

Training and Mentoring programme



Introduction

This is a training programme designed to equip HR professionals, in-company VET trainers and managers with the essential knowledge and hands-on skills to enhance the psychosocial well-being of their employees. This programme consists of 6 modules, developed by the consortium of the Thrive@work project. Each module includes four key components: the most essential information about a specific theme on well-being at work, supporting multi-media learning materials, practical activities, and assessments. The total duration of the entire programme is approximately 18 hours.

Module 1 introduces positive psychology and its application in the workplace. Module 2 outlines the eight steps in planning a sound well-being programme, where the roles of internal actors, external experts and the employees are discussed. Module 3 focuses specifically on the role of managers and illustrates the important leadership skills that can help the well-being programme succeed. Module 4 focuses on the role of employees in taking charge of their psychosocial well-being, in particular work-life meaningfulness. Module 5 provides a comprehensive understanding of stress management and useful advice on how to reduce stress at work. Module 6 explains the importance of mentorship and how to implement mentorship to build a well-being culture within organisations.

After completing the programme, learners will have a better understanding of what psychosocial well-being entails and the practical skills to design, implement and evaluate well-being programmes.

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Screening self-test survey

Dear participant,

We are inviting you to participate in the Erasmus Training and Mentoring Programme 'THRIVE@WORK' by completing this survey. The aim of the survey is to assess your perceptions, knowledge and skills regarding workplace well-being. The programme includes six modules on essential aspects of workplace well-being, together with practical exercises and case studies. It takes approximately 5 minutes to complete this survey. Participation in the survey is voluntary. The data will be confidential and used only as an indication for your own training. A high score for a module (i.e., 5 on a 5-point scale) means that you are familiar with the content of the module, and you can choose either to go through the content or directly to the exercises of the module.

If you want to withdraw from the current study for any reason even during the completion of the questionnaire, you are free to do so at any given point. Further information about the project can be obtained from Ms. Yang Yang, yang.yang@pulso-group.com, Diestsesteenweg 52, 3010 Leuven, Belgium.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidance for research will be followed along all phases of the research project.

Informed Consent

- I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask any questions I have.
 - Please tick box
- I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw my data up to two weeks after participating without giving any reason.
 - Please tick box
- I agree freely to take part in the study.
 - Please tick box

Please read each statement carefully and choose an answer from the list below according to the extent to which you are familiar with the following statements. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers.

Module	Questions/Statements	Scale	
Intro	Individuals experience well-being when they have the psychological, social and physical resources needed to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M1	PERMA model (P-Positive Emotion, E-Engagement, R-Relationships, M-Meaning, A-Accomplishment) has been found effective in enhancing the well-being and productivity of individuals and organisations.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M2	I know the necessary steps of planning a sound well-being programme: define goals for the well-being policy, clarify responsibilities of responsible parties, assessment, awareness raising, implementation and evaluation.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M3	The management team plays an important role in creating the appropriate culture that values workplace well-being and the successful implementation of well-being programmes within an organisation.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M4	Work-life balance is a broad concept evoking a prioritizing between "work" (career or ambition) on one hand and "life" (pleasure,	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little	

	leisure, family or spiritual development) on the other. There is no such thing as a "perfect" balance that will work for every person and at every stage of life.	4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M5	Work-related stress can come from many different sources, including work contents and context. Organisations have to assess stress risks in the workplace and analyse the stressors to be able to take adequate actions to its prevention and reduction.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	
M6	Mentoring is a process where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value and development. There four stages of a mentoring relationship include: Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, Redefinition.	1. Never heard of it 2. Heard of it 3. Know a little 4. Know a fair amount 5. Know it well	

Introduction: Definition, dimensions of well-being and its benefits

Abstract

This is an introductory module in the well-being concept which aims at clarifying the understanding of well-being as a whole and within the Thrive@work training & mentoring programme. Furthermore, the module gives an overview of the benefits of well-being for individuals, organisations and society. It is a more theoretical model for making you familiar with the main terms and setting the foundation for the next modules.

Learning outcomes

Learning output 1: The learners will be able to define well-being, recognise its different aspects and differentiate it from other concepts such as wellness, mental health etc.

Learning output 2: The learners will be familiar with the benefits of the well-being programmes on the individual, organisational and country level.

Keywords

Well-being, wellness, mental health, benefits of well-being, employee engagement, increased productivity, employer branding, resilience, fair play, equal opportunities, social inclusiveness, and stability.

Identity of the Module	
Module	<i>Definition, dimensions of well-being and its benefits on individual, organisational and country level</i>
Short description of the module / abstract	<i>The main aim of this introductory module is to give definition to well-being and differentiate it from other constructs such as wellness or mental health. Furthermore, our aim is to raise awareness about the demands for and the benefits of well-being programmes on individual, organisational and country level when such programmes are widely spread.</i>
Learning Outcomes	<i>Learning outcome1: The learners will be able to define well-being, recognise its different aspects and differentiate it from other concepts such as wellness, mental health etc.</i>

	<i>Learning outcome2: The learners will be familiar with the benefits of the well-being programmes on individual, organisational and country level.</i>						
Learning Units	<i>Learning Unit 1: Definition and different dimensions of well-being. Differentiation from other similar constructs. Learning Unit 2: Importance and benefits of well-being programmes on individual, organisational and country level.</i>						
Learning core material	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chapter</th> <th>Learning Material</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Defining and dimensions of well-being</i></td> <td><i>Text, 1 Practical Activity</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Importance and benefits of well-being</i></td> <td><i>Text, 2 Practical Activities</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Chapter	Learning Material	<i>Defining and dimensions of well-being</i>	<i>Text, 1 Practical Activity</i>	<i>Importance and benefits of well-being</i>	<i>Text, 2 Practical Activities</i>
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Assessment method	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chapter</th> <th>Assessment method</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Defining and dimensions of well-being</i></td> <td><i>True or False Statement, Open Question</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Importance and benefits of well-being</i></td> <td><i>True or False Statement, Multiple Choice question</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Chapter	Assessment method	<i>Defining and dimensions of well-being</i>	<i>True or False Statement, Open Question</i>	<i>Importance and benefits of well-being</i>	<i>True or False Statement, Multiple Choice question</i>
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<i>Defining and dimensions of well-being</i>	<i>True or False Statement, Open Question</i>						
<i>Importance and benefits of well-being</i>	<i>True or False Statement, Multiple Choice question</i>						
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	120 min.						
Author(s)	Anelia Miteva, CATRO Bulgaria						
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO						

Dear participants,

My name is Anelia Miteva from CATRO Bulgaria, and I welcome you to the Introductory module “Definition, dimensions of well-being and its benefits on individual, organisational and country level”.

The **aims** of the Module are to clarify the understanding of well-being as a whole and within our Thrive@work training & mentoring programme. Furthermore, you will get familiar with the benefits of well-being for individuals, organisations and society.

The Module is **structured** in two chapters, namely.

- Defining and dimensions of well-being
- Importance and benefits of well-being

Chapter 1 discusses the definition of well-being, while it gives insight into the various dimensions of well-being.

Chapter 2 presents the benefits of well-being for individuals, organisations and the society as a whole.

Finally, your **assessment** consists of 5 practical tasks that will allow you to test your theoretical knowledge about the well-being concept and its benefits.

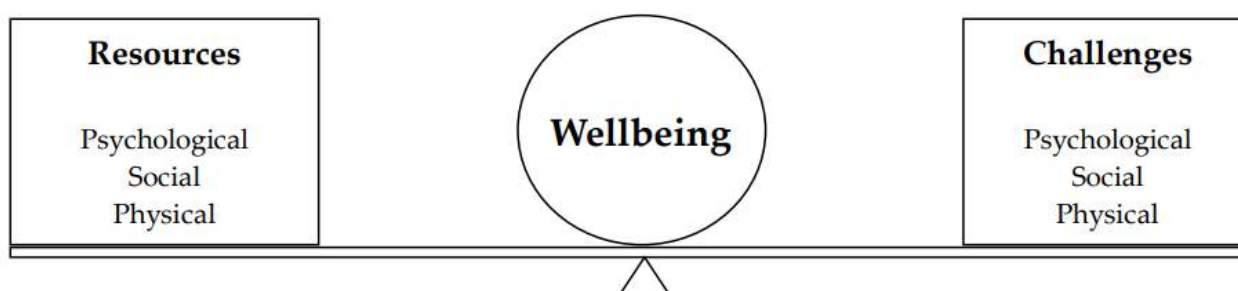
1. Learning Unit 1: Defining well-being

1.1. Challenges to define well-being.

The concept of well-being is undeniably complex, which is also proved by the increasing number of research in well-being in recent decades (e.g., Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999; Keyes, Schmotkin, & Ryff, 2002; Stratham & Chase, 2010; Seligman, 2011).

A recent attempt for a definition has been made by Dodge, R., Daly, A., Huyton, J., & Sanders, L. (2012)¹, whereas their focus lies on three key areas: 1.) the idea of a set point for well-being; 2.) the inevitability of equilibrium/homeostasis; 3.) and the fluctuating state between challenges and resources. Thus, the authors from Cardiff Metropolitan University define well-being as the **balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced**.

In essence, **stable well-being is when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge**. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their well-being, and vice-versa.



There are other popular and even simplified attempts for definition of well-being which however narrow the scope of the term:

¹ The challenge of defining well-being. *International Journal of Well-being*, 2(3), 222-235. doi:10.5502/ijw.v2i3.4

- Oxford English Dictionary defines “well-being” as a **state where one feels comfortable, healthy and happy**.
- Other similar definitions focus on the **presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness), the absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety), satisfaction with life, fulfilment and positive functioning**. In simple terms, well-being can be described as judging life positively and feeling good.
- Another multidimensional **approach defines well-being as the combination of feeling good and functioning well**; the experience of positive emotions such as happiness and contentment as well as the development of one’s potential, having some control over one’s life, having a sense of purpose, and experiencing positive relationships. **It is a sustainable condition that allows the individual or population to develop and thrive**. The term subjective well-being is synonymous with positive mental health.

For the purpose of the Thrive@work project we will build on the broader and complex definition by the Cardiff Metropolitan University which states that **individuals experience well-being when they have the psychological, social and physical resources needed to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge**.

1.2. Aspects of well-being

Furthermore, researchers from different disciplines have examined different aspects of well-being that include the following (<https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/well-being.htm#three>)

- **Physical well-being**

This refers to the healthy functioning of the body that is affected by our lifestyle choices. How active we are, the sleep quality and what we eat and drink will determine our physical well-being.

- **Emotional or psychological well-being**

This refers to a state of mind where one experiences positive emotions such as happiness and life satisfaction. It describes our ability to cope with everyday life and reflects how we think and feel about ourselves.

- **Social well-being**

This dimension of well-being describes our ability to develop and maintain meaningful relationships with others and fulfill one's need for belonging. The way we interact with others, the values and beliefs we hold, and our lifestyle are important factors of our social well-being.

- **Spiritual well-being**

This describes one's ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose in life. To a broader extent this can be achieved through connecting with our inner self, nature or even a greater power.

- **Intellectual well-being**

This dimension of well-being describes a person's engagement in creative and stimulating mental activities in order to expand their knowledge and skills to help them develop personally and professionally.

- **Economic well-being**

This dimension describes our ability to meet our basic needs and feel secure.

Again, for the purpose of the Thrive@work training and empowering programme, the main focus will be on **psychological and social well-being**.

1.3. Well-being and other related constructs

Having looked at the definition of well-being, it is time to explore the relationship between well-being and other related concepts such as **mental health** and **wellness**.

Mental Health vs well-being: Is there a difference between the two?

The World Health Organisation has defined **mental health** as:

“A state of well-being in which an individual realised his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

Both physical and mental health can influence well-being. The relationship between well-being and mental health can be two-way; poor mental health (e.g., chronic stress) can negatively impact our well-being (e.g., emotional or psychological well-being), and well-being itself can impact one's mental health. (<https://happiful.com/the-difference-between-mental-health-and-well-being/>)

Wellness vs Well-being: Is there a difference between the two?

While well-being describes a state of being comfortable, healthy and happy, **wellness** can be described as the day-to-day pursuit of attaining this sense of well-being. It describes the acts of practising healthy habits on a daily basis to gain well-being, and mental as well as physical health. Although wellness means something different at every stage of life, it's primarily supported through habits of eating, physical activity and quality sleep that led to positive health outcomes. Such acts include exercise, practicing mindfulness, social connectedness, gratitude, having a healthy nutrition and sleep routine. To put it simple, **wellness can be seen as the action, whereas well-being can be seen as the outcome.**

Well-being on the other hand encompasses the broader holistic dimensions of a well-lived life. Gallup's global research has found five elements of well-being that add up to a thriving life:

- **Career well-being:** You like what you do every day.
- **Social well-being:** You have meaningful friendships in your life.
- **Financial well-being:** You manage your money well.
- **Physical well-being:** You have energy to get things done.
- **Community well-being:** You like where you live.

Based on that comparison it could be concluded that wellness is an important element of overall well-being. However, wellness is only one part of a thriving life. If someone has healthy eating habits and exercises regularly but has few friends and dreads going to work each day, this will make this person struggle, and these chronic issues will ultimately affect his/her physical health as well. For employers, the costs of poor employee well-being go far beyond insurance - they ultimately impact employee engagement, productivity and performance (<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/340202/wellness-well-being-difference.aspx>).

Practical Activity 1: What are the different dimensions of well-being?

Purpose: Getting aware of the different aspects of well-being in a group discussion, as well as to assess to what extent they are currently fulfilled in your life.

Instructions:

Participants are first getting familiar with the 6 different dimensions of well-being and discuss their understanding about each aspect:

- Physical well-being
- Emotional or psychological well-being
- Social well-being
- Spiritual well-being
- Intellectual well-being
- Economic well-being

In a second step, they can rank these aspects individually in hierarchical order regarding their current priorities in life.

In a third step the participants can assess their own satisfaction with the level of fulfilment of this aspect in their current life situation on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means not satisfied at all, and 5 means – fully satisfied.

Variations: As an additional step, the same exercise, HR experts may use to reflect on the well-being of their employees and its influence on the organisation.

The three steps can be visualized as follows:

Well-being dimension	Meaning for me	Ranking by current priorities	Level of satisfaction on a scale from 1-5
Physical well-being			
Emotional/psychological well-being			
Social well-being			
Spiritual well-being			
Intellectual well-being			
Economic well-being			

2. Learning Unit 2. Importance and Benefits of well-being programmes on individual, organisational and country level

2.1. Why is well-being important?

Well-being is fundamental to our health and overall happiness. It is a plausible individual and national goal and it's something well over the absence of misery. Higher well-being is linked to a number of better outcomes regarding physical health and longevity as well as better individual performance at work, and higher life satisfaction has been linked to better national economic performance. Furthermore, by increasing our well-being we can successfully overcome difficulties and achieve what we want out of life.

During the last few years, there's been an increasing awareness of the importance of happiness and satisfaction with life among individuals, policy makers and the business. Increasing your well-being isn't an easy thing to do, but it is well worth it in the long run. All the advantages of higher well-being are reviewed below taking into consideration the different perspectives – individual, organisational and country levels.

2.2. Benefits for individuals, organisations and society

Most of the time when we talk about well-being, we consider the benefits for the individual. Sometimes we don't realize the big impact that the psychological health of the individual has on society. In this part of the module, we will go deeper in the context of well-being and its various benefits for the individuals as well as for organisations and for the society.

Benefits of well-being for individuals

There is no sole determinant of individual well-being, it is not just the absence of disease or illness. In general, well-being is dependent upon good health, positive social relationships, and availability and access to basic resources (e.g., shelter, income). It is a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social health factors. So why should you invest time, effort, or money in optimising your own well-being?

Many believe that well-being and happiness are inherently valuable – meaning that feeling happy is worthwhile as an end in itself. However, others take more convincing. So, is there any pay off for investing in well-being beyond the warm and fuzzy feeling that comes with happiness?

Until more recently, this question had been relatively ignored as far as scientific research is concerned. However, since the inception of Positive Psychology, an abundance of research investigating the benefits of happiness and well-being has emerged. This has resulted in the identification of numerous psychological, social, physical health, and productivity benefits of happiness and well-being, some of which are highlighted below.²

² Why well-being?, <https://www.vitalisepsychology.com.au/resources/why-well-being>

Physical Health Benefits. The experience of greater degrees of happiness and well-being has now been strongly linked to many physical health benefits, highlighting the connection between the body and the mind (i.e., healthy mind = healthy body). Individuals with high happiness and well-being have been found to have:

- Lower incidences of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and sleeping difficulties.
- Lower levels of cortisol (i.e., stress hormone), less self-reported physical symptoms and pain, a decreased risk of automobile fatality, and a decreased likelihood of engaging in unhealthy behaviours (e.g., smoking)
- Increased likelihood of engaging in health promoting activities (e.g., exercising), longer survival times following an illness, and quickened physical recovery and return to normal activities following surgery.
- Speaking more broadly, a relationship has been observed between well-being and a decreased risk of all causes of death (i.e., increased overall longevity)

Psychological Benefits. Many social and psychological benefits of happiness and well-being have also been observed. Those individuals with higher degrees of happiness have been found to also have:

- Increased self-esteem, optimism, a sense of personal competence, prosocial and altruistic behaviour, interpersonal skills, and higher satisfaction with the quality of one's relationships.
- Heightened ability to cope and remain positive during difficult times, and an increased likelihood of receiving emotional and tangible assistance.
- Happy people are less inclined to feel jealous, less likely to experience conflict and more likely to be superior at resolving conflict.
- They are more accepting and less critical of themselves and others, and are judged as more physically attractive, intelligent, competent, friendly, and warm than their less happy counterparts.
- Happiness has also been found to lead to an increased number of reliable and supportive friends.
- Those high on well-being have also been found to contribute to their communities by volunteering their time.

Benefits of well-being for organisation

On average we spend $\frac{1}{3}$ of our day in our workplace, subsequently what happens at work significantly affects our emotional and physical well-being and vice versa. Fostering employees' well-being can lead to mutual benefits for both the employee and the organisation. Organisations that invest in their employees' well-being help them flourish, thrive, and reach their full potential. There is no doubt then that **well-being is a key factor in determining an organisation's long-term effectiveness.** A plethora of studies have shown that organisations that support and promote employee well-being enjoy various **benefits** such as:

Better employee engagement and increased productivity. A study conducted by the University of Warwick (Oswald, Proto, & SgROI., 2015) found that **happiness made people at work 12% more productive**, while unhappy workers were 10 % less productive. According to the researchers: *“... happiness has large and positive causal effects on productivity. Positive emotions appear to invigorate human beings.”*

According to the Employee Engagement & Modern Workplace report (Bonusly, 2020), 95% of employees who claim to be highly engaged feel that the underlying factor leading to their engagement level has to do with their managers **listening carefully to their needs** and taking their **feedback into consideration**.

Lower absenteeism and turnover. Studies also support the idea that employee well-being programmes can reduce absenteeism rates for **78% of employers**, leading therefore to **financial savings** of the company.

In turn, a healthy work environment can lead to **lower turnover** levels as employees feel more **motivated** and want to stay in the company for longer. Without such programmes, employees are at a higher risk of burnout which causes companies huge financial costs.

Stronger employer branding. Employees who work for organisations that care about their well-being are more likely to **recommend their organisation to their peers**. In the long term this could improve an organisation’s employer branding, help them attract new talent and reduce an organisation’s recruitment costs.

Build employees’ resilience. Through well-being programmes and practices employees can learn how to **handle unforeseen work and personal related circumstances**, helping them to improve their **quality of life** and **manage crisis** situations without panic.

Increases Creativity and innovation. A positive work environment can translate to a more positive attitude among employees. And when employees feel more positive, they are more inclined to **think creatively** on the job. Creativity in the workplace, in turn, has a direct connection to a **company’s growth and prosperity**.

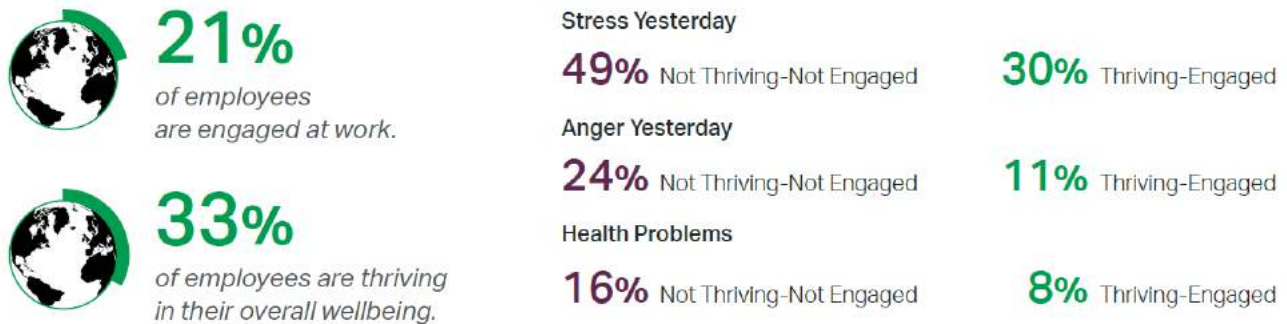
Build and sustain high employee morale. It’s important to foster a ‘go home better’ motto. For instance, being able to provide employees with fitness and exercise programmes, health screenings, nutritional advice, and programmes to manage stress can address their overall wellness.

Better Workplace Culture. *“Caring for the well-being of your employees will foster a more positive workplace culture as they would be happier and have a higher level of employee engagement. ... It is crucial that all organisations make employee wellness a priority during this pandemic, and this should remain a high priority even post-pandemic.”*, Dr. Melissa Tranquille³

³ Why employee well-being matters now more than ever, 28.01.2022, <https://fuel50.com/2022/01/why-employee-well-being-matters/>

Gallup State of the Global Workplace 2022. Engagement and well-being interact with each other in powerful ways. We often think of engagement as something that happens at work and well-being as something that happens outside of work, but Gallup’s analysis suggests that’s a false dichotomy.

