last 12 months, and reward the top performers and teams in front of the broader business.

patrick.tadros@news.com.au

Ask the experts

Christian Boucousis, a human behaviour and performance specialist (below) offers tips for a happier workplace

What are some ways to reduce workplace stress?

Take a breath, take stock and reset. Managers and business leaders need to reframe the future for their team. Don’t allow yourself to get caught up in the noise and speed. Don’t say yes to everything and raise issues with your manager if you are feeling overwhelmed by the workload. Also, be aware that your workplace is in your pocket, on your phone. So make time away from work to turn off your notifications and never bring your phone into the bedroom.



How can I resolve a workplace dispute with my leader or colleague?

The simplest place to start is to say: “I am unsure what the expectation is here and clearly it’s creating an issue between us.” Look to keep calm, avoid blame and raise issues in a way that shows you want to resolve them.

What fun activities could improve my workplace culture?

While fun is an important element of the workplace, meaningful activities are more important. Mutually agreeing on purposeful actions and behaviours means when we work together, we win together – that feels good. Ask your team what makes them feel good, how they like being spoken to and what they perceive as fun. Let everyone have a turn and organise simple, fun activities.

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Kaltukatjara
Art’s Mary
Gibson.**

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