How people **experience work influences their lives outside of work.** Employees who consistently experience high levels of burnout at work say their job makes it difficult to fulfill their family responsibilities. For more statistics and information about the relation between engagement and well-being, you can check the full report [here](#).



Organisations need to think about the whole person, not just the worker. **Leaders need to add well-being measurements to their executive dashboards.** This can alert them to critical warning signs that do not show up on traditional spreadsheets. **They also need to prioritise employee well-being as part of their employer brand promise.** When leaders take responsibility for the well-being of their workers, the result is not only productive organisations, but thriving individuals, families, and communities.

Benefits of well-being on national/community level

Numerous studies have examined the associations between determinants of individual and national levels of well-being. Many of these studies have used different measures of well-being (e.g., life satisfaction, positive affect, psychological well-being), and different methodologies resulting in occasional inconsistent findings related to well-being and its predictors. In general, life satisfaction is dependent more closely on the availability of basic needs being met (food, shelter, income) as well as access to modern conveniences (e.g., electricity). Pleasant emotions are more closely associated with having supportive relationships.

Countries differ substantially in their levels of well-being. Societies with higher well-being are those that are more **economically developed**, have **effective governments** with low levels of **corruption**, have high levels of **trust**, and can meet citizens’ **basic needs** for food and health. Cultural factors (e.g., individualism vs. collectivism, social norms) also play a role in national estimates of well-being.

Some general findings on associations between well-being and other relevant factors are listed below:

Genes and Personality. At the individual level, genetic factors, personality, and demographic factors are related to well-being. For example, positive emotions are heritable to some degree (heritability estimates range from 0.36 to 0.81), suggesting that there may be a genetically determined set-point for emotions such as happiness and sadness. However, the expression of genetic effects is often **influenced by factors in the environment** implying that **circumstances and social conditions** do matter and are actionable from a public policy perspective. Longitudinal studies have found that well-being is sensitive to life events (e.g., unemployment, marriage). Additionally, genetic factors alone cannot explain differences in well-being between nations or trends within nations.

Some personality factors that are strongly associated with well-being include optimism, extroversion, and self-esteem. Genetic factors and personality factors are closely related and can interact in influencing individual well-being.

While genetic factors and personality factors are important determinants of well-being, they are beyond the realm of public policy goals.⁴

Age and Gender. Depending on which types of measures are used (e.g., life satisfaction vs. positive affect), **age and gender** also have been shown to be **related to well-being**. In general, men and women have similar levels of well-being, but this pattern **changes with age**, and has changed over time. There is a U-shaped distribution of well-being by age - younger and older adults tend to have higher well-being compared to middle-aged adults.

Income and Work. The relationship between income and well-being is complex. Depending on which types of measures are used and which comparisons are made, income correlates only modestly with well-being. In general, associations between **income and well-being** (usually measured in terms of life satisfaction) are stronger for those at **lower economic levels**, but studies also have found effects for those at higher income levels. Paid employment is critical to the well-being of individuals by conferring direct access to resources, as well as **fostering satisfaction, meaning and purpose** for some. Unemployment negatively affects well-being, both in the short- and long-term.

Prevention of Criminal and Antisocial Activities. A number of studies have investigated the link between crime and well-being - with the focus being largely on the impacts of crime on well-being. For example, Cornaglia et al. (2014) use data for Australia and conclude that an

⁴ Well-being concepts, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion , Division of Population Health, 31.10.2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/well-being.htm#six>

increase in violent crime in an area leads to a significant reduction in community well-being, this being much higher than the effect of property crime.

A number of studies have examined the determinants of the crime rate, but few have focused on subjective well-being. However, elements of the determinants of life satisfaction also arise in the studies on the determinants of crime. For example, in the case of German municipalities, factors such as employment, the divorce rate, poverty and inequality are shown to be important in determining the crime rate (Buettner and Spengler 2003).⁵

Prosocial Behaviour. Empirical research has shown that happy people are more willing to do something for others, such as working for charities or engaging in other types of voluntary work. In particular, the literature has shown that happy and satisfied people are more likely to be blood donor and to donate money to charities (Priller and Schupp 2011), devote more hours to voluntary activities (Thoits and Hewitt 2001; Griep et al. 2015) and engage in a higher number of types of unpaid voluntary activities (Oishi et al. 2007).

Several studies confirm that the connection between volunteering and well-being is strong. Helping people is beneficial not only for those receiving assistance.

Social Relationships and Social Activities. It has been shown that **happy people** like spending **time with others**; however, at the same time, spending time with other people makes us happy. Also, the literature has suggested that people enjoy spending time with happy and extroverted people (Mehl et al. 2010), while contact with depressing subjects can have a detrimental effect on our mood as well.

Having **supportive relationships** is one of the strongest predictors of **well-being**, having a notably positive effect. A large literature has focused on the link between subjective well-being and the quality and quantity of social relationships. Diener and Seligman (2002) distinguish between three levels of **happiness** (very high/medium/very low) and show that “very happy” subjects rate the quality of their social contacts very highly, spend **significantly more time with other** people and less time alone. Mehl et al. (2010) find that individuals with higher levels of happiness and satisfaction spend **more time talking to others** and have **deeper conversations**. In particular, when distinguishing between individuals in the highest and in the lowest level of happiness, the former is found to spend twice as much time in deep conversations compared to the latter.

Another aspect of well-being in the national or community concept is the **well-being of society**. A well-being society is one where the different aspects of well-being are prioritised during fundamental policy and strategizing steps, over merely economic or scientific, or technological advancement. The term “*well-being society*” was used in the 2021 Geneva Charter for Well-being by the United Nations Organisation (UNO), with the following meaning: “*creating*

⁵ Maccagnan, A., Wren-Lewis, S., Brown, H. et al. Well-being and Society: Towards Quantification of the Co-benefits of Well-being. Soc Indic Res 141, 217–243 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-017-1826-7>

sustainable well-being societies, committed to achieving equitable health now and for future generations without breaching ecological limits.”

The mark of a well-being society is **focusing on well-being and sustainable living** rather than traditional economic parameters. This involves a wide range of policies and initiatives aimed at improving social relationships, ensuring a peaceful and equitable mode of existence rather than the fiercely competitive mode of living of modern capitalism.

Good relationships are fundamental to a well-being society. Being gainfully and productively employed is key to experiencing well-being as well. Thus, a well-being society is one where the different aspects of well-being are prioritised during fundamental policy and strategizing steps, over merely economic or scientific, or technological advancement.

In such a society, **fair play, equal opportunities, social inclusiveness, and stability**, are **prioritized** over economic gain, while not neglecting productive development. The path to development aims at **the good of the people** in their communities while preserving environmental health. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is not the ideal measure for the well-being of human societies, as it is independent of gross socioeconomic inequities, environmental disruptions, and decreased health indices.⁶

Well-being concept is quite complex, and this module outlined the variety of aspects related to human well-being. Starting with the huge list of individual benefits – physical and psychological, with organisational gains – engagement, retention, productivity, culture etc., and last but not the least the influence on the society, shows that we must take care of our well-being as individuals, as part of the company and the society we live in. If we didn’t start working on this, the best day to start is today!

Practical Activity 2: What is the influence of well-being on organisational level? (10 min)

Instructions: Considering the main aspects of individual well-being, listed below, please reflect in 2 groups on the following interrelations:

Physical well-being
Emotional/psychological well-being
Social well-being
Spiritual well-being
Intellectual well-being
Economic well-being

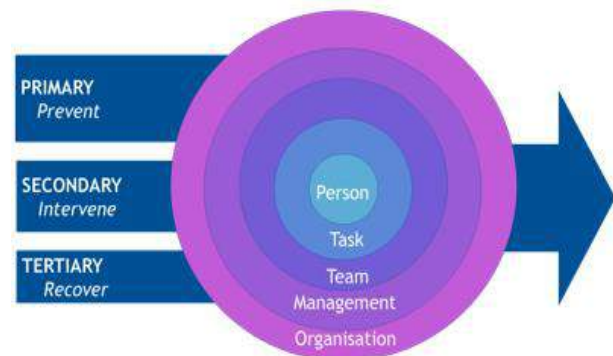
⁶ What is a well-being society?, Dr. Liji Thomas, MD, 7.04.2022, <https://www.news-medical.net/health/What-is-a-Well-Being-Society.aspx>

1. How do these aspects of your personal well-being relate to the following aspects of organisational well-being? Could you please give one positive and one negative example?

Lower absenteeism
Lower turnover
Higher productivity
Higher employee engagement
Higher employee satisfaction
Greater innovation and creativity
Higher resilience to stress

2. How do the factors from the organisational context (a sample of factors are listed below) impact your personal aspects of well-being? What are the positive correlations and what are the negative ones? Please give at least one example for each of those factors.

Person
Task
Team
Management
Organisation



Resource: *Pulso Group, Belgium*

3. Optional question: What would you need from the management/organisation in terms of every factor which will increase the level of your individual well-being?

Practical Activity 3: What is the influence of well-being on national/community level? (10 min)

Purpose: Since we don't always think about how our behaviour and attitude influence society and the people around us, let's think about the influence of our well-being on society/community. The advantage of using Mentimeter for this activity is to check if there's a common understanding of the influence since the repetitive words appear bigger on the screen.

Instructions: Using [Mentimeter's Word Cloud](#), write down the benefits of well-being for the community.

3. Synopsis

This introductory module gives an overview of the well-being concept in the literature – how it is defined, what are the different dimensions, how it relates to similar terms as wellness or mental health. It also highlights the importance of well-being for the psychological and physical health of individuals, for employee engagement, productivity, creativity, and innovation potential in organisations, as well as for ensuring fair play, equal opportunities, social inclusiveness, and stability in the society as a whole.

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5. Assessment plan of Module Intro

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Definition and dimensions of well-being</i>
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Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about the different dimensions of the concept of well-being and to distinguish it from other related concepts.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define the main aspects of well-being. Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to make the difference between well-being and well</i>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions, open question</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Anelia Miteva
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Please select in the statements below all aspects of well-being which you are familiar with (there are more than 1 correct answer)
Possible answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Physical well-being B. Emotional well-being C. Spiritual well-being D. Intellectual well-being E. Community well-being F. Economic well-being G. Organisational well-being
Correct answer	E & F are not correct answers, because they are not aspects of well-being
Response to correct answer	A, B, C, D,G: are the correct answers. Well done! If you have checked all the correct answers, then you are aware of all important aspects of well-being.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. This is not a correct answer, because this is not a dimension of well-being, but describes the level of measurement (individual or group) of well-being.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Please define the relationship between mental health and well-being by choosing the correct answers
Possible answers	<p>A. poor mental health can negatively impact our well-being.</p> <p>B. Mental health requires professional assistance from psychologists, while good well-being can be achieved just by introducing a healthy way of living.</p> <p>C. Well-being can impact our mental health in a positive or negative way.</p> <p>D. Both concepts are not directly related</p>
Correct answer	A), C)
Response to correct answer	<p>Is the correct answer, well done!</p> <p>Mental health and well-being can influence each other in either a positive or negative way</p>
Response to wrong answer(s)	Both concepts are closely interlinked. Both might require professional help by a psychologist/therapist as well as introducing of more healthy habits of living
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Benefits and importance of well-being for the individual, organisation and the society,</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about the importance and benefits of well-being programmes on the individual, organisational and country level.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<p><i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to identify the indirect benefits of well-being for society.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to outline the importance of well-being for the society and the organisations.</i></p>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 min
Author(s)	Anelia Miteva

Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO
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<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	An increased number of reliable and supportive friends is one of the indirect benefits of well-being for the individual.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. is correct because many social and psychological benefits of happiness and well-being have also been observed. Happiness has also been found to lead to an increased number of reliable and supportive friends.
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer. Well done! If you have checked the correct answer, then you are aware that happiness has also been found to lead to an increased number of reliable and supportive friends.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. This is not a correct answer, because happiness is a benefit of the well-being and happy people have an increased number of reliable and supportive friends.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	4
Question	Which statement is <u>not</u> true:
Possible answers	A. Several studies confirmed that there's a strong connection between volunteering and well-being. B. Younger and older adults tend to enjoy better well-being compared to middle-aged adults. C. In the well-being society competition, GDP, economic development are the main measures for well-being.
Correct answer	C is the correct answer because the true statement is the inverse - In a well-being society, fair play, equal opportunities, social inclusiveness, and stability, are prioritised over economic gain, while not neglecting productive development.

Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! In a well-being society, fair play, equal opportunities, social inclusiveness, and stability, are prioritised over economic gain, while not neglecting productive development.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. This is not a correct answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	5
Question (stem)	One of the key factors in determining an organisation's long-term effectiveness is:
Possible answers	A. Increase of the salaries every year B. Well-being C. Psychological support for the employees
Correct answer	B is correct because the other two factors applied individually cannot provide organisation's long-term effectiveness.
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer. Great Work! There is no doubt then that well-being is a key factor in determining an organisation's long-term effectiveness. A plethora of studies have shown that organisations that support and promote employee well-being enjoy various benefits.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. For sure, an increase of salaries and psychological help could increase the effectiveness of the organisation but the key factor that can influence the long-term effectiveness is the overall well-being. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2.
Times the question can be taken	2

Module 1: Introduction to Positive Psychology/PERMA model and its application at work

Abstract

The aim of this module is to introduce learners to basic principles of Positive Psychology and more specifically to Seligman's PERMA model. In this training learners will be provided with different examples on how they can apply principles of Positive Psychology in their workplace and help their employees thrive at work. Upon completion of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of Positive Psychology and apply that knowledge at work to help employees thrive. After attending the training, learners will be able to list the five facets of well-being from the PERMA acronym and apply each facet in the workplace to foster a positive work environment. Finally, learners will have the opportunity to practise some relevant Positive Psychology activities and exercises that can help them boost their well-being, including activities on mindfulness.

At the end of the training learners will be assessed with different methods such as multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what are the principles of positive psychology.

Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to summarise the benefits of applying positive psychology at work.

Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to list the five facets of well-being from the PERMA acronym.

Learning outcome 4: Learners will learn how to apply knowledge they have gained on the principles of positive psychology and PERMA model in the workplace to foster a positive work environment.

Learning outcome 5: Learners will have the opportunity to use and practise some relevant positive psychology activities and exercises that can help them boost their well-being including activities on mindfulness.

Keywords

Positive psychology, PERMA model, mindfulness, well-being, appreciation, positive affirmations, workplace well-being

Identity of the Module							
Module	<i>Introduction to Positive Psychology/PERMA model and its application at work</i>						
Short description of the module / abstract	<p><i>The aim of this module is to introduce learners (HR managers) to basic principles of positive psychology and more specifically to Seligman’s PERMA model. In this training learners will be provided with different examples on how they can apply principles of positive psychology in their workplace and help their employees thrive at work. Upon completion of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of positive psychology and apply that knowledge at work to help employees thrive. After attending the training, learners will be able to list the five facets of well-being from the PERMA acronym (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment) and apply each facet in the workplace to foster a positive work environment. Finally, learners will have the opportunity to practise some relevant Positive Psychology activities and exercises that can help them boost their well-being, including activities on mindfulness. At the end of the training learners will be assessed with different methods such as multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.</i></p>						
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Learning Units	<p><i>Learning Unit 1 - Introduction to Positive Psychology</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 2 - Introduction to the PERMA model</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 3 - PERMA model and its workplace application</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 4 - Positive Psychology in Practice (exercises + activities)</i></p>						
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4. <i>Positive Psychology in Practice</i>	<i>True/False, Multiple-choice questions</i>										
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	180 min										
Author(s)	Evie Michailidis , <i>Institute of Development</i>										
Technical Reviewer	Yang Yang, Inge Van den Brande, PULSO										
Scientific Reviewer	Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO										

Dear participants,

My name is Evie Michailidis from the Institute of Development, and I welcome you to the Module Introduction to Positive Psychology/PERMA model and its application at work.

The aims of the Module are to introduce learners to basic principles of Positive Psychology and more specifically to Seligman's PERMA model. In this training learners will be provided with different examples on how they can apply principles of Positive Psychology in their workplace and help their employees thrive at work. Upon completion of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of Positive Psychology and apply that knowledge at work to help employees thrive. After attending the training, learners will be able to list the five facets of well-being from the PERMA acronym (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment) and apply each facet in the workplace to foster a positive work environment. Finally, learners will have the opportunity to learn some relevant positive psychology activities and exercises that they can use to boost their employees' well-being, including activities on mindfulness.

The Module is structured in 4 chapters, namely, (1) Introduction to Positive Psychology, (2) Introduction to the PERMA model, (3) PERMA model and its workplace application, (4) Positive Psychology in practice (exercises + activities)

Chapter 1 discusses the definition of Positive Psychology, while it gives insight into the benefits of practising positive psychology especially in the workplace.

Chapter 2 presents the PERMA model describing the five facets of well-being: P-Positive Emotion, E-Engagement, R-Relationships, M-Meaning, A-Accomplishment. This model helps us define well-being in the workplace but also in the wider context.

Chapter 3 provides learners with some ideas on how the PERMA model can be applied in the workplace to improve employee well-being and happiness levels.

Chapter 4 introduces learners to some positive psychology activities and exercises that when used consistently can lead to greater psychological well-being over time.

Finally, your assessment consists of different methods such as multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.

1. Learning Unit 1 - Introduction to Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology can be defined as the scientific study of human strengths and virtues, rather than focusing on one's weaknesses (Peterson, Park & Sweeney, 2008). Traditional psychology has exclusively focused on pathology, causes and symptoms of mental illness and emotional disturbances such as depression, lack of motivation, sadness. Positive Psychology however has emphasised positive features, traits, behaviours, and thinking patterns that make life more meaningful and improve one's quality of life. For example, it explores mostly what makes people happy, satisfied, motivated, what gives people joy and hope, and what factors lead to resilience and engagement, rather than focusing on why people are sad, disengaged, dissatisfied, depressed, burned out etc. By focusing on the strengths of people we can gain a better understanding of what helps people thrive and flourish in various aspects of their lives, such as the workplace.

The founding fathers of positive psychology, **Martin Seligman** and **Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi**, noted that principles of positive psychology can help us achieve "scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thriving individuals, families, and communities." (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

According to empirical evidence, practising Positive Psychology can lead to numerous **benefits**. Overall, positive psychology can help people enhance their personal resources and attributes, such as self-esteem, confidence, optimism, contributing therefore to their psychosocial well-being and health.

Other benefits of positive psychology include the following:

1. Focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses can help people boost their **confidence and self-esteem**.
2. People who experience more happiness and positive emotions show **improved and stronger relationships** with their family, friends, and colleagues, as they communicate (verbally and non-verbally) more effectively.
3. **Increases experience of success** as people change the way they think and look at failure and obstacles when trying to achieve a goal. They see a failure as an opportunity to learn and grow and they eventually become stronger.
4. Leads to **improvements in the workplace** as positive emotions boost one's job performance, leads to a happier work environment and people feel more valued.

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

Watch the video: [What is Positive Psychology?](#)

Read the online article [What Is Positive Psychology?](#)

2. Learning Unit 2 - Introduction to the PERMA model

One of the most widely used positive psychology models is the PERMA model, developed by Seligman (2011). PERMA is an acronym for the five facets of well-being: P-Positive Emotion, E-Engagement, R-Relationships, M-Meaning, A-Accomplishment. This model helps us define well-being in the workplace but also in the wider context. According to Seligman's model, five core elements can contribute to employees' healthy sense of well-being, fulfilment, and satisfaction in life that can lead to finding life's true meaning.

Positive emotions refer to feeling pleasant emotions such as happiness, compassion, joy, pride and gratitude. According to this model, experiencing positive emotions can help people flourish in life as well as in work and can lead to overall well-being. Positive emotions in the workplace can foster greater levels of trust, creativity, resilience, and collaboration.

Engagement refers to something that an employee can get engrossed in and absorbed in. The dimension of engagement is also in line with the concept of "flow", which occurs when one is fully present at the moment and focuses entirely on the task at hand. This state of flow can then bring happiness to the individual. Employees who are engaged in work also experience a greater sense of accomplishment.

Relationships refer to social connectedness, through which our need for love, affection, attention, and interaction are met. In the workspace positive relationships are linked to increased productivity, happiness, and improved overall well-being.

Meaning refers to purposeful and meaningful existence. Work becomes more meaningful when employees can see how their efforts have an impact on society.

Accomplishment/Achievement strengthens one's self esteem pushing therefore one to thrive and flourish in life. Accomplishment is a result of working toward and reaching goals, having self-motivation to finish what we set out to do. Setting and achieving goals provides employees with a sense of meaning and purpose.

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

Watch the following video: [PERMA Model of Wellbeing](#)

3. Learning Unit 3 - PERMA model and its workplace application

On average we spend $\frac{1}{3}$ of our day at work. Subsequently what happens at work significantly affects our emotional and physical well-being and vice versa. The level of happiness employees experience at work, as well as the workplace atmosphere can have an impact on various work-

related outcomes such as job performance, workplace satisfaction, employee engagement and satisfaction.

The PERMA model can be applied in the workplace to foster a positive work environment that will eventually result in a happy and productive workforce.

Below you will find some ideas on how the PERMA model can be applied in the workplace to improve employee well-being and happiness levels.

Positive emotions

There are various ways in which positive emotions can be expressed in the workplace. The benefits of **expressing appreciation** and **being grateful** are well documented in the literature. Expressing appreciation and recognising one's efforts can lead to increased morale, improved engagement, and better performance. It is especially important for managers and supervisors to learn ways to show appreciation and recognise employees' hard work. When an employee feels appreciated and recognised then they experience more positive emotions.

In this [article](#) you can find some ideas and practices for employee appreciation, such as: writing a thank you note, acknowledging accomplishments right away, thanking your team publicly.

It is important to note that appreciation and recognition can come in different forms. In this short [video](#) Psychologists Gary Chapman & Paul White introduce the **5 Languages of appreciation at work**. While watching the video take notes of the 5 different ways in which you can show appreciation and pay attention to the description of each "language".

Practical Activity 1: Then take some time to reflect on how you could apply each of these languages to show appreciation to your employees or colleagues?

Instructions: Appreciation and recognition can come in different forms. Watch the short [video](#) by Psychologists Gary Chapman & Paul White introducing the 5 Languages of appreciation at work. While watching the video take notes of the 5 different ways with which you can show appreciation and pay attention to the description of each "language".

Then take some time to reflect on how you could apply each of these languages to show appreciation to your employees. Note your thoughts down on the table below.

Language of appreciation	Example
Words of affirmation	1. <i>Send private emails of gratitude to your employees</i> 2.
Quality time	1. 2.

Acts of service	1. 2.
Tangible gifts	1. 2.
Physical touch	1. 2.

Engagement

Employees who are truly, deeply engaged in what they are doing, are in a state of flow, and fully engrossed. In general, employees are engaged when they have this sense of accomplishment. This sense of accomplishment is achieved when employees work on projects and goals that enable them to build on their **strengths and interests**.

Managers and leaders can help employees identify their strengths through strength inventory assessments (example: [VIA Character Strengths](#)) and modify responsibilities so that employees can work within their strength areas.

Practical Activity 2: Reflect on how your current position allows you to apply each of these strengths. If you feel that you are not currently applying your strengths to the extent you wish to, can you think of how you could maximise the application of your strengths at your current position?

Instructions: Complete the free VIA Character Strengths inventory assessment (link: <https://www.viacharacter.org/>) and note down your strengths.

Reflect on how your current position allows you to apply each of these strengths. If you feel that you are not currently applying your strengths to the extent you wish to, can you think of how you could maximise the application of your strengths at your current position?

Relationships

Positive relationships at work are vital for employees' well-being and the success of an organisation. Managers and leaders need to establish an ethos of holding "active meetings" that provide intentional opportunities for staff to connect and interact with each other, both inside and outside work premises. Social connections can also be encouraged through team building exercises, mentoring, coaching, showing empathy and communication skills training, acts of kindness, group lunches and happy hours.

Read the following [article](#) and find out more about building positive relationships at work.

Meaning

Work becomes more rewarding and enjoyable when employees can see the result of their work. To make work more meaningful, leaders can encourage employees to reflect on what difference they are making in society and how their efforts are impacting the organisation and their clients/customers.

Practical Activity 3: Think of a day you spent at work, and you felt really pleasant emotions and joy. Reflect on what might have contributed to these feelings. What tasks did you engage in that were meaningful to you (e.g., helped a colleague)?

Accomplishment

Employees who progress towards their goals feel more capable and have a sense of accomplishment. The goals that employees set, however, are important to be aligned as much as possible to their strengths and values. When an employee successfully fulfils his/her objectives and goals it is important that their hard work and efforts are acknowledged, celebrated, and taken into account during performance appraisals or frequent informal feedback. Most importantly, significant accomplishments need to be rewarded. When offering workplace rewards, organisations should consider what is most valuable to their employees. Many organisations focus on financial rewards, but rewards like flexible working hours or an extra vacation day may be more valuable to employees.

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

Read the following article: [How to Show Appreciation to Your Employees](#)

Watch the following video: [Gary Chapman & Paul White | The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace](#)

Complete Practical Activity 1

Complete the free VIA character strength survey and complete Practical Activity 2:
<https://www.viacharacter.org/account/register>

Read the following article: [Building Good Work Relationships - From MindTools.com](#)

Complete Practical Activity 3

4. Learning Unit 4 - Positive Psychology in practice (exercises)

In this learning unit you will be introduced to some positive psychology activities and exercises that can help you boost your happiness. When you use Positive Psychology techniques and

exercises, you'll be able to improve your mental state and make progress toward greater psychological well-being over time. These activities can be used by you, but we also encourage you to share these activities with your team to help them thrive at work.

- **Showing Appreciation and gratitude**

As mentioned in Learning Unit 3, expressing appreciation and recognising one's efforts can lead to positive emotions, increased morale, improved engagement, and better performance. Seligman et al., (2005) in one of his studies explored the benefits of “gratitude visits”. Participants were asked to write a letter of appreciation and deliver it in person to someone who had shown them kindness. Findings indicated that individuals felt happier and less depressed after showing gratitude.

Possible ways that you can use to show appreciation at work could be to **list ‘appreciations’** as a standing agenda at the beginning of staff meetings, and employees can nominate a colleague for whom they are grateful.

An example of a expressing gratitude could be simple:

“I would like to thank Helen for helping me with analysing some data.”

Another way would be to write a **gratitude letter** where you can write about positive experiences and things and people you are grateful for. You can either keep the letter for yourself or share it with the person you are feeling grateful for.

Practical Activity 4: List down all the things and people you are grateful for at work.

Instructions: List down all the things and people you are grateful for at work (e.g., the flexibility you have at work, the autonomy you have in completing tasks, your team, your supervisor).

- **Positive affirmations**

Positive affirmations are positive and encouraging statements or phrases that you repeat to yourself in an effort to combat negative thoughts or overcome challenging situations. They're typically brief yet powerful phrases, either spoken aloud or written down, designed to evoke a positive attitude or mindset. Examples of positive affirmations are:

“I can do this!”

“I have the skills and knowledge to complete this task.”

“I will make the most out of today.”

Positive affirmations play a significant role in one's well-being as when done persistently, they can help you love and accept yourself fully and make you feel more confident. The more you practise them the stronger your confidence grows.

Using positive affirmations can also help you thrive at work as through practising positive affirmations you feel more empowered to face any adversities and can also manage stress more effectively. This eventually can lead to a happier and more productive workforce.

If you are leading a team, you can encourage your team to practise positive affirmations as well. Some employees might find it difficult at first to think of a positive affirmation, so it's crucial that leaders and managers lead by example but also provide encouragement and positive feedback.

- **Mindfulness**

How often have you eaten dinner while binge-watching TV series and not paying attention to the taste, smell, and texture of your food? If you can relate to this scenario you might want to consider practising mindfulness.

Mindfulness describes the ability to be fully present to the here and now and not worry about the future or the past. Practising mindfulness can improve one's well-being as it can help us to increase our ability to regulate our emotions, decrease our stress, anxiety, and depression.

Mindfulness is important especially in the **workplace** as it can help drive many aspects of a healthy workplace including well-being, relationships, and creativity. Employees who practise mindfulness gain a better understanding of their emotions and stress levels and become aware of ways that they can influence them. Through mindfulness employees are also more able to respond effectively to difficult situations and bounce back from adversities, which is known in the literature as "**resilience**".

Studies have shown that leaders who practise mindfulness have team members with reduced stress, increased work-life balance, improved performance, and enhanced engagement. The reason behind this has to do mostly with the fact that through mindfulness an individual can increase their empathy when interacting with others. Thus, mindfulness is also beneficial for **positive working relationships**.

Employees who practise mindfulness can more easily control their emotions and experience less stress. As such they can think with a clearer mind, generate greater ideas and be more **creative**.

How can you become more mindful? Below you will find easy activities that you and your team can practise to become more mindful.

Practical Activity 5: The raisin exercise

This is a brief mindfulness exercise encouraging present-moment awareness of the senses, connecting with taste, touch, and smell while you eat a raisin. Most of the time we engage in an 'autopilot' habit of eating, paying little attention to how our food tastes, smells, and feels. With this exercise you will be introduced to mindful awareness while paying full attention to the present moment while eating a raisin.

Instructions (7 minutes): This is a brief mindfulness exercise encouraging present-moment awareness of the senses, connecting with taste, touch, and smell while you eat a raisin. Most of the time we engage in an 'autopilot' habit of eating, paying little attention to how our food tastes, smells, and feels. With this exercise you will be introduced to mindful awareness while paying full attention to the present moment while eating a raisin.

Step 1: Take a raisin and hold it in the palm of your hand or between your finger and thumb.

Step 2: Take time to really focus on it; gaze at the raisin with full attention—imagine that you have never seen an object like this before in your life. Examine with your eyes what colour the raisin is, the folds and ridges, and any asymmetries or unique features it has.

Step 3: Notice the texture of the raisin. Close your eyes and notice how the raisin feels in your palm.

Step 4: Hold the raisin beneath your nose and smell the aroma that arises with every inhalation.

Step 5: Gently place the raisin in your mouth and without chewing or swallowing notice how the raisin feels in your mouth by exploring it with your tongue.

Step 6: Take one or two bites and notice the taste the raisin has while chewing. Pay attention to the taste and texture in your mouth and how these may change over time, moment by moment. Then you can swallow.

Step 7: Finally, see while swallowing if you can feel what is left of the raisin moving down into your stomach, and sense how your body is feeling after you have completed this exercise.

If you prefer to listen to audio instructions, you can use the following video: [What A Raisin Can Teach You About Mindfulness Practice](#)

Practical Activity 6: Mindful Body scan

Body scanning involves paying attention to parts of the body and bodily sensations in a gradual sequence from feet to head. The aim of this exercise is to help you bring awareness to every single part of your body, noticing any aches, pains, tension, or general discomfort.

Instructions (10 – 15 min): Body scanning involves paying attention to parts of the body and bodily sensations in a gradual sequence from feet to head. The aim of this exercise is to help you bring awareness to every single part of your body, noticing any aches, pains, tension, or general discomfort.

Step 1: Allow your body to sit comfortably on a chair.

Step 2: You can either close your eyes or keep them open.

Step 3: Focus on how your body feels. Notice how you are sitting. Allow your spine to lift and your shoulders to soften.

Step 4: By taking a full breath in (2 seconds) and a full breath out (10 seconds) move your attention slowly through your body. Start with your feet and slowly progress up your body — legs, shoulders, arms, neck — until you reach the top of your head. At each body part, stop for a few seconds and notice how it feels, whether it is tense, relaxed, tingling, painful.

Step 5: You will notice that your attention might wander and that is normal. When it does, acknowledge it, and gently bring your attention back to a specific body part.

Step 6: Finally, take a few moments to notice how your body is feeling. Take a few more breaths and slowly open your eyes.

If you prefer to listen to audio instructions, you can use the following video: [Compassionate Body Scan](#)

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

Watch the following video: [What is Mindfulness?](#)

Complete Practical Activity 4

Complete Practical Activity 5 or Listen to the following instructions (raisin exercise): [What A Raisin Can Teach You About Mindfulness Practice](#)

Complete Practical Activity 6 or Listen to the following instructions (Body scan): [Compassionate Body Scan](#)

5. Synopsis

The definition of well-being in the workplace can be based upon principles of Positive Psychology, which can be defined as the scientific study of human strengths and virtues, rather than focusing on one's weaknesses. Specifically, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model (P-Positive Emotion, E-Engagement, R-Relationships, M-Meaning, A-Accomplishment) can contribute to employees' healthy sense of well-being, fulfilment, and satisfaction in life that can lead to finding life's true meaning. The PERMA model can be applied in the workplace to improve

employee well-being and happiness levels in various ways such as expressing appreciation, building on one's strengths and interests, and investing in building positive relationships. Positive psychology techniques and exercises (e.g., mindfulness, positive affirmations) when applied consistently can lead to greater psychological well-being over time.

6. List of references

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 5–14. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.5>

Peterson, C., Park, N., & Sweeney, P. J. (2008). Group well-being: morale from a positive psychology perspective. *Applied Psychology*, 57, 19-36.

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7. Assessment plan of Module 1

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Introduction to Positive Psychology</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained from completing this Learning Unit. Specifically, in this assessment we want to ensure that you have understood what Positive Psychology refers to.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what are the principles of positive psychology and contrast it with traditional psychology principles. Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to summarise the benefits of applying Positive Psychology at work</i>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Evie Michailidis , Institute of Development
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1

Question	Researchers and theorists in the field of positive psychology have sought to identify elements of good life and well-being.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Positive psychology explores mostly what makes people happy, satisfied, motivated, what gives people joy and hope, what factors lead to resilience and engagement.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided as well as the online article on what is positive psychology.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	The main difference between traditional psychology and positive psychology is that traditional psychology has focused mainly on negatives, deficiencies, and things that need to be “fixed,” whereas positive psychologists are more likely to try to build on people’s strengths in order to help them overcome challenges.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. is the correct answer, well done! Traditional psychology has exclusively focused on pathology, causes and symptoms of mental illness and emotional disturbances such as depression, lack of motivation, sadness. Positive psychology, however, has emphasised positive features, traits, behaviours, and thinking patterns that make life more meaningful and improve one’s quality of life. For example, it explores mostly what makes people happy, satisfied, motivated, what gives people joy and hope, what factors lead to resilience and engagement, rather than focusing on why people are sad, disengaged, dissatisfied, depressed, burned out etc.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided as well as the online article on what is positive psychology.

Times the question can be taken	2
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<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	Which of the following is a benefit of applying practices of positive psychology at work?
Possible answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Positive working relationships B. Increased confidence and self-esteem C. Employees feel more valued D. All of the above
Correct answer	D. All the above
Response to correct answer	D. is the correct answer. Well done! Focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses can help people boost their confidence and self-esteem. People who experience more happiness and positive emotions show improved and stronger relationships with their family, friends, and colleagues, as they communicate (verbally and non-verbally) more effectively. Positive emotions also boost one's job performance, leads to a happier work environment and people feel more valued.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Introduction to the PERMA model</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained from completing this Learning Unit. Specifically, in this assessment we want to ensure that you have understood what PERMA model is and what are the five facets of well-being according to this model.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to list the five facets of well-being from the PERMA acronym</i>

Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice questions, True/False</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Evie Michailidis Institute of Development
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	Which of the following facets of the PERMA model is in line with the concept of “flow”, which occurs when one is fully present at the moment and focuses entirely on the task at hand.
Possible answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Positive emotions B. Engagement C. Relationships D. Accomplishment
Correct answer	B. Engagement
Response to correct answer	B. is the correct answer. Excellent! Engagement refers to something that an employee can get engrossed in and absorbed in. The dimension of engagement is also in line with the concept of “flow”, which occurs when one is fully present at the moment and focuses entirely on the task at hand. This state of flow can then bring happiness to the individual. Employees who are engaged in work also experience a greater sense of accomplishment.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	Which of the following facets of the PERMA model could best be described as having a purposeful existence in life?

Possible answers	A. Positive emotions B. Relationships C. Meaning D. Accomplishment
Correct answer	C. Meaning
Response to correct answer	C. is the correct answer. Great Work! Meaning refers to purposeful and meaningful existence. Work becomes more meaningful when employees can see how their efforts have an impact on society.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	PERMA model is used to define mental illness and psychopathology.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B. is the correct answer. Bravo! The PERMA model helps us define well-being in the workplace but also in the wider context. According to Seligman's model, five core elements can contribute to employees' healthy sense of well-being, <u>fulfilment</u> , and satisfaction in life that can lead to finding life's true meaning.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2. You could also watch the video provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 3 (Assessment Unit)	<i>PERMA model and its workplace application</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained from completing this Learning Unit. Specifically, in this assessment we want to ensure that you have understood how the PERMA model can be applied in the workplace.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 4: Learners will learn how to apply knowledge they have gained on the principles of positive psychology and PERMA model in the workplace to foster a positive work environment.</i>
Assessment method	<i>Open questions, Multiple choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Evie Michailidis Institute of Development
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	How can employers increase employee engagement? Describe one possible way.
Possible answers	(open question)
Correct answer	Employers can increase employees' engagement by assigning them projects and goals that enable them to build on their strengths and interests, show trust to their employees, and help them find meaning in their work.
Response to correct answer	Managers and leaders can help employees identify their strengths through strength inventory assessments (example: VIA Character Strengths) and modify responsibilities so that employees can work within their strength areas. This could be a possible way in which employers could increase employee's engagement.
Response to wrong answer(s)	If you are uncertain of the answer to this question you can read the text from Learning unit 3.

Times the question can be taken	2
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<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	Checking in with your employees on a recurring, consistent basis best describes which of the following 5 languages of appreciation?
Possible answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Words of affirmation B. Quality time C. Acts of service D. Tangible gifts
Correct answer	B. Quality time
Response to correct answer	B. is the correct answer. Well done! Quality time in the workplace is all about receiving someone's complete and focused attention. This can be a truly meaningful way for employees to feel appreciated.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 3. You could also watch the video provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	Note down 3 practices that team leaders could use in order to build positive relationships at work.
Possible answers	(open question)
Correct answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show appreciation • Schedule time to build relationships • Organise team events (e.g., happy hours, team building activities) • Avoid gossiping
Response to correct answer	
Response to wrong answer(s)	If you are not sure about the answer, please read the text from Learning Unit 3. You could also read the article provided.

Times the question can be taken	2
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Learning Unit 4 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Positive Psychology in practice</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained from completing this Learning Unit. Specifically, in this assessment we want to check whether you are able to practice some basic positive psychology exercises including mindfulness.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 5: Learners will have the opportunity to use and practice some relevant positive psychology activities and exercises that can help them boost their well-being including activities on mindfulness.</i>
Assessment method	<i>True/False, Multiple-choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Evie Michailidis Institute of Development
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	Mindfulness is the practice of purposely bringing one's attention to the present-moment experience without evaluation.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A is the correct answer. Great work! Mindfulness describes the ability to be fully present to the here and now and not worry about the future or the past. Practising mindfulness can improve one's well-being as it can help us to increase our ability to regulate our emotions, decrease our stress, anxiety and depression.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 4. You could also watch the video provided.

Times the question can be taken	2
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<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	Resilience is the ability to not experience negative emotions such as stress, sadness and anger.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B is the correct answer. You are doing amazing! Resilience describes the ability of individuals to respond effectively to difficult situations and bounce back from adversities. It does not mean a person doesn't experience stress, emotional upheaval, and suffering. Resilience involves the ability to work through emotional pain and suffering.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 4.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	The 'raisin exercise' is an activity that you can practice for healthy eating.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B is the correct answer. You are doing amazing! The 'raisin exercise' is a brief mindfulness exercise encouraging present-moment awareness of the senses, connecting with taste, touch, and smell while you eat a raisin.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 4. You can also watch the video provided and complete Practical Activity 4.

Times the question can be taken	2
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Module 2: How to plan for a sound well-being programme

Abstract

The aim of this module is to provide a general structure of the necessary steps in designing and planning for a sound well-being programme. In this training, HR practitioners and other responsible parties for well-being at work get a systematic view of how to plan for a well-being programme from conceptualization to evaluation and follow-up. The steps provided in this module apply to organisations of all sizes across Europe, and this structure can also be adjusted depending on the specific national and organisational situations. These steps can be taken by an internal or external responsible party or a joint effort of the two. Best practices and practical learning materials are provided for a more interactive learning experience. Upon completing this module, learners will know the 8 steps in designing a sound well-being programme as well as the key elements for each step. After completing the training, learners will be assessed with different methods, including multiple choice questions and True or False statements.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcome 1: Learners will know the 8 relevant steps in planning a well-being programme

Learning outcome 2: Learners will know the responsible party for employees' well-being.

Learning outcome 3: Learners will know how to assess the knowledge of the responsible party.

Learning outcome 4: Learners will know how to assess the well-being situation of an organisation

Learning outcome 5: Learners will know how to define the scopes of a well-being programme

Learning outcome 6: Learners will know how to communicate and raise awareness for the well-being programme

Learning outcome 7: Learners will know how to evaluate the well-being programme

Learning outcome 8: Learners will learn from best practices and know how to choose the best well-being programme based on their specific situation.

Keywords

Well-being, well-being programme, planning, awareness-raising, communication, assessment

Identity of the Module											
Module	<i>How to plan for a sound well-being programme</i>										
Short description of the module / abstract	<i>The aim of this module is to provide a general structure of the necessary steps in designing and planning for a sound well-being programme. In this training, HR practitioners and other responsible parties for well-being at work get a systematic view of how to plan for a well-being programme from conceptualization to evaluation and follow-up. The steps provided in this module apply to organisations of all sizes across Europe, and this structure can also be adjusted depending on the specific national and organisational situations. These steps can be taken by an internal or external responsible party or a joint effort of the two. Best practices and practical learning materials are provided for a more interactive learning experience. Upon completing this module, learners will know the 8 steps in designing a sound well-being programme as well as the key elements for each step. After completing the training, learners will be assessed with different methods, including multiple choice questions and True or False statements.</i>										
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will know the 8 relevant steps in planning a well-being programme</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 2: Learners will compare the different responsible parties for employees' well-being.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 3: Learners will differentiate positive and negative psychosocial factors within the well-being situation of an organisation</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 4: Learners will address the key elements of a well-being action plan at work.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 5: Learners will understand how to communicate and raise awareness for the well-being programme</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 6: Learners will know the methods to evaluate the well-being programme</i></p>										
Learning Units	<p><i>Learning Unit 1: How to plan for a well-being programme – preparation and assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 2: How to design the communication – raising awareness of well-being at work and the planned well-being programme</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 3: How to evaluate the well-being programme</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 4: Best practices/ Case studies</i></p>										
Learning core material	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Chapter</th> <th>Learning Material</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>1. Plan for a well-being programme for YOUR organisation</i></td> <td><i>Text, video, articles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2. Communication design</i></td> <td><i>Text, articles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>3. Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes</i></td> <td><i>Text, video, articles</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>4. Best practices</i></td> <td><i>Text</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Chapter	Learning Material	<i>1. Plan for a well-being programme for YOUR organisation</i>	<i>Text, video, articles</i>	<i>2. Communication design</i>	<i>Text, articles</i>	<i>3. Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes</i>	<i>Text, video, articles</i>	<i>4. Best practices</i>	<i>Text</i>
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Assessment method	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Chapter</i></th> <th><i>Assessment method</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>1. Plan for a well-being programme for YOUR organization</i></td> <td><i>Multiple choice</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>2. Communication design</i></td> <td><i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>3. Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes</i></td> <td><i>Multiple choice</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>4. Best practices</i></td> <td><i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Assessment method</i>	<i>1. Plan for a well-being programme for YOUR organization</i>	<i>Multiple choice</i>	<i>2. Communication design</i>	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>	<i>3. Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes</i>	<i>Multiple choice</i>	<i>4. Best practices</i>	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>
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<i>4. Best practices</i>	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>											
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	200 min											
Author(s)	<i>Yang Yang, Pulso</i>											
Reviewer	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO											

Dear participants,

My name is Yang Yang from Pulso Group, and I welcome you to the Module 2 on How to plan for a sound well-being programme.

The aim of this module is to provide a general structure of the necessary steps in designing and planning for a sound well-being programme. This reflects the life cycle of a well-being program.

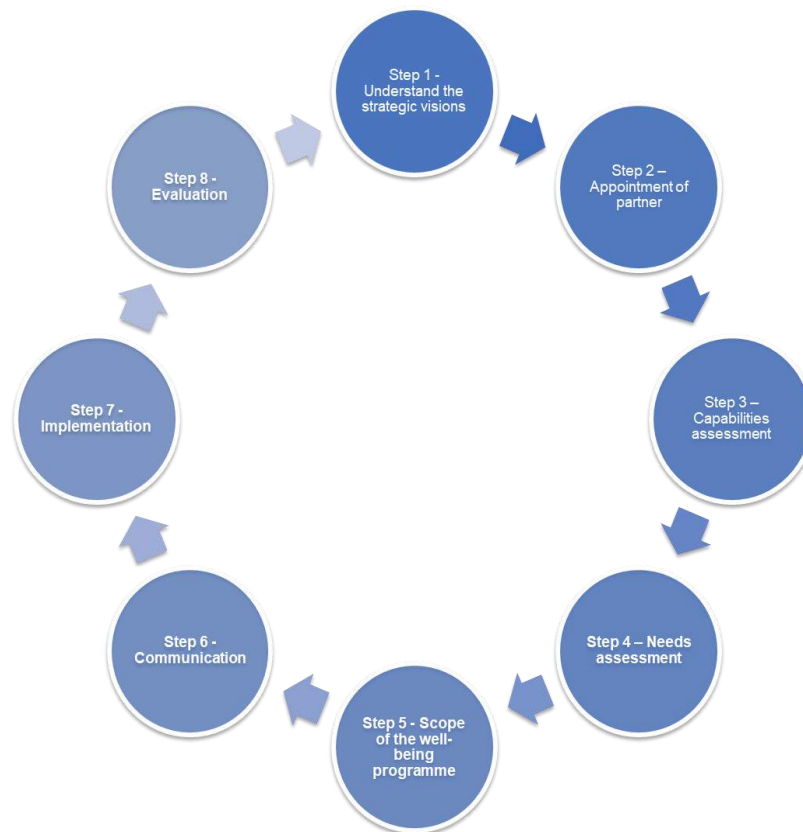


Figure 1: The Lifecycle of a Well-being Programme – 8 steps approach.

In this training, HR practitioners and other responsible parties for well-being at work get a systematic view of how to plan for a well-being programme from conceptualization to evaluation and follow-up. The steps provided in this module apply to organisations of all sizes across Europe, and this structure can also be adjusted depending on the specific national and organisational situations. These steps can be taken by an internal or external responsible party or a joint effort of the two. Best practices and practical learning materials are provided for a more interactive learning experience. Upon completing this module, learners will know the 8 steps in designing a sound well-being programme as well as the key elements for each step. After completing the training, learners will be assessed with different methods, including multiple choice questions and True or False statements.

The Module is **structured** in 4 chapters, namely, (1) Preparation for a well-being programme, (2) Planning for a well-being programme, (3) Communication design, and (4) Evaluation.

Chapter 1 discusses the essential steps to be taken before the planning of the concrete content of the well-being. In the preparation phase, it is utmost important to understand the vision of the organisation and define goals for the well-being policies, clarify the responsible actors for employees' well-being, and assess the knowledge of the responsible actor.

Chapter 2 presents the necessary foundation of a well-being programme, namely the assessment of the well-being situation within the organisation as well as how to define the scope of the well-being programme based on the assessment.

Chapter 3 explains how to design a communication campaign and raise awareness for the well-being programme as well as for well-being at work in general.

Chapter 4 discusses how to evaluate a well-being programme and create action plans for further improvements.

Finally, your **assessment** consists of different methods including multiple choice questions, True/False statements, and case studies.

1. Learning Unit 1 - Plan a well-being programme for YOUR organisation

Responsible organisations strive to create a healthy and safe environment for their employees. In most European countries such as Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, Cyprus and Greece, there are legal frameworks in place to oblige and monitor organisations to promote the well-being of employees. In this section, we provide an overall structure of the relevant steps in planning a well-being programme, and these steps can be taken by an internal or external responsible party or a joint effort of the two. However, organisations need to bear in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all-solution when it comes to well-being programmes. Each organisation needs to assess their own situation in terms of goals, ambitions, and capabilities. In general, a complete well-being programme includes 8 steps. In the preparation phase, it is utmost important to understand the vision of the organisation and define goals for the well-being policies, clarify the responsible actors for employees' well-being, and assess the knowledge of the responsible actor.

Step 1 - Understand the strategic visions of the organisation and define goals for well-being policy.

The first step in planning a well-being programme is to define the goals of the organisation, at the individual, team, and corporate levels, and use these goals as priorities for their well-being programmes. In general, the goals and ambitions of an organisation stem from the organisational visions, as declared in their overall Strategy. Relative to long-term organisational visions, short and middle-term goals function as periodical milestones. A well-being policy needs to be drafted, which is based on risk analysis and promotes the well-being of its employees. For example, a tech company aspires to become more innovative and competitive in the fast-paced industry. However, its employees experience a high level of stress due to their workload. In this case, the organisation needs to focus on stress management, allocation of tasks at the individual and team levels when planning a well-being programme.

Step 2 - Clarify who is responsible for employees' well-being.

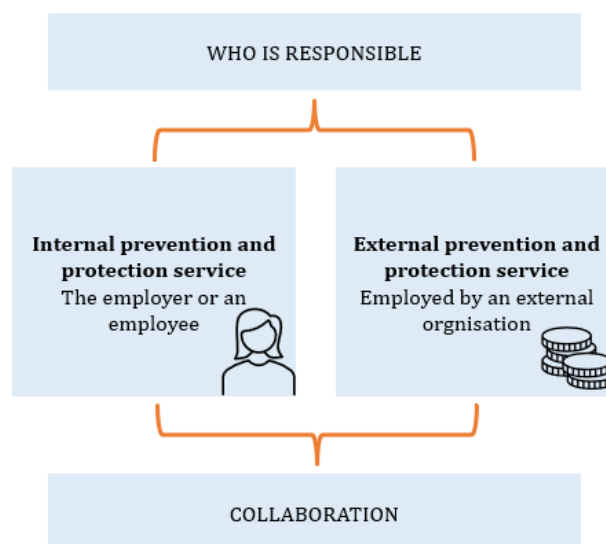
To plan and implement a well-being programme, organisations need to first clarify who will be responsible for employees' well-being. According to the law, the employer takes responsibility of their company and what happens within. Based on the consolidated findings in the five above-mentioned partner countries, employees believe that HR, the management team, including higher management (ex., CEO) and the department heads, as well as the department head of the prevention/health, safety and wellness are the responsible internal party for employees' well-being. However, the employer is not the only responsible party; employees themselves should also use the existing knowledge and resources and comply with the organisational well-being measures. It is very much about the role clarity within the organisation, the clear communication about the roles, as well as the collaboration between individual employees and the organisation.

- Internal service for prevention and protection at work

Every company should set up an internal prevention and protection service (IPPS), which consists of one or more persons within the company – prevention advisors – who support the management team in complying with regulations and implementing preventive measures. The profile of the prevention advisor depends on the size and the sector of the company. For example, in an organisation with less than 20 employees, the employer (ex. owner of the company) can function as the prevention advisor, whereas in larger organisations, an employee can be appointed.

- External service for prevention and protection at work

Depending on the size, expertise and capacity of the organisation, External prevention and protection service (EPPS) can be utilised. This service usually consists of two aspects: medical supervision and psychosocial risk management. When hiring external service providers, it is important to check their credentials, technical capabilities, and references. A list of recognized service providers can be consulted in certain countries such as Belgium. The EPPS works together with the IPPS or the prevention advisor of the organisation to achieve well-being goals defined by the organisation.



(Source: https://www.beswic.be/sites/default/files/public/content/download/files/NL/helder_handig/gids_web_nl.pdf)

Step 3 - Assess the knowledge of the responsible party.

It is essential that the responsible party of the IPPS and EPPS has sufficient knowledge in the field of workplace well-being, especially psychosocial risks analysis, including stress, burnout, and harassment. In addition, the prevention advisor needs to have the capability of coordinating or implementing prevention activities. For example, a prevention advisor should have obtained at least a Master diploma in Psychology or Sociology, with 3 – 5 years of experience in the field related to psychosocial aspects. The consolidated findings on the European level show that 30% to nearly 60% of the participants indicated that there are no

staff within their organisation who have received training on how to promote well-being at work. This implies a strong need for training and continuous training for the responsible individuals and parties across organisations in European countries. Responsible individuals have the right and obligation to take continuous training, to keep abreast of changes in regulations on workplace well-being and scientific and technical advances in the field. The obligation for additional training applies to all prevention advisers, regardless of their educational background and experiences. In this training programme, we propose a self-test for HR professionals or other responsible individuals involved in well-being programmes or training within organisations. This short assessment helps responsible parties to identify their level of knowledge as well as areas for improvement. For example, in Belgium, an identification document is used to clearly describe the distribution of tasks between the internal and external parties. In principle, the identification document includes the following information:

- The objectives of the internal prevention service
- The competences that the organisation possesses internally the know-how that is sought externally.
- The composition of the responsible service
- The (minimum) duration of the engagement of the prevention service, so that tasks are performed properly, and objectives are achieved.
- The administrative, technical, and financial resources of the internal service

This document needs to be kept up to date, so that responsible internal and external parties can use it as a blueprint.

(Source: https://www.beswic.be/sites/default/files/public/content/download/files/NL/helder_handig/gids_web_nl.pdf)

In this unit, we discuss the foundation of designing a well-being programme – a comprehensive understanding of the well-being situation in the organisation as well as the risk factors in the work situation that have an impact on the well-being of employees. The findings can provide an evidence-based contribution to the definition of the programme’s scope and objectives.

Step 4 - Assess the well-being situation of the organisation and analyse the needs of the employees.

A well-being programme needs to start with assessing the overall well-being situation of the organisation. In other words, an organisation needs to identify situations that are or will become problematic within the organisation. Some examples of the possible ways of assessing the overall well-being situation of the organisation include well-being surveys, psychosocial risk analysis, absenteeism data, complaints from employees, conversations with employees, etc. To get a comprehensive view of the well-being situation of an organisation and the organisational dynamics, it is best to assess both positive and negative well-being indicators. For example, measuring negative well-being indicators such as stress, burnout, and harassment provides an indication of the psychosocial risks, whereas measuring positive indicators such as engagement, organisational commitment, and job satisfaction in the meanwhile provides

insight into the positive aspects of employees' well-being. The positive aspects can be used as buffers against negative aspects. Together, they form a balanced view for the employer and the employees on how they are doing in terms of well-being. In addition, organisations need to assess the risk factors that have an impact on the well-being of employees. The impact factors are situated at the organisational, team, management, task, as well as individual levels. For example, the degree of bureaucracy (organisational level), social atmosphere within a team (team level), support from management (management level), job demands (task level), as well as resilience (individual level) all have an important impact on the well-being of employees. Only a thorough understanding of the situation will help organisations to take meaningful and purposeful actions. The relations between the well-being indicators and the impact factors in the work situation are shown in figure 2.

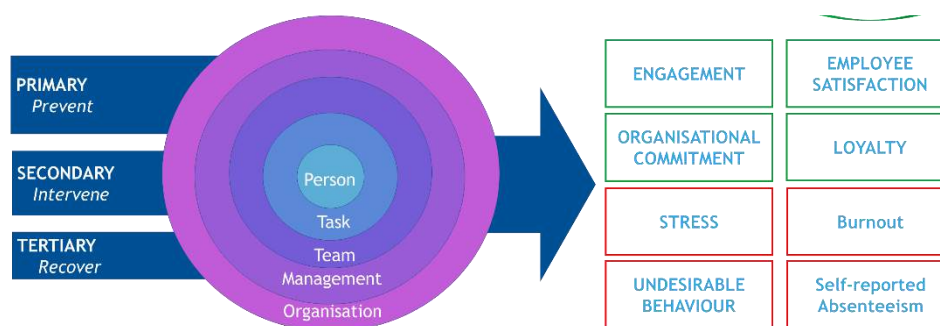


Figure 2. The systematic view of well-being by Pulso Group, Belgium

The current situation analysis can further contribute to the determination of a SWOT analysis framework that summarises the Strengths, the Weaknesses, the Opportunities and the Threats of the organisation. The SWOT analysis shapes an empirical overview of the well-being status within the organisation and enables decision makers to think and rethink possible measures and actions.

Step 5 - Define the scope of the well-being programme

Following the assessment of the current well-being situation the fifth step comprises the definition of the overall scope of the well-being programme. To achieve the objectives in the area of employee well-being, responsible parties can define the short-term and long-term scope of the well-being programme. The scope aligns and reflects the well-being strategy of the organisation. For instance, the organisation can start by drafting a global well-being plan, which usually consists of the following elements:

- The overall well-being situation of the organisation, including positive and negative well-being indicators, as well as the factors at different levels that have an impact on employees' well-being.
- The objectives of the global plan are based on the assessment of the well-being situation. The action plan that has been drafted based on the assessment.

- The concrete activities that need to be undertaken to achieve the objectives.
- The organisational, financial, and human resources needed to undertake the planned activities.
- The role and responsibility of all the involved parties.

Besides the long-term global plan, it's necessary to have a detailed annual or periodic action plan. This short-term plan defines the objectives within the coming fiscal year or calendar year. In particular, the short-term well-being plan usually consists of the priority objectives in the coming year, the resources, and methods to achieve the objectives, the roles and responsibilities of involved parties, and the adjustments that need to be made in the global well-being plan if needed.

The consolidated national reports show that in various European countries, well-being programmes have been implemented in the past two to five years, and employees also indicated the training and programmes they wish to receive in the coming two years. Work-related stress appears to be a major problem, and participants from all partner countries indicated a strong need for training in stress management. Successful programmes have been implemented to reduce stress at work and improve employees' well-being. For example, since 2015, the Center for Mental Health Care (CGG Kempen, Belgium) has been working on prevention of burnout by raising awareness and offering concrete tools for better self-care and adequate coping. In 2019, the following actions were taken:

- An intensive 2-day group course 'Living in Balance' with four separate modules on 'informing and sensitising', 'self-awareness and increasing capacity', 'discovering one's own values, talents and energy providers' and 'workload and energy consumers.'
- Internal trajectory: information session 'stress in the workplace', psychoeducation about the effect of stress, the causes and consequences of stress.

Raising awareness contributes tremendously to the success of a well-being programme. It helps employees to recognize that the organisation attaches high importance to employees' well-being. It also provides practical information about how and where employees can access resources to improve their well-being. This way, employees take workplace well-being into their own hands.

Practical activity 1 – Discussion

- Who are the responsible parties for the well-being within your organisation?
- Are there well-defined well-being programmes within your organisation? Give some examples.
- What pieces of the puzzle are missing?

To complete this Learning Unit, you need to:

Read this online article: [Engaging employees in their well-being](#)

Read this webpage: [Role and status of the prevention stakeholders](#)

Read this online article: [Psychosocial Risk Factors in the Workplace](#)

Watch this online video: [Workplace well-being programmes and interventions](#)

2. Learning Unit 2 - Communication design

This unit focuses on awareness-raising and communication about the well-being programme as well as well-being at work in general.

Step 6 - Communicate to raise awareness of workplace well-being and the ongoing programme

Communication strategy is key to sensitise and inform employees about the offered well-being programme. A comprehensive, company-specific, and structured communication strategy sets a critical milestone for an efficient utilisation rate and the success of the well-being programme in total. First it informs and raises the awareness of the employees about the psychosocial aspects of work, while it declares confidentiality and personal data protection, which in turn contributes to the establishment of trust relations.

It's important to note that communication on all channels needs to be mobilised. In specific, communication includes the following aspects:

1. A clear documentation of the long-term and short-term well-being plans. This needs to be brought to the attention of and streamlined among all responsible parties (both internal and external) of the well-being programme.
2. The organisation's vision, values and objectives of well-being should be made clear and visual to the employees, for example, by internal communication, website, newsletter, team events, social media, etc.
3. The contact information of the responsible parties needs to be clearly communicated to employees.
4. Information and materials on specific well-being themes need to be easily accessible to employees. For example, texts, tips, advice, exercises, and videos about various well-being themes should be placed on the share-point (or other forms of information management platform) of the organisation, so that employees can easily find it.
5. Sensitising messages need to be distributed and awareness-raising campaigns need to be set up to reach as many employees as possible. Responsible parties should also take timing into account to achieve maximum outreach. Sensitising messages need to be distributed about 1 – 2 weeks before the launch of the programme. During the implementation of the programme, responsible parties can send weekly reminders to keep the enthusiasm of the employees.

6. Feedback to the employees about the outcomes of the well-being programme needs to be planned. In this way, employees feel more rewarded for their input and effort. Being able to provide feedback empowers employees and increases their willingness to engage in future programmes.

For example, an effective Communication Strategy for the implementation of an Employee Assistance Programme comprises the following phases:

1. **Before launching:** 2-3 weeks before the official launch of the EAP an email will be sent by the HR or the CEO to all employees regarding the scope and services of the new EAP. Additionally, approximately 1-2 weeks before the launch a series of induction workshops can be held within the company aiming at presenting the EAP workflow, the offered services, the ways to access the EAP, the confidentiality arrangements, etc. In these sessions employees can ask questions and be informed in detail.
2. **At launching time:** Another email can be sent on the official starting date of EAP that reminds employees of the offered services and their overall scope.
3. **Ongoing:** Every three months a reminder or a new email can be sent to all employees. Additionally, newsletters about mental health at work and psychosocial well-being can be developed and shared within the company.
4. **For new staff:** With the responsibility of the HR Department new colleagues who are recruited have to be personally informed about the EAP services.
5. **Unscheduled reminders:** In case of a crisis, such as the pandemic or another critical event that impacts on the mental state of employees, the HR can send emails to the employees highlighting the benefits of the EAP and welcoming them to utilise it, if they need it.

It goes without saying that organisations need to adapt these points according to their individual situation. For example, in Flemish, “u” and “je” (i.e., the respectful and casual forms of “you”) are used on different occasions. Depending on the organisational culture and communication style, adopting a casual form may reach more employees. For assuring a successful and smooth implementation of a well-being programme it is recommended to develop a communication and sensibilization strategy that comprises successive unequally spaced actions in time, namely a) before launching of the programme, b) by the launch of the programme and c) ongoing – during the implementation.

Practical activity 2:

Share good and bad experiences of communication. What are the important success factors?

To complete this Learning Unit, you need to:

Read this online article: [How to get employees to participate in well-being programmes](#)

Read this online article: [How to promote your well-being programme](#)

3. Learning Unit 3 – Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes

Unit 3 explains how to implement a well-being programme and explains the attention points when it comes to evaluation of well-being programmes.

Step 7 - Implement the selected well-being programme

Experience shows that successful well-being strategies only come from sustainable approaches and integrated initiatives. It's important to clearly define the phases of implementation and the role and responsibilities of the responsible parties, both internal and external actors. International best practices on successful implementation of Employees Assistance Programmes indicate the following actions:

1. **Leadership support and commitment:** Senior executives and the Management Team of the company can help announce the well-being actions (see Step 6 above) and emphasise the organisation's interest in promoting a well-being culture. Furthermore, the leadership team of the organisation undertakes the role of encouraging employees to participate in the offered well-being actions, attempting to establish the sense of the importance of staying healthy in the workplace.
2. **Company policy:** An important part of the well-being programme involves formalising the availability, the role and the added value by integrating it in the HR practices, processes and policies. The main purpose is to establish clear guidelines on how the well-being programme will operate and function internally, addressing key actors, roles, and responsibilities.
3. **Utilisation targets:** The free access to an EAP or another well-being programme does not mean that it will be used. Therefore, it is important in the implementation phase to define expected utilization rates to create a realistic implementation plan.
4. **Promotional Communication:** As already mentioned under Step 6, a necessary component of implementation is to maintain regular communications with the beneficiaries (employees and their family members) regarding the offered well-being services, the added value of mental health prevention and the well-being culture of the organisation.
5. **Internet-based services:** the implementation of well-being programmes cannot be unrelated to digital transformation and the flexible digital platforms and tools. Therefore web-based services can allow employees to become more familiar with the scope of the well-being programme. The identification of providers who can offer high

quality digital services for well-being or the integration of communication material in the internal network of the organisation (for example, Sharepoint) can foster the implementation.

6. **Managers' training:** Successful implementation requires the engagement of managers and their understanding of the added value of the well-being programme. Therefore, short training for sensitising, informing, and cultivating well-being-related skills for managers is essential. Managers should be trained to detect behaviour changes in their employees and other colleagues and actively listen to their issues and know when to make referrals to the EAP services.

Step 8 - Evaluation of the well-being programme and action planning for improvement

Aligned with the long-term objectives, organisations and responsible parties draw up action plans based on the results of the implemented well-being programme. This is a joint effort of all the parties involved, both internal and external. Management, engagement, and commitment play an important role in the success of action plans. However, meaningful, and effective action plans can only be developed together with employees. In this context it is of profound importance to evaluate the well-being outcomes and results after the first year of its implementation. The main target group of the evaluation are the beneficiaries, namely the employees of the organisation. Employees' feedback can be collected through a short online evaluation questionnaire. Another target group are managers and key people involved in the implementation of the programme. The deployment of focus groups and individual interviews plays hereby an important role in gaining insight into the experience, thoughts, considerations, and opinions. In principle, an action plan needs to include the following elements:

- a. A clear description of the goal(s);
- b. Steps / actions that need to be carried out to reach the goal;
- c. Role and responsibility of the working group;
- d. Deadlines and milestones;
- e. Resources needed;
- f. Evaluation of progress. There are various well-established methods to develop action plans, and a variety of templates with free access can be found online.
- g. Workshop with the management team to determine the priorities and objectives for the well-being programme of the next period, considering the outcomes of the evaluation.

To complete this Learning Unit, you need to:

Read this online article: [Tasmania's guideline for creating a well-being programme](#)

Watch this online video: [How to turn employee survey results into action](#)

4. Learning Unit 4 – Best practices

In this unit, we present a few best practices where the organisations designed the best well-being programme based on their specific situation.

Case 1: An integrated approach to resilience and well-being: Feelgreat @Proximus

The Feelgreat@Proximus journey is an integrated well-being approach, focusing on the employees' resilience. A complementary investment is made at the organisational level, assessing the work environment regarding workload, motivation, teamwork, leadership, and the context in which the employees are working. This way, the stress-inducing factors can be reduced, and the motivating factors can be maximised at the group level, on top of increasing the resilience on an individual level.

This programme is implemented in cycles of 3 phases:

First, an analysis of psychosocial risks, a first step in tackling well-being at the organisational level, gaining insight in how the work environment affects employee well-being, motivation, and performance, not on an individual level but on team and group level.

Second, these insights are translated into actionable solutions for each specific subgroup.

Third, the effects of these solutions are measured to see if they contributed to the general level of engagement within the organisation.

In concrete, Proximus started with a working group consisting of external experts, social unit consultant, HR and the prevention advisor, who defined together the different steps. The first step is about awareness, discussing with the company how to involve employees and to show that the company cares about them. A video was made where the prevention advisor and head of sales introduced psychosocial risk analysis. Next, the working group reviewed the questionnaire with the external service provider and adapted it to the target group based on interviews done with direct sales employees of different shops. Unions were informed during the entire exercise. Once the results were known, the working group started to work on an action plan on a corporate level. Additionally, workshops were held on district and shop level to have a specific action plan based on their own results. Results & action plans were communicated towards all employees in a video. The execution phase of the action plan takes 6 to 12 months. The progress of actions is measured with a barometer. Besides, Proximus has organised a wide range of activities to make their employees aware and give them food for thought and inspiration. They took it even one step further by partnering up with Pulso in order to provide their employees with tools to take their resilience in their own hands.

Case 2: EAP across the borders: diversity within consistency

With well over 500 brands globally, AB InBev is the world's Nr.1 brewer. Fonds Verhelst, founded in 1949 by the former director of the Artois breweries Léon Verhelst, has evolved from

a local and rather small foundation to an internationally operating organisation that ensures and enhances the well-being of AB InBev employees in Europe.

Among the many benefits offered by Fonds Verhelst, one of the most successful and sustainable ones is the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Fonds Verhelst started with the EAP programme at AB InBev in 2002, as one of the first Belgian organisations.

Over the years, the type and quantity of offered services have expanded from traditional themes, such as professional or personal matters, financial or legal questions and stress-related or other issues regarding well-being to new packages including sleep coaching, FitforLife (a burnout prevention programme), and 'Wheel of choice', aimed at employees' partners, children as well as the employees themselves, helping people to get an insight into what really matters to them when facing important decisions in their lives (study, career, relationships, ...). Employees can quickly and discreetly obtain a variety of information, advice and counselling for all sorts of important personal issues that may influence their private and professional performance.

Next to expanded services, a crisis helpdesk has also been added, offering 24/7 assistance for extreme circumstances such as suicidal thoughts or domestic violence. And EAP also enables access to an intervention team for critical incidents such as labour accidents, individual accidents, or sudden deaths.

The success of the AB InBev EAP is largely due to the continuous willingness of all parties to learn from each minor success or failure and to adapt the programme accordingly. The key lessons learned throughout the programme are:

- Never Stop Communicating. Every employee has access to EAP services, and fortunately they don't often need them. It is important that, when they do need them, employees know what is available and that confidentiality is always guaranteed. The only way to ensure this is through regular communication.
- EAP needs a face. It is sometimes hard to gain employees' trust when you aren't one of the colleagues. That's why they make sure that the employees can put a face on Fonds Verhelst contact people: they participate in events, send newsletters, organise workshops, etc.
- Diversity in consistency. All EAP contact persons follow the same guidelines of confidentiality and professional procedures. But within these guidelines, the communication style and tone may differ per country. Allowing for this flexibility to ensure the local feel is key to success in all regions.

The EAP programme, among other initiatives, has played an important role in supporting employees' well-being throughout the years. The keys to this success can be summarised in 3 words: Partnership, empathise and iterate.

You need a close partnership with the EAP provider to make it work but also with

the client, the employee who comes for guidance. Both need to feel they are equal partners. This feeling is enhanced for the employee when they have an empathic person in front of them – when they feel they are being heard and counselling will be tuned to their needs, this will contribute to that feeling of partnership. Last but not least: iteration is essential for EAP to survive. The world changes continuously, so we need to listen, evaluate, and evolve constantly in order to keep our programme up to date. This is the only way we can ensure that we will still be relevant in the years and decades to come.

Practical activity 3:

Share best practices of your or other organisation. What can you learn from them?

5. Synopsis

A well-being programme can be planned in the following 8 steps. For it to succeed, it is essential to get the commitment and ambassadorship from the management, the engagement and ownership of employees, good planning, and follow-up of the responsible actor, as well as regular communication and awareness raising.

- Understand the strategic visions of the organisation – and define goals for well-being policy.
- Clarify who is responsible for employees' well-being.
- Assess the knowledge of the responsible party.
- Assess the well-being situation of the organisation and analyse the needs of the employees.
- Define the scope of the well-being programme
- Communicate via various channels to raise awareness of workplace well-being and the ongoing programme
- Implement the selected well-being programme
- Evaluation of the well-being programme and action planning for improvement

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7. Glossary

Well-being policy: a policy in an organisation that aligns with the organisation's vision and values and promotes the well-being of its employees. The policy is based on the principle of risk analysis.

Psychosocial risk: the probability that an employee will experience psychological harm, which may be accompanied by physical harm, following exposure to parts of the work organisation, the content of the work, working conditions, living conditions at work and interpersonal relations at work, on which the employer has an impact, and which objectively pose a danger. Psychological harm may include anxiety, depression, or even suicidal thoughts.

Internal prevention and protection service (IPPS): an internal service that consists of one or more people within the company – prevention advisors – who support the management team in complying with regulations and implementing preventive measures.

External prevention and protection service (EPPS): an external service that consists of two aspects: medical supervision and psychosocial risk management.

Well-being assessment: an assessment of the overall well-being situation of the organisation in the form of well-being surveys, psychosocial risk analysis, absenteeism data, complaints from employees, conversations with employees, etc.

7. Assessment plan Module 2

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Plan for a well-being programme for YOUR organisation</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to assist your learning and strengthen your understanding of the content you have learned in this Unit. In particular, this assessment helps you to grasp the steps in the preparation and assessing phase of planning a well-being programme.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<p>Learning outcome 1: Learners will know the 8 relevant steps in planning a well-being programme</p> <p>Learning outcome 2: Learners will compare the different responsible parties for employees' well-being.</p> <p>Learning outcome 3: Learners will differentiate positive and negative psychosocial factors within well-being situation of an organisation</p> <p>Learning outcome 4: Learners will address the key elements of a well-being action plan at work</p>
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15 min
Author(s)	<i>Yang Yang, Pulso</i>
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	What are the most important elements to consider when preparing for a well-being programme in your organisation?
Possible answers	<p>A. Clarify the visions of the organisation and align the well-being policy with the organisational ambitions.</p> <p>B. Designate responsible actor(s) for well-being at work.</p> <p>C. Assess the knowledge of the responsible actor(s) and the well-being situation in your organisation.</p> <p>D. Define the scope of the well-being programme</p> <p>E. All the above</p>
Correct answer	E

Response to correct answer	E is the correct answer. Well done! In the preparation phase of planning a well-being programme, it is important to align the well-being policy and the organisational visions. A well-being committee should be established, which may consist of internal actors, external actors, or a combination of both. Assessing the knowledge and the well-being situation in your organisation allows you to identify the exact areas to focus on. Finally, a clear scope of the programme helps you to monitor the progress.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the text in Learning Unit 1. Preparation is key. A winning effort begins with preparation. It is important to consider all the key elements when preparing for a well-being programme.
Times the question can be taken	5

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Who should be responsible for the well-being of employees? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. The management and HR of the organisation B. External parties C. The employees themselves D. Internal prevention and protection service
Correct answer	A C D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! Employers should guarantee the well-being of their employees, and internal entities such as the management team, HR, and the prevention and protection services are jointly responsible. However, when there is lack of internal expertise, external expertise can be sought, but the employer and the employee themselves remain the main responsible for the well-being at work.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the text in Learning Unit 1. The employer and the employee themselves are both responsible for the well-being at work.
Times the question can be taken	4

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3

Question	Which is the best way to assess the well-being situation of an organisation?
Possible answers	A. Examining the absence data. B. Conducting a psychosocial risk analysis. C. Listening to the management team. D. Talking to a particular team
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	B is the correct answer. Well done! A psychosocial risk analysis or a well-being survey at the organisational level will provide the most accurate insight into the well-being situation of an organisation.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the text of Learning Unit 1. Many factors need to be examined when assessing the well-being situation of an organisation.
Times the question can be taken	4

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	4
Question	How to define the scope of a well-being programme? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. Long-term and short-term plans should be made based on the well-being policy. B. Define objectives that are easy to achieve. C. Plan wellness activities such as yoga D. Conduct a psychosocial risk analysis and use the results as a starting point
Correct answer	A, D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! Both the long-term and short-term objectives should align with the well-being policy of the organisation. The objectives should be based on the results of the psychosocial risk assessment.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the content of Learning Unit 1. To achieve the objectives in the area of employee well-being, responsible parties can define the short-term and long-term scope of the well-being programme. The scope aligns and reflects the well-being strategy of the organisation.
Times the question can be taken	3

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Communication design</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to assist your learning and strengthen your understanding of the content you have learned in this Unit. This assessment helps you to design the communication plan about a well-being programme as well as well-being at work in general.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 5: Learners will understand how to communicate and raise awareness for the well-being programme</i>
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 min
Author(s)	<i>Yang Yang, Pulso</i>
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question	It is necessary to document the long-term and short-term well-being plans.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	True
Response to correct answer	This statement is correct. The long-term and short-term well-being plans need to be clearly documented and streamlined among all responsible parties (both internal and external) of the well-being programme.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 2. The long-term and short-term well-being plans need to be clearly documented and streamlined among all responsible parties (both internal and external) of the well-being programme.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2

Question	The communication plan should be made for the well-being programme, the awareness raising campaign, and the feedback to the employees about any conducted assessment.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	True
Response to correct answer	This statement is correct. Information and materials of specific well-being themes need to be easily accessible to employees. Sensitising messages need to be distributed and awareness raising campaigns need to be set up to reach as many employees as possible, and feedback to the employees about the outcomes of the well-being programme need to be planned.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 2. Communication is the key. Responsible actors should include information about themes in the well-being programme, sensitisation message and feedback sessions to the employees.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question	It is sufficient to raise employees' awareness about well-being at work once a year.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	False
Response to correct answer	This statement is false. Awareness raising of well-being at work in general and the specific ongoing well-being programme is not once and good for all. It needs to be a continuous effort.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 2. Communication is the key. Awareness raising of well-being at work in general and the specific ongoing well-being programme is not once and good for all. It needs to be a continuous effort.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 3	<i>Implementation and evaluation of well-being programmes</i>
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(Assessment Unit)	
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to assist your learning and strengthen your understanding of the content you have learned in this Unit. This assessment helps you to implement and evaluate a well-being programme.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	Learning outcome 4: Learners will address the key elements of a well-being action plan at work. Learning outcome 6: Learners will know the methods to evaluate the well-being programme
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 min
Author(s)	<i><u>Yang Yang</u>, Pulso</i>
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question	It is necessary to define the phases of implementation and the role and responsibilities of the internal as well as external responsible parties.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	True
Response to correct answer	This statement is correct. Most well-being programmes require an implementation plan, including the actions to be taken at each stage. It is also important to clearly define the responsibilities of each involved party.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 3. Most well-being programmes require an implementation plan, including the actions to be taken at each stage. It is also important to clearly define the responsibilities of each involved party.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2

Question	How should action plans be made? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. Action plans should align with the long-term objectives of the organisation. B. Action plans should be based on the results of the well-being programme. C. Action plans are made by external experts. D. Action plans are made by the involved internal and external actors.
Correct answer	A, B, D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! Action plans should be aligned with the long-term objectives, and organisations and responsible parties draw up action plans based on the results of the implemented well-being programme. This is a joint effort of all the parties involved, both internal and external.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the content of Learning Unit 3. Action plans should be aligned with the long-term objectives, and organisations and responsible parties draw up action plans based on the results of the implemented well-being programme. This is a joint effort of all the parties involved, both internal and external.
Times the question can be taken	4

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	What elements should be considered when developing an action plan? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. Objectives of the action plan and the steps to achieve them. B. Roles and responsibilities of the involved parties and intermittent milestones. C. Internal and external resources needed. D. Evaluation process and follow-up plan.
Correct answer	A B C D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! An action plan should include a clear description of the goals and the necessary steps to achieve these goals. Roles and responsibilities of the working group should be defined. Deadlines and resources should be clarified. The evaluation process and follow-up plans need to be agreed on beforehand.

Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the content of Learning Unit 3. The evaluation of action plans helps the organisation to assess the effects of their well-being programme and improve their well-being programmes accordingly. The follow-up op action plans show the commitment of the organisation and sends a strong signal to the employees.
Times the question can be taken	4

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	4
Question	Why is it important to evaluate well-being programmes? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. The evaluation of action plans helps organisations to assess the effects of their well-being programmes. B. The evaluation of action plans helps organisations to adapt the well-being programme. C. The evaluation of action plans is a legal obligation. D. The evaluation of action plans shows the commitment of the organisation.
Correct answer	A B D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! The evaluation of action plans helps the organisation to assess the effects of their well-being programme and improve their well-being programmes accordingly. The follow-up op action plans show the commitment of the organisation and send a strong signal to the employees.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please review the content of Learning Unit 3. The evaluation of action plans helps the organisation to assess the effects of their well-being programme and improve their well-being programmes accordingly. The follow-up op action plans show the commitment of the organisation and sends a strong signal to the employees.
Times the question can be taken	4

Learning Unit 4 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Best practices</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to assist your learning and strengthen your understanding of the content you have learned in this Unit. This</i>

	<i>assessment helps you to draw important lessons from two best practices about designing well-being programmes.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	Learning outcome 8: Learners will learn from best practices and know how to choose the best well-being programme based on their specific situation
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice, True or False statements</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15 min
Author(s)	Yang Yang , Pulso
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question	The Feelgreat@Proximus well-being programme is an integrated approach that targets the factors in the work situation that impact well-being.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	True
Response to correct answer	This statement is correct. The assessment at Proximus focuses on multiple factors in the work environment. This way, the stress-inducing factors can be reduced, and the motivating factors can be maximised at the group level, on top of increasing the resilience on an individual level.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 4. The assessment at Proximus focuses on multiple factors in the work environment. This way, the stress-inducing factors can be reduced, and the motivating factors can be maximised at the group level, on top of increasing the resilience on an individual level.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question	How is the Feelgreat@Proximus well-being programme implemented? Multiple answers are possible.

Possible answers	<p>A. A psychosocial risk analysis is first conducted to gain a good understanding of well-being and its impact factors at the organisational level.</p> <p>B. Individual interviews are taken as assessments so that well-being can be tackled at the individual level.</p> <p>C. Results of the initial assessment are translated into action plans.</p> <p>D. Evaluations of the action plans are made to see whether they truly had an positive effect.</p>
Correct answer	A C D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! The Feelgreat@Proximus well-being programme is an ongoing programme that targets the impact factors in the work context at the organisational level. It starts with an assessment, of which the results are used as a baseline to form concrete action plans. The effects of the action plans are evaluated to make further improvements. This is really a textbook example of how to plan and implement well-being programmes.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 4. The Feelgreat@Proximus well-being programme is an ongoing programme that targets the impact factors in the work context at the organisational level. It starts with an assessment, of which the results are used as a baseline to form concrete action plans. The effects of the action plans are evaluated to make further improvements. This is really a textbook example of how to plan and implement well-being programmes.
Times the question can be taken	4

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question	The EAP programme in AB InBev offers services including traditional themes and more tailored services such as sleep coaching, burn-out prevention and assistance for employees' family members, but other services and the flexibility of the programme are limited.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	False
Response to correct answer	This statement is false. The EAP programme of AB InBev has been steadily growing and expanding over the years. Besides the traditional and tailored

	themes, they also offer a crisis help desk and enable access to intervention teams for critical incidents.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 4. The EAP programme of AB InBev has been steadily growing and expanding over the years. Besides the traditional and tailored themes, they also offer a crisis help desk and enable access to intervention teams for critical incidents.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	4
Question	What are the most important take-away messages from the AB InBev EAP programme? Multiple answers are possible.
Possible answers	A. Communication is key. The only way to ensure employees' awareness is regular communication. B. Make it personal. It's important that employees can put a face on Fonds Verhelst contact people. C. Diversity and flexibility in communication contributes to the success of the well-being programme in different countries. D. Iteration is essential for EAP to survive.
Correct answer	A B C D
Response to correct answer	Correct! Well done! All the answers are correct. The EAP programme of AB InBev is a success thanks to their continuous commitment in regular and flexible communication. EPA needs to adapt according to the needs of employees. Only in this way can it offer the right support that employees need to thrive at work.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text of Learning Unit 4. The EAP programme of AB InBev has shown an increased utility rate over the years, and their continuous commitment in regular and flexible communication has contributed to this increase. EPA needs to adapt according to the needs of employees. Only in this way, can it offer the right support that employees need to thrive at work.
Times the question can be taken	4

Module 3: Leadership Skills

Abstract

This module aims to provide an overview of the various factors that need to be considered for a well-being programme to be successfully implemented, with particular focus on the importance of buying-in management support and the way of succeeding it, to achieve leadership commitment and, by extension, the establishment of a well-being culture within the company. Moreover, the several skills that leaders should possess in promoting workplace well-being are presented and discussed. The learning objectives therefore revolve around: 1. becoming aware of the success factors in introducing a well-being programme to be in a position to apply them when necessary and, 2. gaining a deep understanding of the significance of leadership commitment and the way in which it can be achieved for the success of a well-being programme and the sustainability of a well-being culture.

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome 1. Following this module, learners will recognise what should be done for a well-being programme to succeed.

Learning Outcome 2. After being introduced to and studying this module, learners will list and describe at least 4 out of 6 factors that contribute to the success of a well-being programme.

Learning Outcome 3. By the end of this module, learners will recognize the importance of leadership commitment and the leadership approach that is related to well-being promotion.

Learning Outcome 4. After studying this module, learners will be able to apply practices of getting leadership support within their organisations.

Learning Outcome 5: Following this module, learners will be aware of the skills that are necessary for leaders in order to promote the concept of well-being within the organisation.

Learning Outcome 6: After studying this module, learners will be able to practise the leadership skills related to the promotion and establishment of well-being within their organisations.

Keywords

Success factors, leadership support, commitment, well-being culture, HR leaders, leadership skills

Identity of the Module	
Module	<i>Leadership Skills</i>
Short description of the module / abstract	<i>This module aims to provide an overview of the various factors that need to be considered for a well-being programme to be successfully implemented, with particular focus on the importance of buying-in management support and the way of succeeding, so as to achieve leadership commitment and, by extension, the establishment of a well-being culture within the company. Moreover, extra tips regarding the role of HR leaders in implementing a change within the organisation are mentioned throughout the whole module. The learning objectives therefore revolve around 1. becoming aware of the success factors in introducing a well-being programme so as to be in a position to apply them when necessary and, 2. gaining a deep understanding of the significance of leadership commitment and the way in which it can be achieved for the success of a well-being programme and the sustainability of a well-being culture.</i>
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>Learning Outcome 1. Following this module, learners will recognise what should be done in order for a well-being programme to succeed.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Outcome 2. After being introduced to and studying this module, learners will be able to list and describe at least 4 out of 6 factors that contribute to the success of a well-being programme.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Outcome 3. By the end of this module, learners will recognise the importance of leadership commitment and the leadership approach that is related to well-being promotion.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Outcome 4. After studying this module, learners will be able to apply practices of getting leadership support within their organisations.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Outcome 5: Following this module, learners will be aware of the skills that are necessary for leaders in order to promote the concept of well-being within the organisation.</i></p> <p><i>Learning Outcome 6: After studying this module, learners will be able to practise the leadership skills related to the promotion and establishment of well-being within their organisations.</i></p>
Learning Units	<p><i>Learning Unit 1: Introduction to the module</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 2: Success factors to consider when introducing well-being programmes</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 3: The role of leadership commitment in promoting well-being</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 4: Leadership skills and workplace well-being</i></p>

Learning core material	Chapter		Learning Material	
	1. Introduction to the module		Text, Video, Practical Activity	
	2. Success factors to consider when introducing well-being programmes		Text, Articles, Video, Practical Activity	
	3. The role of leadership commitment in promoting workplace well-being		Text, Articles, Video, Practical Activity	
	4. Leadership skills and workplace well-being		Text, Article	
Assessment method	Chapter		Assessment method	
	1. Introduction to the module		-	
	2. Success factors to consider when introducing well-being programmes		True or False, Open-ended question	
	3. The role of leadership commitment in promoting workplace well-being		True or False, Open-ended question, Multiple choice	
	4. Leadership skills and workplace well-being		True or False, Open-ended question	
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	155 minutes			
Author(s)	Christina Sofroniou, Celia Hadjichristodoulou, GrantXpert			
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO			

Dear participants,

My name is Christina Sofroniou from GrantXpert, and I welcome you to the 2nd module of our training programme, namely “Leadership Skills”.

The **aims** of the Module are to provide an overview of the various factors that need to be considered for a well-being programme to be successfully implemented, with particular focus on the importance of buying-in management support and the way of succeeding, so as to achieve their commitment and, by extension, the establishment of a well-being culture within the company. Moreover, extra tips regarding the role of HR leaders in implementing a change within the organisation are mentioned throughout the whole module.

The Module is **structured** in three chapters, namely, 1. Introduction to the module, 2. Success factors to consider when introducing well-being programmes, 3. The role of leadership commitment in promoting well-being, and 4. Leadership skills and workplace well-being.

Chapter 2 discusses the various factors that define the success of a well-being programme within an organisation, which should be taken into consideration mainly before starting to implement a well-being programme, so as to create first the appropriate environment for such a programme to be successfully implemented.

Chapter 3 presents the importance of buying-in leaders’ support in order for a well-being programme to be successfully implemented, as well as the ways in which an HR manager can achieve leadership commitment.

Chapter 4 analyses several skills that a leader should possess in order to steer and motivate employees, keeping them satisfied and contributing by extension to their workplace well-being.

All chapters involve practical exercises, articles, and videos for further information on the subject, as well as several tips for the HR professionals.

Finally, your **assessment** consists of True or False questions, open-ended questions, and a multiple-choice question.

1. Introduction



Well-being programmes have received considerable attention in the past three years, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, as employees felt even more stressed and experienced higher levels of burnout, while striving to handle both their personal and professional life from the confinement of their home. This “buzz” created around the concept of well-being increased the scientific and professional/industrial interest in well-being programmes, leading to a big number of articles written in the past three years, aiming to shed light on the factors that contribute positively to well-being programmes at work.

A 2021 CIPD report showed that more senior leaders have employee well-being on their agenda (now 75%, up from 61% in 2020) and that 47% of employers now provide advice on healthy lifestyle to all employees. Leadership accountability is therefore key for the success of the workforce’s well-being. As claimed in a report from the Health Enhancement Research Organisation (HERO) and Mercer, “Even in organisations that offer very comprehensive well-being initiatives — including health screenings, behaviour change workshops, onsite gyms and others — employees’ perceived lack of leadership support might act as a barrier to their participating in and benefiting from these initiatives” (Murphy, 2018).

To complete this module, you must:

Watch a video as an introduction to workplace well-being:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOU22vOjatc>

Practical Activity – Discussion (5 minutes)

*Question: Which do you think are the factors that contribute to the success of a well-being program?
Share your ideas and thoughts.*

2. Learning Unit 2: Success factors that leaders and HR managers should consider when introducing well-being programmes

What defines a successful well-being programme? Answers may differ from one company to the other, as this is a multi-dimensional and complex issue. Any change effort that involves people can be time-consuming and challenging and the results can sometimes be disappointing. However, most well-being experts will agree that it is all about creating tangible benefits for both the employees and the company. If the programme does not achieve a win-win situation for both the employees and the company, then it will be abandoned or it will be used by a fraction of the workforce, having as a result poor achievement of long-term and sustainable positive results for both sides.

According to Renee Cocchi (2022), in her article entitled “What does a successful wellness programme look like?” in the HRMorning magazine, for an employee well-being programme to be successful, employers need to make sure that employees are aware of the programme and are using it. Factors that determine success include promoting awareness, strong support by leaders and soliciting input from employees. Moreover, two key success factors are real engagement and overcoming relevant barriers: this involves engagement and support from all people in the hierarchy, from the CEO and the other senior leadership team of the company, the HR team, the middle management, and to the rest of the employees. A well-being programme will only come to life and have a positive impact if it engages most of the employees. Additionally, corporate well-being programmes cannot be treated as a band-aid whenever a crack appears. Engagement, support, motivation, and strategy are the keys to success. If employees are not involved in the solution from the beginning, it’s difficult to succeed.

Knock Down the Barriers:

A major barrier that many companies face is the fact that a lot of employees do not want to be lectured about their lifestyle choices. Thus, it is important to clearly communicate to the company employees that there is no danger of this happening within the well-being programme that you will be initiating. Let’s not forget that a programme is only as good as its communication. Extra weight and planning need to be given to this aspect once the well-being programme is ready to go live.

Of course, the first step in designing a well-being programme is to evaluate the situation for your company. Evaluate what employees want and need. Businesses will reap real benefits if individual employee needs, which impact their well-being, were understood by the leaders in the workplace. The aim is to establish a culture which will be based on the essence of being heard to be supported and not for a mere tick in the box. Employees who feel cared for by their leadership and company are better poised to do well at work. Once the employees’ needs are clear, they must be aligned with the overall strategic and financial goals of the company, as a

budget needs to be devoted to designing and implementing the well-being programme successfully. Also, the programme needs to be aligned with the leadership team of the company, in order to really support it from Day 1.



In a recent article at Superwellness.co.uk (Angela, 2021), six key success factors that contribute to the success of well-being programmes are presented, as follows:

1. Inclusive & diverse – Both in methods of delivery and in content. For example, you need to take into account the different needs and stages in the life of different employees, in terms of gender, age group etc. This will create enhanced engagement as you will be able to address topics that are important to them at different stages in their life (e.g., menopause for women of older age or ‘eco-friendly’ eating for younger generations of employees).

2. Measurable outcomes – Unless you can track how well your well-being programme is doing and whether it is achieving its objectives, it is not easy to justify its need in the first place and develop it further once it is proven that it has long-term positive results on a number of dimensions for both the employees and the company’s performance. Of course, it is not simple to measure the performance of a well-being programme, however, there are several ways to start with basic measurements, such as:

- Yearly health and well-being survey.
- Track attendance on well-being activities (e.g., webinar attendees, video downloads or platform logins) each quarter.
- Identify KPIs which can give you an idea of impact at an organisation level: sickness absence, employee engagement, productivity measurement such as sales performance or customer service scores.
- Consider external awards and assessments which can provide a framework and evaluate current performance (Investors in People, Workplace Well-being Charter, Britain's Healthiest Workplace etc).

3. Plan for the longer term – To achieve engagement, this is built over time. In many cases employees may be reluctant to participate in any change effort like well-being activities because they are not ready, but this can change over time. To achieve this, you need to have a clear plan of what kind of activities you are offering on a monthly basis and to track the response and acceptance of each one of these activities so that you know what needs to change and where to put focus on. Also, once the plan is clear, the senior management team along with the HR team/person need to communicate in a systematic and continuous way to all employees at different levels and to promote each activity effectively. This of course requires strong support from senior management, as any change effort cannot be successful if the CEO and the senior management team do not support it both verbally and practically. Moreover, it helps to have a well-being committee and these members can discuss priorities on a yearly basis and agree on common themes for each quarter. Once this programme is set, a well-being programme is useful to be provided to all employees, in order to see at a glance, the key dates and activities throughout the year.

4. Accessible, fun & informative approach – A pragmatic, down-to-earth approach along with some doses of humour can be important attributes to the success of a well-being programme. This can be achieved by adding fun parts like challenges or competitions, along with small prizes for the winners/best performers. Also, providing interesting workshops or eye-opening seminars so that people learn some new and interesting can be beneficial, as the focus is on “why” this has a health benefit instead of focusing on “this is what you should be doing”. Finally, if photos and presentations from well-being activities are shared (either internally or on social media), this helps in gaining visibility and persuading more people to come along in the next activity.

5. Champion-led engagement – Well-being champions or ambassadors have a key role to play in the success of a well-being programme, as they can identify the real needs of the workforce in the first place and thus contribute to the development of a well-thought and customised well-being programme for the company. In addition, champions are the key advocates that identify possible barriers and break them down, and at the same time they encourage all other colleagues to participate in well-being activities thus building engagement more widely. Organisations are increasingly putting in place these networks or committees of engaged individuals. It is a good practice to ask employees to volunteer for these committees rather than nominating yourself. Once the committee is formed, it is necessary to provide clear role descriptions and ensure that they have a clear and structured agenda, with regular meetings and so on. Of course, these people also need to receive proper training in order to be able to fulfil their roles.

Steve Boese, Co-Founder of H3 HR Advisors, Co-Chair of Human Resource Executive Magazine’s HR Technology Conference said: “I think ownership is important. Figuring out who the right person or persons to own your organisation’s well-being strategies is important. An owner will help drive this further and more effectively” (Cocchi, 2022).

6. Tailored implementation – As no two companies are the same, it is important to identify from the start the key needs and also the limitations that exist, as you will need to work around these. In some situations, communication options are limited or there are organisations with employees from different cultures and levels of education. All these need to be considered both during the design and the implementation of the well-being programme.

These six factors from the Superwellness.co.uk article are shown in the diagram below and they form the word IMPACT:



To complete this Learning Unit, you must:

Read these online articles:

1. <https://superwellness.co.uk/workplace-wellbeing-success-factors/>
2. <https://www.bluehost.com/blog/how-to-improve-employee-well-being-for-happy-employees-and-better-business/>

Watch a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odyyk926mfY>

Practical Activity (5 min)

Instructions: Please match the six different factors of the left column with the relevant with the appropriate definitions in the right column.

Factor	Definition
1. Tailored implementation	a. Reaches more people
2. Accessible, fun & informative approach	b. Ensures relevance
3. Planned for the longer term	c. Breaks down barriers
4. Inclusive & Diverse	d. Embeds well-being into the culture
5. Measurable outcomes	e. To build positive momentum
6. Champion-led engagement	f. Makes good business sense

1 - , 2 - , 3 - , 4 - , 5 - , 6 -

3. Learning Unit 3: The role of leadership commitment in promoting workplace well-being

Practical Activity – Discussion (10 min)

Think about the way in which an HR Manager can gain the support of leadership (what actions should be done), as well as the importance of achieving it. Discuss.

“Senior leadership is defined as the ability to influence and guide individuals and groups within an organisation” (Passey et al., 2018, p. 1792). A culture of well-being starts therefore at the top. Hence, the first action that needs to be taken is to get the support from the company’s leaders, the Board of Directors, and make sure that they themselves understand the importance of well-being programmes. Leaders’ and managers’ awareness needs to be increased concerning the benefits of such programmes, through analysed data and reports (Valencia, 2021). Leaders and managers, in turn, need to understand that they act as role models in conveying to the employees the feeling that leadership cares about their well-being, so as to encourage, as well, the engagement and participation of employees in well-being programmes



(Martic, 2020). Only if the top and middle management gets excited and willing to be involved in such a process can the success of a well-being programme be ensured (Peterson, 2022).

Bringing in senior stakeholders early in the planning stages usually can make the rest of the process easier and more fluid. We want leaders to champion the implementation of a well-being programme, not just checking off the boxes and moving on to something they consider more important. Of course,

not everyone in leadership or senior positions understand the importance of a well-being programme and that's where awareness and education seminars come into play, in relation to the importance not just on employee well-being and job satisfaction levels but also on business performance too.

Again, communication is vital so the leadership team will buy-in to the concept that improving access to mental health and wellness offerings isn't just the right thing to do, it is also good business. You may need to make a case for investment in time and finance and for the benefits of well-being for the organisation's wider success. The HR manager that will be suggesting the design and development of a new well-being programme needs to emphasise to the top leadership team that these programmes help increase profitability, reduce turnover, increase employee engagement, and encourage better work performance. Plus, all the other benefits that come from happier and healthier employees. Moreover, there is real financial Return on Investment (ROI). To get the executive support and to convince all other relevant departments (like Finance, Procurement, etc.) you need to prove that there is high ROI on these programmes, and this can be manifested by setting metrics that tie wellness to ROI. Employers and managers worldwide require real-world evidence that workplace well-being programmes are an investment that yields valuable returns rather than a cost. Thus, the supporters and initiators of such programmes need to study relevant recent scientific papers that support this evidence and present it to the people that will be making the decision.

Unless you have a leadership team that really supports and champions a corporate well-being programme, this cannot be successful. It is a top-down process, and it is not straight-forward nor easy to achieve quick results. Thus, it needs leadership commitment, patience, continuous support and awareness efforts and changes when these are needed, to make the programme easier to follow, user friendly and attractive. Employee well-being is essentially a complete lifestyle and behaviour change for the company's culture. And change takes time with commitment.

Servant leadership as an approach in promoting well-being.

The role of leadership is fundamental in maintaining a culture of well-being within an organisation, since leaders are those who can influence the job demands and job resources of employees. Servant leadership constitutes one of the approaches that can be considered as



efficient in enhancing work engagement, decreasing in turn, burnout, and health-related issues. This is because, as Van Dierendonck (2011) explains, “Servant leadership is a unique and comprehensive leadership theory in which the leader serves, empowers and supports employees to achieve meaningful outcomes to the benefit of the individual, the organisation and the community” (as cited in Coetzer et al., 2017, p. 2).

Servant leaders are those people who focus more on their people, on satisfying the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs of the employees (Sendjaya, 2015), rather than focusing solely or primarily on results (Chathury, 2008; Sendjaya, 2015, as cited in Coetzer et al., 2017, pp. 2-3). As demonstrated by some studies, a negative relationship exists between servant leadership and two of the dimensions of burnout, namely cynicism (Bobbio, Van Dierendonck, & Manganelli, 2012) and emotional exhaustion (Tang, Kwan, Zhang, & Zhu, 2016) (as cited in Coetzer et al., 2017, p. 3). Hence, it seems that servant leadership constitutes a viable leadership theory that can be used in reducing burnout, either directly or indirectly (Coetzer et al., 2017).

To complete this Learning Unit, you must:

Read these online articles:

1. <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/article/1790398/leaders-promote-employee-wellbeing>
2. <https://www.glintinc.com/blog/employee-well-being/>

Watch a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctZHSa4Qhd4>

Further reading and small videos:

1. <https://www.rewardgateway.com/uk/blog/employee-wellbeing-success-stories>
2. <https://www.perkbox.com/uk/resources/blog/employee-wellbeing-programmemes>

4. Learning Unit 4: Leadership skills and workplace well-being

Melanie Berman (Chief Human Resources Officer, NiSource) stresses the fact that employees' well-being should be a key priority for managers, leaders, and HR leaders, especially in this new reality, while prioritising their employees' well-being has been found to act as an intermediary variable to success (Kalshoven & Boon, 2012). There exist, however, certain skills that a leader should possess in order to steer and motivate employees, keeping them satisfied and contributing by extension to their workplace well-being.

An employee's performance and motivation are greatly influenced by their work environment. Creating a *beautiful and positive work environment* brings much better results to the efficiency of the employees and the business in general. Thus, one of the most important things that leaders need to secure is the creation of an appropriate and good atmosphere within the company and among the employees, while at the same time addressing conflicts that might rise within the workplace and managing to escape those challenges, continuing to attract, retain, and sustain employees.

All the above-mentioned require that, first, an *open communication* exists within the company. This means that both the management team and the employees express any ideas, issues, or problems they may have in an honest, transparent, and reliable way (Klein, 2022). Open communication is what encourages employees to share any challenges or issues they may face in order to ask for help and receive feedback, as well as any feelings and thoughts they may need to communicate. This helps in avoiding problems within the workplace, easily resolving conflicts, resulting thus in ensuring employees' smooth collaboration and contributing to sustaining their well-being. It is important thus that, even if a company nowadays takes advantage of a more hybrid way of working after the pandemic, leaders still find ways to regularly connect with and hear from their employees. This helps leaders know more about their employees, their personalities, habitual behaviours, and any problems they may face throughout their everyday lives, understanding therefore better any potential mental health risks and spotting red flags early, so as to act accordingly in advance (Runyon, 2021).

An open communication is built nevertheless over time and requires that leaders are *leading by example*. This is important in terms of the leaders themselves modelling clear work/life boundaries, so as to promote the concept and the importance of work-life balance and well-being to their employees. Similarly, leaders should *show vulnerability* themselves, in order to encourage employees to communicate whatever issues or challenges they may face, without

feeling ashamed, breaking in this way any stereotypes existing of being afraid to seem vulnerable. For example, if having a bad day and not feeling themselves, it is important for leaders to communicate it rather than hiding behind a professional profile and attitude (Hunter, 2021). This will help employees perceive that their leaders are humane and will transfer to them the feeling that it is fine not to always be in a good mood, with an excellent performance. All these actions are simple cues for the employees, showing them that it is okay for them to admit when they face whatever kind of issues, and that balancing work and personal life is a sign of health.

Moreover, this is something that will help leaders master *empathetic leadership*, as well. Shifting nowadays away from a command-and-control type of management and leadership, it is important for leaders to focus on getting in someone else's shoes, understanding their perspective, and identifying with them, demonstrating a genuine interest in how employees are doing, while being able to look behind their words, if needed, to find the real answer. This presupposes, though, that leaders are *actively listening* to their employees during their communication. According to Julian Treasure's TED Talk, whereas people usually spend 60 percent of our time listening, only 25 percent of what we hear is retained (as cited in Runyon, 2021). Active listening helps people, thus, not only in retaining information but also understanding better what is being heard, boosting their emotional intelligence, and making them more empathetic as leaders. This is because, active listening helps leaders understand their employees' struggles, stress, and tension points, contributing to developing a relationship of trust, transparency, rapport, and influence -necessary among leaders and those led by them- also fostering loyalty and, by extension, employees' well-being, through a positive environment and good relationships (Covey).

Another important characteristic that leaders should possess is *flexibility*, in a two-folded dimension. First, good leaders should have the ability to get out of their comfort zones and adapt quickly to changing working conditions, as also proven by the Covid-19 crisis, which will be appropriate in maintaining and encouraging employees' good performance (Yasar & McLaughlin). Second, flexibility support from the part of leadership according to the needs and wants of employees should be offered and established within the company's leadership practices, especially in this post-pandemic era. The key, however, is to not confuse flexibility with a lack of clarity. Open and frequent communication is therefore required among leaders and employees, through which clear expectations, goals and roles are set, with high-quality and frequent work-related feedback. This will contribute to creating a work environment and company culture where flexibility can be better implemented, since clarity and feedback will allow both leaders and employees to understand which policies and procedures should be fixed and which can be adjusted upon pursuing their goals (Hunter, 2021). This will also create a relationship of trust between leaders and employees, since the latter ones will get the feeling that they are allowed to establish their own personal time management practices, always aligned with the company's overall policies, which will contribute to sustaining their work-life balance and thus their well-being, as well.

To complete this Learning Unit, you must:

Read the following online article:

https://www.verityintl.com/blog_post/foundational-leadership-skills-that-promote-employee-wellbeing/

5. Synopsis

Employee well-being has received considerable attention during these past years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected employees' levels of stress and anxiety, with the result of experiencing more burnout and turnover. Consequently, special attention has been given to well-being programmes at work, which undoubtedly contribute positively to reducing employees' stress and, by extension, more severe symptoms, thus maintaining employees' well-being. Particular attention has been given however to the importance of leadership's support, engagement, and commitment. Consequently, as already discussed in the above sections, apart from the factors that help in successfully implementing a well-being programme within an organisation, there needs foremost to be support and commitment from the part of leadership in order for such an initiative to succeed.

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7. Glossary

Employee well-being: It refers to the way employees' duties, expectations, stress levels and working environments affect their overall health and happiness. Employee well-being encompasses much more than just physical health. Moreover, it is about less tangible factors, employees' mood and cognition. Above all, employee well-being is about understanding your employees from a holistic perspective.

Well-being programmes: initiatives and policies directed at chronic disease prevention and supporting healthy behaviours for employees. Participation in comprehensive wellness programmes can decrease employees' burnout and turnover and increase job satisfaction, productivity, and mental well-being. Also, employees view the access to and provision of wellness programmes as a sign of employer commitment to health and well-being.

Leadership commitment: The role of leadership is fundamental in maintaining a culture of well-being within an organisation, since leaders are those who can influence the job demands and job resources of employees. Leaders need to be championing the implementation of a well-being programme, not just checking off the boxes and moving on to something they consider more important.

8. Assessment plan Module 3

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Success factors to consider when introducing well-being programmes</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The scope of this assessment is to examine whether the learners have gained an understanding of what are the factors that</i>

	<i>contribute to the success of a well-being programme, so as for them to be able to use them as guidance in their own organisations. Since these factors will be adequately analysed and discussed, learners are expected to be able to name and describe at least four out of the six factors that will be presented.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<p>1. <i>Following this module, learners will recognize what should be done in order for a well-being programme to succeed.</i></p> <p>2. <i>After being introduced to and studying this module, learners will list and describe at least 4 out of 6 factors that contribute to the success of a well-being programme.</i></p>
Assessment method	<i>True or False, Open-ended question</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15'
Author(s)	Christina Sofroniou, Celia Hadjichristodoulou, GrantXpert
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Since the employees are the ones who are going to take part in a well-being programme, there needs to be engagement and support only from the part of employees, in order for the programme to be successfully implemented.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B. False is indeed the correct answer. Good job! There needs to be real engagement and support from all people in the hierarchy, from the CEO and the other senior leadership team of the company, the HR team, the middle management, and the rest of the employees. If the programme does not achieve a win-win situation for both the employees and the company, then it will be abandoned or it will be used by a fraction of the workforce, having as the result the poor achievement of long-term and sustainable positive results for both sides.
Response to wrong answer(s)	The correct answer is B. False. You can take a look again at Chapter 1, which you can find here (p. 2).
Times the question can be taken	1

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	One significant step that needs to be taken before implementing a well-being programme is to evaluate the current situation of the company, what employees want and need.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	Great! A. True is the correct answer! Before designing and implementing a well-being programme, one of the most important steps is to evaluate the situation of the company. Evaluate what employees want and need. Businesses reap real benefits if individual employee needs, which impact their well-being, are understood by the leaders in the workplace.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read Chapter 1 again, which you can find here.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	Please list and describe in a few words, at least four out of the six success factors discussed when introducing a well-being programme.
Possible answers	1. Inclusive & diverse, 2. measurable outcomes, 3. plan for the longer term, 4. accessible, fun & informative approach, 5. champion-led engagement, 6. tailored implementation.
Correct answer	Any four out of the six factors discussed, along with a small description of what each of them refers to.
Response to correct answer	Great! Keep up the good work!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Take again a look at the first chapter to refresh your memory, or read again the article 'Well-being Programmes: Six Key Success Factors' which you can find again here.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 3 (Assessment Unit)	<i>The role of leadership commitment in promoting workplace well-being</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The scope of this assessment is to examine whether the learners have gained an understanding of the importance of getting the leadership's support in implementing a well-being programme and culture and whether they can apply some practices in their own organisations to buy-in seniors' support.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<p>1. <i>By the end of this module, learners will recognize the importance of leadership commitment and the leadership approach that is related to well-being promotion.</i></p> <p>2. <i>After studying this module, learners will be able to apply practices of getting leadership support within their organisations.</i></p>
Assessment method	<i>True or False, Open-ended question, Multiple choice</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15'
Author(s)	Christina Sofroniou, Celia Hadjichristodoulou, GrantXpert
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question	"Unless you have a leadership team that really supports and champions a corporate wellness programme, this cannot be successful". This statement is:
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. True is the correct answer! Great! A culture of well-being starts at the top; it is a top-down process. Hence, the first action that needs to be taken is to get the support from the company's leaders, the Board of Directors, and make sure that they themselves understand the importance of well-being programmes.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please look carefully again at Chapter 3, as well as the extra reading provided.

Times the question can be taken	2
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<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question	The awareness of managers and leaders about the benefits of such a programme should be increased through a deep, detailed discussion that will convince them to support it.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	Great job! B. False is indeed the correct answer!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the third chapter and answer the question again.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3 (Follow-up question when question no. 2 is answered correctly)
Question	Please provide a list of actions (at least 4) that should be done in order to achieve leadership commitment.
Possible answers	Communication, presentation of a series of benefits of well-being in terms of time and finance, emphasise to the leaders that these programmes help in increasing profitability, reducing turnover, increasing employee engagement, and encouraging better work performance, real-world evidence, and presentation of ROI.
Correct answer	Any four of the possible answers described above.
Response to correct answer	Perfect! You have indeed gained an understanding of how leadership commitment can be achieved.

Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the part of the second chapter of Module 2 that refers to the actions that help in getting leadership support and commitment, along with the extra reading sources provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	4
Question	Servant leadership is considered as fundamental in maintaining a culture of well-being, because:
Possible answers	<p>A. Servant leaders are those who serve all the needs and desires of their employees to keep them satisfied and happy, maintaining their well-being as a result.</p> <p>B. Servant leaders are those focusing on the results each employee produces so as to compensate them accordingly and preserve their satisfaction.</p> <p>C. Servant leaders are those who serve, empower, and support employees to achieve meaningful outcomes to the benefit of the individual, the organisation, and the community.</p>
Correct answer	C. Servant leaders are those who serve, empower, and support employees to achieve meaningful outcomes to the benefit of the individual, the organisation, and the community.
Response to correct answer	C. is the correct answer, well done! Servant leadership constitutes one of the approaches that can be considered as efficient in enhancing work engagement, decreasing in turn, burnout, and health-related issues. Servant leaders are those people who focus more on their people, on satisfying the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs of the employees (Sendjaya, 2015), rather than focusing solely or primarily on results
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read Chapter 3 again and try once more!
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 4 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Leadership skills and workplace well-being</i>
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Scope of the assessment	<i>The scope of this assessment is to examine whether the learners have gained an understanding of some of the skills that are related to the promotion of well-being within their organisation, so as to be able in turn to practise and apply them themselves.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	1. Following this module, learners will be aware of the skills that are necessary for leaders in order to promote the concept of well-being within the organisation. 2. After studying this module, learners will be able to practise the leadership skills related to the promotion and establishment of well-being within their organisations.
Assessment method	<i>True or False, Open-ended question</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15'
Author(s)	Christina Sofroniou, Celia Hadjichristodoulou, GrantXpert
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question	Open communication is what helps in avoiding problems within the workplace, easily resolving conflicts, resulting thus in ensuring employees' smooth collaboration and contributing to sustaining their well-being.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. True is the correct answer! Great! Open communication is what encourages employees to share any challenges or issues they may face in order to ask for help and receive feedback, as well as any feelings and thoughts they may need to communicate, in an honest, transparent, and reliable way.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please take a look again on Chapter 4, as well as the extra reading provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>

No.	2
Question	It is inappropriate for leaders to show vulnerability since, as leaders, they need to demonstrate a professional profile and attitude towards their employees.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B. False is indeed the correct answer! It is very important for leaders to show vulnerability themselves, in order to encourage employees to communicate whatever issues or challenges they may face, without feeling ashamed, breaking in this way any stereotypes existing of being afraid to seem vulnerable.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please look carefully again at Chapter 4.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question	Empathetic leadership relates to a command-and-control type of leadership, without a genuine interest in employees' problems and concerns.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	Great! B. False is again the correct answer! Empathetic leadership is about getting in someone else's shoes, understanding their perspective, and identifying with them, demonstrating a genuine interest in how employees are doing, while being able to look behind their words, if needed, to find the real answer.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read carefully again Chapter 4.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	4
Question	Please list and describe 3 leadership skills that are related to the promotion of workplace well-being (apart from the ones already introduced in the previous questions, i.e., open communication, showing vulnerability, empathetic leadership).
Possible answers	<p>1. Beautiful and positive work environment: one of the most important things that leaders need to secure is the creation of an appropriate and good atmosphere within the company and among the employees, while at the same time addressing conflicts that might rise within the workplace and managing to escape those challenges. This brings much better results to the efficiency of the employees and the business in general.</p> <p>2. Active listening: it helps people, not only in retaining information but also understanding better what is being heard, boosting their emotional intelligence, and making them more empathetic as leaders. This is because, active listening helps leaders understand their employees' struggles, stress and tension points, contributing to developing a relationship of trust, transparency, rapport, and influence -necessary among leaders and those led by them- also fostering loyalty and, by extension, employees' well-being, through a positive environment and good relationships.</p> <p>3. Leading by example: leaders should model clear work/life boundaries, so as to promote the concept and the importance of work-life balance and well-being to their employees. Similarly, leaders should show vulnerability themselves. For example, if having a bad day and not feeling themselves, it is important for leaders to communicate it rather than hiding behind a professional profile and attitude.</p> <p>4. Flexibility: first, good leaders should have the ability to get out of their comfort zones and adapt quickly to changing working conditions, which will be appropriate in maintaining and encouraging employees' good performance. Second, flexibility support from the part of leadership according to the needs and wants of employees should be offered and established within the company's leadership practices, especially in this post-pandemic era.</p>

Correct answer	Any of the four skills described above.
Response to correct answer	Great! Keep up the good work!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read carefully again Chapter 4 to gain a better understanding.
Times the question can be taken	3.

Module 4: Mentoring, a practice that enhances employees' well-being.

Abstract

The aim of this module is to introduce learners (HR managers) to basic principles of mentoring and its implementation, which is a practice that enhances employees' well-being. In this module, learners will be introduced to the concept of mentoring, and they will learn everything necessary to conduct a complete mentoring process between a mentor and a mentee. This can help their employees to increase their well-being and, as a result, to thrive at work. At the end of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of mentoring, recognize the advantages of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching and apply these practices at work, through the mentoring process in order to increase their well-being. At the end of the training, learners will be assessed with multiple choice questions and true or false questions.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what are the basic principles of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching.

Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to recognize the benefits of mentoring in the workplace and the importance of well-being through mentoring process.

Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to conduct a complete mentoring process, which is going to enhance well-being in the workplace.

Keywords

mentoring, workplace well-being, mentor, mentee

Identity of the Module											
Module	Mentoring, a practice that enhances employees' well-being										
Short description of the module / abstract	<i>The aim of this module is to introduce learners (HR managers) to basic principles of mentoring and its implementation, which is a practice that enhances employees' well-being. In this module, learners will be introduced to the concept of mentoring, and they will learn everything necessary to conduct a complete mentoring process between a mentor and a mentee. This can help their employees to increase their well-being and, as a result, to thrive at work. At the end of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of mentoring, recognize the advantages of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching and apply these practices at work, through the mentoring process in order to increase their well-being. At the end of the training, learners will be assessed with multiple choice questions and true or false questions.</i>										
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what are the basic principles of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to recognize the benefits of mentoring in the workplace and the importance of well-being through the mentoring process.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to conduct a complete mentoring process, which is going to enhance well-being in workplace.</i></p>										
Learning Units	<p><i>Learning Unit 1 – Basic principles of mentoring in the workplace</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 2 - The importance of mentoring culture for well-being</i></p> <p><i>Learning Unit 3 –Mentoring in practice</i></p>										
Learning core material	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Chapter</i></th> <th><i>Learning Material</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Introduction to module 6 "Mentoring"</i></td> <td><i>Text</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Basic principles of mentoring in the workplace</i></td> <td><i>Text, Articles, Videos</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>The importance of mentoring culture in the workplace for well-being</i></td> <td><i>Text, Articles, Videos</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Mentoring in practice</i></td> <td><i>Text, Articles</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Learning Material</i>	<i>Introduction to module 6 "Mentoring"</i>	<i>Text</i>	<i>Basic principles of mentoring in the workplace</i>	<i>Text, Articles, Videos</i>	<i>The importance of mentoring culture in the workplace for well-being</i>	<i>Text, Articles, Videos</i>	<i>Mentoring in practice</i>	<i>Text, Articles</i>
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Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	120 minutes										
Author(s)	<i>Vera Lazanaki & Maria Vakola, Job Pairs</i>										
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO										

Dear participants,

My name is Vera Lazanaki from Job Pairs, and I welcome you to the Module “Mentoring, a practice that enhances employees’ well-being”.

The aim of the module is to introduce learners (HR managers) to basic principles of mentoring and its implementation, which is a practice that enhances employees’ well-being. Also, learners will be trained on how “to narrow the gap between the two sides and increase the well-being of mentees”. On the other hand, it provides an opportunity for action by professionals (mentors) at a time when “we can and should all offer our knowledge and experience to those who need it.”. In this training, learners will be introduced to the concept of mentoring, and they will learn everything necessary to conduct a complete mentoring process between a mentor and a mentee. This can help their employees increase their well-being and, as a result, thrive at work. At the end of the training, learners will be able to define what are the principles of mentoring, recognize the advantages of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching, and apply these practices at work, through the mentoring procedures in order to increase their well-being.

The Module is **structured** in three chapters, namely (1) Basic principles of mentoring (2) mentoring in workplace and (3) its benefits applying mentoring.

Chapter 1 discusses the definition and the history of mentoring, while it gives insight into the characteristics of mentor and mentee and the differences between mentoring and coaching.

Chapter 2 presents the benefits and the importance of mentoring culture in the workplace, and its role in increasing well-being.

Chapter 3 discusses the procedure of mentoring sessions between a mentor and a mentee, which can be applied in the workplace to improve employee well-being.

Finally, your **assessment** consists of the method of *multiple choice questions* and *true or false questions*.

1. Learning Unit 1 - Basic principles of mentoring in the workplace

In this learning unit, the definition and the history of Mentoring are presented, while it gives insight into the characteristics of mentor and mentee and the differences between mentoring and coaching.

Definition of mentoring

The concept of mentoring was adopted by organisations in 1970. However, the concept is not so recent. Its roots can be found in Ancient Greece, where Homer first mentioned the concept of Mentor in his work, "Odyssey". Homer's mythical hero, Odysseus, before leaving for the Trojan War, entrusted the care, training and protection of his son Telemachus to his friend Mentor. Then, the goddess Athena takes the form of Mentor and guides Telemachus during his father's ten-year absence. The Mentor - Athena, armed with patience, wisdom, selflessness and the will to bond with the guided Telemachus, provides support and counselling so that Telemachus develops the skills and knowledge that will help him face life's challenges. This relationship developed by the Mentor with the mentee Telemachus is the first mentoring relationship mentioned in history (Murray, 2002). Since then, the concept of mentoring has been associated with a person with more experience forming a relationship with a less experienced person in order to advise, encourage and support him (Collin, 1988).

According to Fagenson (1989), "mentoring is a process where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value and development in senior management". When the mentor and the mentee belong to the same organisation, the mentor is a senior hierarchical employee who possesses knowledge and skills which they are responsible for imparting to the mentee to improve their performance. It is a process of guiding the mentee's growth and development based on specific goals mutually agreed upon between them (Murray, 2002). The mentor may be a person who belongs to a different department from the one to which the mentee belongs and is not the mentee's supervisor or manager (Scandura & Williams, 2001).

The purpose of mentoring contributes to the effective career management of the mentee and the mentor, through maintaining their interest and enthusiasm for work, creating motivation for improvement and increased performance, job satisfaction and creativity, and continuous improvement and development both within the organisation and personally (Vakola & Nikolaou, 2019). A Gallup survey found that 66% of Millennials expect to leave their jobs within four years. They also found that 94% of the survey participants appreciated having a mentor at work. This shows employee engagement and job satisfaction have links to a mentoring culture in organisations.

History of mentoring

The history of using mentoring for the needs of human resource development dates to 1931, when the Jewel Tea Company first implemented a formal mentoring programme. In this form of mentoring, each new employee entering the company had a senior manager as an advisor and mentor at the beginning of their career (Russell, 1991). However, until 1980, there was no proliferation of formal mentoring programmes. Finally, the growth and evolution of formal mentoring was facilitated by various economic and social trends during this period which also facilitated its development, such as competitive challenges, labour shortages, the large number of mergers, the emphasis on innovation and technology, cross-cultural issues, but the goals of affirmative action and awareness of each organisation's needs for diversity of its staff and better succession planning (Kram & Bragar, 1991, Zey, 1988).

As formal mentoring programmes began to grow in organisations, the diversity of participants began to increase in parallel. In fact, many organisations began to use formal mentoring programmes to further their organisational goals and to meet developmental needs in the areas of recruitment, retention, training and career development, reduction of attrition rates, succession plan formation, and professional and personal development of employees (Collin, 1988).

Finally, over the years there has also been a gradual change in the structure and content of formal mentoring programmes. Organisations began to move away from programmes that focused only on minority employees such as women to programmes that focused on all employees. Now modern mentoring programmes focus on encouraging employees to form relationships with their peer colleagues as well as with senior managers in the organisation (Farren, Gray & Kaye, 1984, Kaye & Jacobson, 1995, Rogers, 1992).

Mentor

Dreher & Chargois (1998), define a mentor as a person who has more work experience than the mentee and is interested in taking an active role in the professional development of the new colleague. Obviously, the classic relationship of an employee and a supervisor could not be said to be a mentoring relationship by nature. However, the way this relationship exists in cases where the two parties are in the same part of the organisation, represents an important opportunity for the young professional who is in constant interaction with his or her mentor (Dreher & Cox, 1996).

As Haggard et al. (2011) point out, how one can define the importance of the mentor depends on certain circumstances. There are four conditions concerning mentoring. The level of mentor hierarchy in the organisation, whether the mentor is the supervisor of the mentee, whether the mentor works in the same organisation as the mentee and finally, the degree of intimacy that the two individuals have developed.

- Spends time with the mentee.

- Shares their successes and failures, knowledge, and experiences.
- Is objective and gives realistic answers.
- Listens to the mentee without criticising them.
- Asks a lot of questions and does not jump to conclusions.
- Shows patience
(Humphrey, 2010)

Mentee

One factor that has a very important influence on the willingness of employees to enter into mentoring, and how good the quality of the relationship will be, is the personality traits of the mentee. These characteristics influence the mentees' reactions throughout the mentoring relationship, their emotional stability, and the way in which they interact with both the mentor and the other employees in the organisation (Turban & Dougherty, 1994).

The concept of self-monitoring of the mentee, i.e., the ability to self-monitor and evaluate the mentee's performance, also plays an important role in the quality of outcomes. Each mentee has a different sensitivity to managing social issues such as their work image and behaviour and a different ability to adapt their behaviour to different situations (Snyder, 1987).

Digman (1990), proposes Emotional Stability as another factor that influences the mentee's behaviour during the relationship. Emotional stability depends on the mentee's concept of self-esteem about their abilities and the concept of negative affectivity. Individuals with low self-esteem are more likely to avoid situations that may bring down their morale, such as engaging in challenging and difficult projects, have less confidence and assurance in their abilities to achieve high goals, and are less likely to seek feedback from their peers, which apparently affects their career development (Brockner, 1988, Campbell, 1990). In addition, mentees' tendency to have negative feelings about both themselves and other colleagues is likely to make them nervous, stressed and hostile. Emotional stability exists when the mentee has high self-esteem and low negative affectivity (Levin & Stokes, 1989, Watson & Clark, 1984).

Differences between mentoring and coaching

Mentoring

- Long-term orientation
- Teacher
- Agreed objectives
- Working on professional & personal development issues
- Usually more experienced than the mentee
- Development-based

Coaching

- Short-term orientation

- Trainer
- Works in a targeted manner and aims for immediate and measurable results.
- The coach guides the coachee to take action.
- Performance-based

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the Article: "[Mentoring made easy: A practical guide](#)"
- Read the Article: "[The art of mentoring](#)"
- Watch the video below <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoy5MifHuLs>
- Watch the video below <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Qy0P65kMIM>

2. Learning Unit 2 - The importance of mentoring culture in the workplace for well-being

This learning unit presents the benefits and the importance of mentoring culture in the workplace, and its role in increasing well-being.

Benefits of mentoring

A well-designed mentoring programme has positive results for the mentor and the mentee. Eby & Lockwood (2005) refer to a predetermined process where the pair commit to certain goals that are jointly set by both parties. In most cases, there is a pre-designed timetable which is followed by the pair and a guide which the mentor consults in order to properly guide the mentee.

The mentoring benefits for the mentor are the increased job satisfaction and the recognition they receive from colleagues. This is because the role of the mentor is rewarded and so significant. Enthusiasm and personal satisfaction also increase when they see that the mentor is directing a junior employee to reach their full potential. Still, their contribution to the mentees' development gives them a positive image in the eyes of their colleagues who admire and appreciate them for their skills in developing people, and as a result they gain great visibility and prestige as an employee. After all, career counselling is a process that helps the mentor to develop their leadership skills, their ability to transfer knowledge, guide and give advice. In addition, the mentor has the opportunity to think about certain issues from a different perspective, especially when their mentee has a different way of approaching issues and a different way of thinking from theirs. They may even gain fresh and innovative ideas. This may give him an opportunity to reassess things that were not previously considered. Finally, career counselling helps the mentor to broaden their professional network in the organisation by building meaningful relationships with younger staff.

Several studies have examined the benefits of mentoring for the mentee, concluding that it is associated with significant positive career outcomes and development for the mentee, such as increased salary, promotion, and increased job satisfaction (Chao, Walz & Gardner, 1992). Considering the potential benefits that mentoring offers to the mentee, many seek a competent

mentor, and many organisations encourage such relationships because of the benefits they will indirectly reap themselves (McKeen & Burke, 1989, Douglas & McCauley, 1999, Kram, 1985). As Levinson et al. (1978) point out, mentors are not only a source of knowledge for the mentee, but also a key role in cultivating the mentee's self-esteem and professional identity.

According to researchers, the mentee through the relationship gains access to social networks that are a reservoir of knowledge that would otherwise be inaccessible (Dreher & Ash, 1990). In addition, through the contact the mentee gains with the networks, they have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills to key individuals in the organisation who make important decisions. The literature shows that employees who participate or have participated, as mentees, in a mentoring process, achieve greater professional success than non-participants. The mentee sees the mentor as a veteran, as a model of behaviour and is informed of the standards of behaviour that govern the organisation and must be adhered to (Bolton, 1980, Dreher & Ash, 1990, Zagumny, 1993). Kram (1985), states that through counselling and acceptance, the mentor helps the mentee develop the professional skills (competence) and self-esteem needed to succeed professionally.

Allen et al. (2004), conclude that the effects of the career development-related and psychosocial functions of mentoring differ significantly. As they point out, the behaviours related to career development focus on advancing the mentee's career (exposure, visibility, promotion, challenging projects). Also, career development mentoring has mainly objective career-related outcomes. On the other hand, psychosocial mentoring (acceptance, counselling), is mainly focused on improving subjective characteristics of the mentee such as self-esteem, self-confidence and professional identity formation, which are consequences related to the emotional world of the mentee. Indeed, it is not surprising that psychosocial mentoring and its success depends to a large extent on the mentee's satisfaction with their mentor's behaviour.

Benefits for Mentor

- ✓ Personal fulfilment
- ✓ Gains enthusiasm and self-confidence
- ✓ Develops their career - Learns a new perspective, how the new generation thinks, how to better approach their own team and partners.
- ✓ Develops a personal leadership style
- ✓ Revitalised interest in work

Benefits for Mentee

- ✓ Develops their skills
- ✓ Develops a career strategy
- ✓ Strengthens their self-confidence
- ✓ Sets & achieves professional and personal goals.

- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Integrates more quickly into the professional environment.
- ✓ Explore new perspectives for their career.
- ✓ Identify areas for development
- ✓ Acquire new knowledge
- ✓ Assistance and feedback

Mentoring role in increasing well-being

Employees need support to thrive at the workplace, grow professionally, and build their strengths to maintain their well-being. This can be achieved mainly through mentoring sessions (Hobson and Maxwell, 2017).

Mentoring relationships can help mentees to explore new ideas and be developed without fear of criticism, as well as having a person they admire who supports them. Mentoring increases employees' confidence in themselves, and so can really help to decrease mental health issues such as depression. Mentoring relationships have a massive impact on an employee's level of job and life satisfaction. Also, it fosters strong relationships between parties and creates a feeling of belonging among the employees. Communication within mentoring relationships allows employees to reduce obstacles, while they feel like belonging in a safe workplace.

By increasing psychosocial support and social activities, mentoring can help employees to reduce the obstacles to success (for example stress and demands). Mentors are a positive aspect for employees. Mentors can help employees to reduce feelings of insecurity, celebrate achievements, manage errors, and deal with burnout (Eckleberry-Hunt et al., 2009).

As a result of mentoring, employees will experience increasing well-being. This means that mentoring can enhance all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organisation. Also, they will feel that they have someone to share their thoughts with and to help them with the problems they face.

Creating a mentoring programme can build a culture, which leads to employee development, inclusion and support. Mentees can talk openly, share their thoughts and emotions with mentors on what's right or wrong. As a result of mentoring, organisations could identify differences among employees' well-being. Moreover, creating an effective mentoring programme requires time and effort, but it can improve employees' well-being. Thus, an organisation with healthy and resilient employees can have long-term success.

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the Article: "[Workplace mentors: Demands and benefits](#)"
- Read the Article: "[Organisational benefits of mentoring](#)"

- Watch the video below <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTez8uz1GDQ>

3. Learning Unit 3 - Mentoring in practice

In this learning unit, you will be introduced to “how to mentor” activities that can help you increase the well-being of your employees. These activities are separated into four stages, which describes a formal mentoring process.

The stages of a formal mentoring relationship



Initiation

The first stage is Initiation. Initiation consists of three levels:

- Break the ice
- Identification of the needs and expectations of both sides
- Meeting schedule and rules

Ice Breaking is the moment when the first meeting between you and the mentee takes place, while at the same time you are invited to talk together, achieving a common goal in a specific period of time. In order to quickly "break the ice" between you, it is recommended to talk and create a relaxed atmosphere.

More specifically, you should take into account the following:

- What professional experience does the mentor/mentee have?
- Why did I become a mentor?
- What does my mentee need to know about me?

About the step of Identification of the needs and expectations of both sides, your mentee has to present the challenges they face in the workplace and their expectations for the future about their well-being. Shortly before the end of your meeting, it is a good idea to discuss the prerequisites and expectations for the whole project, agreeing that you want to increase well-being and try your best to thrive at work through the process. The needs and difficulties that the mentee has at this stage should be taken into account. Also, it is very important to discuss the following:



- What does the mentee expect to gain? (e.g., the increase of well-being)
- What can the mentor offer to contribute to an increasing well-being?
- What are the specific objectives of the process? (e.g., the increase of well-being)

About the step of Meeting schedule and rules, should be taken into account the following:

- When do we meet? Where?
- How will we communicate? Email? Phone?
- How much time do I have to prepare between meetings?
- What are the responsibilities of the mentor and mentee?

Cultivation

- Mentees work to achieve the goals and the mentor guides them in order to complete task which will increase well-being.
- The mentor gives advice, answers questions, shares knowledge and personal experience
- Mentees grow, understand their role, develop a strategy for their career and make important decisions to increase their well-being.

Mentoring Contract

- Agreed objectives and predefined expectations (e.g., the increase of well-being)
- Basic needs & obligations of each side
- Frequency of meetings
- Confidentiality & trust



Trust between mentor and mentee is essential for the success of the project, as sensitive issues will be discussed in the meetings. It is advisable to cultivate a climate of trust by active listening, constructive criticism and sharing with the mentee your own moments from your professional career. In general, it will be beneficial to approach the individual and their potential. After all, the essence of mentoring is precisely the meaningful and authentic relationship that can be built between mentor and mentee.

Mentee's SWOT analysis

At this point, SWOT analysis is presented, a tool that will enable mentors to identify mentees' strengths as a person (personal, professional), mentees' weaknesses, the opportunities mentees can create or encounter and the threats that may arise in mentees' professional career. This SWOT analysis can be used as a tool to achieve well-being.

The acronym SWOT is derived from the English words Strengths = Strengths, Weaknesses = Weaknesses, Opportunities = Opportunities and Threats = Threats

The great advantage of SWOT analysis is that with a little effort it can help mentees to discover and exploit the opportunities that will arise in their workplace and how these opportunities can increase well-being. On the other hand, it allows mentees to identify their weak points and therefore manage and eliminate threats that would otherwise leave you vulnerable and unprepared. More importantly, the SWOT analysis gives mentees the opportunity to build up a clear picture of themselves and their competitors. This process will help mentees to design a strategy that will allow them to differentiate themselves from their competitors and take on them in the labour market more successfully. As a result, mentees will have more job control, increasing performance and motivation to work, reduced stress, low employee turnover and improved employee morale. All these can help mentees to achieve well-being in the workplace.

In Brief:

- Mentee strengths should be preserved, strengthened, and exploited
- Mentee weaknesses should be corrected or eliminated
- Mentee opportunities should be prioritised and optimised
- Mentee threats should be combated or minimised

Example:

SWOT ANALYSIS



planned
completion of a
project

once the
objectives have
been met

suddenly for
important
reasons

conflict and
search for a new
mentor/mentee

Why is a mentoring relationship terminated?

1. Planned integration by the programme
2. The mentee feels ready to become independent from the mentor
3. Inappropriate "match"
4. Mentor does not meet the needs of the mentee
5. The mentee or mentor is not consistent



Redefinition

Mentor - mentee roles do not exist forever. The two sides become "peers" and the relationship between them continues over the years.

Which are the Difficult Cases of Mentees?

- They are inconsistent
- They insist on their own argument and do not listen
- Do not try
- Have low self-esteem

Mentor's Do's and Don'ts

DO's

- Be friendly, comfortable, and open
- Listen carefully to what mentees say

- Focus on dialogue and exchange of views
- Relay your own experience
- Be honest in your answers, pointing out possible difficulties in the labour market

DON'Ts

- You don't have to try to answer all the questions
- Do not appear to be avoiding "difficult" questions
- Avoid taking action for the sake of advertising your company
- Avoid discrimination or favouritism towards mentees

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the Article: "[The Efficacy of Mentoring – the Benefits for Mentees, Mentors, and Organizations](#)"
- Read the Article: [The Stages of Mentoring Relationships](#)

4. Synopsis

Mentoring is a process where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value, and development in senior management. Employees appreciated having a mentor at work. This shows employee engagement and well-being have links to a mentoring culture in organisations. Despite coaching shares many similarities with mentoring, the two differ essentially for the scope of their purposes: while mentoring has a more holistic approach to personal and professional development, coaching is more focused on specific skills and tasks needed to achieve clear career goals. There are four stages that describe a mentoring relationship in order to improve employee well-being: Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, Redefinition.

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6. Glossary

Mentoring: A process is where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value, and development in senior management.

SWOT: A tool that will enable mentors to identify mentees' strengths as a person (personal, professional), mentees' weaknesses, the opportunities mentees can create or encounter and the threats that may arise in metees' professional career.

7. Assessment plan Module 4

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Basic principles of Mentoring in the workplace</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to ensure that you have understood what is mentoring and of which parts it is composed</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learners will be able to define what are the basic principles of mentoring in the workplace and the differences between mentoring and coaching</i>
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice questions, True or False questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 minutes
Author(s)	Vera Lazanaki, Maria Vakola, Job-Pairs
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Please identify the right definition of "mentoring".
Possible answers	<p>A. Mentoring is teaching, or developing in oneself or others, any skills and knowledge that relate to specific useful competencies.</p> <p>B. Mentoring is a process where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value, and development in senior management.</p> <p>C. Mentoring is a form of development in which an experienced person, called a coach, supports a learner or client in achieving a specific personal or professional goal by providing training and guidance.</p>

	D. Mentoring consists of activities that develop a person's capabilities and potential, build human capital, facilitate employability, and enhance quality of life and the realisation of dreams and aspirations.
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Mentoring is a process where a person in a position of power cares for the development of a junior by providing advice to show their effort, value, and development in senior management. When the mentor and the mentee belong to the same organisation, the mentor is a senior hierarchical employee who possesses knowledge and skills which he/she is responsible for imparting to the mentee to improve his/her performance. It is a process of guiding the mentee's growth and development based on specific goals mutually agreed upon between them (Murray, 2002).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the "Definition of Mentoring" chapter again!
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Which of the following statements describes a "mentor"?
Possible answers	A. Listens to his/her mentee without criticising him/her. B. Shows patience C. Shares his successes and failures, knowledge and experiences. D. All the above
Correct answer	D

Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! A mentor must listen to his/her mentee without criticising him/her, show patience and shares his successes and failures, knowledge, and experiences
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the chapter “Mentor”.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	Mentoring has a short-term orientation, works in a targeted manner, and aims for immediate and measurable results.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Coaching has a short-term orientation, works in a targeted manner and aims for immediate and measurable results, not mentoring.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the “Differences between mentoring and coaching” chapter.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	<i>The importance of mentoring culture for well-being</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to ensure that you have understood what the benefits of mentoring are and how important is the mentoring for improving well-being</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learners will be able to recognize the benefits of mentoring in the workplace and the importance of well-being through mentoring process</i>

Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice questions, True or False questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 minutes
Author(s)	Vera Lazanaki, Maria Vakola, Job-Pairs
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Creating a mentoring programme can build a culture, which leads to employee development, inclusion, and support. Mentees can talk openly, share their thoughts and emotions with mentors on what's right or wrong. As a result of mentoring, organisations could identify increases among employees' well-being.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Creating a mentoring programme can build a culture, which leads to employee development, inclusion, and support. Mentees can talk openly, share their thoughts and emotions with mentors on what's right or wrong. As a result of mentoring, organisations could identify increases among employees' well-being.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the "Mentoring role in increasing well-being" chapter again.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Which are some benefits mentoring can have for mentees?
Possible answers	A. Acquire new knowledge.

	<p>B. Explore new perspectives of his/her personality.</p> <p>C. Strengthens his/her self-confidence.</p> <p>D. All the above</p>
Correct answer	D
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Some of the benefits of mentoring for the mentee are that he/she can acquire new knowledge, he/she can explore new perspectives of his/her personality and he/she can strengthen his/her self-confidence.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the chapter “Benefits for mentee” again.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	As a result of mentoring, employees will experience increasing well-being. This means that they will be engaged in their organisation and they will have the opportunity to do the extra mile.
Possible answers	<p>A. True</p> <p>B. False</p>
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! As a result of mentoring, employees will experience increasing well-being. This means that mentoring can enhance all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organisation. employees will experience increasing well-being. Engagement and doing the extra mile are aspects connected with organisational citizenship and work engagement.

Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the chapter “Mentoring role in increasing well-being” again.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 3 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Mentoring in practice</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of this assessment is to ensure that you have understood the mentoring process and the four stages of it, in order to improve well-being in workplace</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learners will be able to conduct a complete mentoring process, which is going to enhance well-being in workplace</i>
Assessment method	<i>Multiple choice questions, True or False questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 minutes
Author(s)	Vera Lazanaki, Maria Vakola, Job-Pairs
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Which are the stages of a formal mentoring relationship?
Possible answers	A. Assessment, Design, Deliver, Evaluation B. Awareness, Analysis, Action, Achievement C. Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, Redefinition D. Initiation, Cultivation, Action, Achievement
Correct answer	C
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! The 4 mentoring stages are Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, Redefinition.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the chapter “The stages of a formal mentoring relationship” again.
Times the question	4

can be taken	
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<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Through the SWOT analysis, mentees can recognize his/her strengths. An example of these strengths may be the attendance of a self-confidence workshop.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! Through the SWOT analysis, mentees can recognize his/her strengths. An example of these strengths may be kindness. The attendance of a self-confidence workshop belongs to opportunities for mentees.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the chapter “Mentee’s SWOT analysis”.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	In the cultivation stage of mentoring, your mentee has to present the challenges he/she faces in the workplace and their expectations for the future about his/her well-being.
Possible answers	True False
Correct answer	B
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Keep up the good work! In the initiation stage, the mentee has to present the challenges he/she faces in the workplace and their expectations for the future about his/her well-being.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again “The stages of a formal mentoring relationship” chapter.

Times the question can be taken	2
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Module 5: Work-life Balance

This module is aimed at HR professionals, both as a self-learning tool for themselves and as training material that they can use for their employees.

The module provides information, practical activities, and external (on-line) resources to help learners to manage work-life harmony in two directions: **One person may think of work-life balance when they are experiencing life stress or burn-out, while another may be trying to set priorities for addressing personal and family needs.**

The term Work-life balance into work-life itself may set up false ideas about being an “ideal” balancing point when in fact the goal may be less about true balance and more about valuing conscious choice when it comes to where and how we spend our time.

Work can make us feel good about ourselves and give us a sense of purpose. It's an important way to help us to protect and improve our mental health and well-being. However, sometimes work and life stress can negatively affect our mental health and our ability to do our jobs.

To cope with the stresses of work and overcome life's daily challenges, it is important that we stay as mentally well as possible. This can help us overcome challenges, build healthy relationships and work more productively.

For many of us the Covid-19 pandemic opens questions about our mental health and changes our purpose. It has attacked our plans and aspirations. It has let us understand the deeper meaning of life and find happiness in unforeseen ways. It means it had a direct effect on the way we were thinking of our purpose in life. It was a time for re-evaluation and introspection for our values and the meaning of life.

This module focuses on work-life balance in terms of work-life meaningfulness, what our life values are and how the work aligns with them, how to reimagine both our personal life and our work.

The Module will be presented in 4 Learning units:

Learning Unit 1 – Work-life balance vs work-life harmony. The relationship with my work.

Learning Unit 2 – Pleasure vs satisfaction. Principles and personal values.

Learning Unit 3 – How to regulate our emotional system to have optimal mental well-being?

Learning Unit 4 –Work-life boundary management flex styles and the role of HR and managers.

At the end of the training learners will be assessed with different methods such as multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what is the difference between Work-life balance and Work-life harmony, Work as a means to an end and Work as an end in itself.

Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about how to set priorities in order to achieve work-life balance.

Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to define the difference between Pleasure and satisfaction.

Learning outcome 4: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about their core values that help them to achieve work-life balance.

Learning outcome 5: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about how to balance their Emotional Regulation Systems and their optimal Mental Health Platter.

Learning outcome 6: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about what is work-life boundary management, what are their individual flex styles of boundary management – Integrators, Separators and Volleyers and what is the role of HR experts and managers for supporting employees' work-life integration.

Keywords

Work-life balance vs work-life harmony; Work as a means to an end/ Work as an end in itself; Pleasure vs satisfaction; Personal values; Dopamine, Neurotransmitter, Emotional Regulation Systems; Compassion, The Healthy Mind Platter; Work-life/work-family boundary management; Flex styles of boundary management – Integrators, Separators and Volleyers

Identity of the Module	
Module	<i>Work-life balance</i>
Short description of the module / abstract	<p><i>This module is aimed at HR professionals, both as a self-learning tool for themselves and as training material that they can use for their employees.</i></p> <p><i>The Module provides information, practical activities, external (on-line) resources for work-life balance in two directions: 1) how to set priorities and values for addressing personal and family needs, and 2) how to regulate your emotional and mental health when experiencing life stress or burn out.</i></p> <p><i>The term Work-life balance may set up false ideas about an “ideal” balancing point when in fact the goal may be less about true balance and more about valuing conscious choice when it comes to where and how we spend our time.</i></p> <p><i>For many of us the COVID pandemic changed our purpose. It was a time for re-evaluation and introspection for our values and the meaning of life.</i></p> <p><i>This module focuses on work-life balance in terms of what our life values are and how the work aligns with them, how to reimagine both our personal life and our work.</i></p> <p><i>The Module will be presented in 4 Learning Units.</i></p> <p><i>At the end of the training learners will be assessed with different methods such as multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.</i></p>
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Learning Units	1. <i>Learning Unit 1 – Work-life balance vs work-life harmony. The relationship with my work.</i>

	<p>2. <i>Learning Unit 2 – Pleasure vs satisfaction. Principles and Personal values.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Learning Unit 3 – How to regulate our emotional system and have optimal mental well-being?</i></p> <p>4. <i>Learning Unit 4 – Work-life boundary management flex styles and the role of HR and managers</i></p>										
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4. <i>Work-life boundary management flex styles and the role of HR and managers</i>	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions</i>										
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	200 min										
Author(s)	<i>Liliya Georgieva, CATRO Bulgaria</i>										
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO										

Dear participants,

My name is Liliya Georgieva from CATRO Bulgaria, and I welcome you to the Module “Work-life balance”.

The **aim** of the Module is to provide information, practical activities, and external (on-line) resources and tools for work-life balance in two directions:

1. how to set priorities and values for addressing personal and family needs and find the individual flex style of work-life boundary management.
2. how to regulate your emotional and mental health when experiencing unbalance in our life.

The Module is structured in 4 chapters, namely: 1) Work-life balance vs work-life harmony. The relationship with my work; 2) Pleasure vs satisfaction. Principles and personal values; 3) How to regulate our emotional system and have optimal mental well-being? 4) Employee’s individual flex style of work-life boundary management and the role of HR and managers.

Chapter 1 Discusses the difference between Work-life balance and Work-life harmony, difference between Work as a means to an end and Work as an end in itself; the definition of polarities; provides practical activities for: Where do I put my energy? What are my Balancing Life Roles and external resources for these topics?

Chapter 2 Presents the difference between Pleasure and Satisfaction, the three strategic principles “What is the best way to live?”, Personal values, Multitasking, and performance. Provides practical activities for: What are my core personal values and external resources for: free on-line Personal Values Assessment and multitasking.

Chapter 3 Presents a description of Paul Gilbert’s model of the three types of Emotional Regulation Systems that operate in our nervous system, presents an explanation about Dan Siegel’s model about Healthy Mind Platter and how to optimise our Healthy Mind Platter. This chapter provides practical activities and external resources about Healthy Mind Platter, practical activities, and external resources on how to use the three Emotional Regulation Systems to keep the balance in our life, compassion as a best way to self-regulate our emotions, as well as practical activities and external resources about Healthy Mind Platter.

Chapter 4 helps the individuals to better understand how they are currently managing relationships between work and personal life; identify gaps in how well it fits with their actual values, jobs, family and personal life; and determine what actions HR experts and managers can take to ensure a working environment that supports employees’ work-life boundary management.

Finally, your assessment consists of multiple-choice questions, True/False statements, sentence completion and open questions.

1. Learning Unit 1 - Work-life balance vs work-life harmony. The relationship with my work

You often feel tired, not because you've done too much, but because you've done too little of what sparks a light in you.

Alexander Del Heijer

1.1. Work-life balance vs work-life harmony

Work-life balance is a broad concept evoking the prioritising between "work" (career or ambition) on the one hand and "life" (pleasure, leisure, family, or spiritual development) on the other. The idea of work-life balance is a bit wrong because it articulates the concept of a perfect 50/50 split between your work life and your private life. The reality is much more fluid. There is no such thing as a "perfect" balance that will work for every person and at every stage of life.

What you may consider "balanced" when you are a young professional just starting out in the working world is going to be vastly different from what you consider "balanced" when you are in your 40s and have kids that you want to spend as much time with as you can with.

The term Work-life balance itself may set up false ideas about an "ideal" balancing point when in fact the goal may be less about true balance and more about valuing conscious choice when it comes to where and how we spend our time.

One person may think of work-life balance when they are experiencing life stress or burn-out, while another may be trying to set priorities for addressing personal and family needs.

What is work-life balance?

Work-life balance is about trying to figure out what to add to your life, or take away from your work, to achieve the magical outcome of "balance". This is problematic because it:

- treats work and life as separate things, although it's the same person who goes to work and lives our lives – it's all interconnected.
- suggests that work = bad and life = good.
- casts work and life as a zero-sum game. If we excel or put in extra effort at work, then our lives will suffer as a result.
- suggests there is an objective "perfect answer" out there for us to discover.

What is work-life harmony?

Work-life harmony is about finding a way to weave together the various aspects of our lives. Doing this produces a greater sense of well-being and satisfaction than might be achieved through work or non-work time alone.

- It's like building a jigsaw puzzle with individual pieces of work, family, friends, health, hobbies and so on.
- It means making conscious choices about what we will prioritise and why.
- There is no single formula for how to achieve work-life harmony. It looks different for each person, and how it will be achieved will vary over time.
- There is a continuum from work as a means to an end to work as an end in itself.

1.2. Polarities vs dichotomy in life

Are you familiar with the famous goblet and women image below? Most people either see the two women's faces or the goblet. You can't hold both images in your mind at the same time.

Dichotomies are unnatural splits in which a field is made up of separate, competing, either-or parts instead of integrated elements in relationship to one another that form a whole (Kellogg, 2004). However, polarities are a natural part of fields. Fields are differentiated into polarities – opposite parts that work in tandem or in contrast to one another to help clarify meaning.



Polarities in life is a both/and situation, this is the **continuum between two opposite parts and complementary parts and the movement and rhythm between them brings meaning to the whole.**

We have to make everyday choices while moving between life polarities, for example: STABILITY – CHANGE; HABITS – FREEDOM; NECESSITIES – POSSIBILITIES; CONTACT – DISTANCE

We need movement between the poles not to choose which is better and this movement (its pace and rhythm depends on the circumstances in our life at any given moment).

1.3. The relationship with my work

Work as a means to an end

At one end of the spectrum, work is a mere technicality; it is about getting the paycheck. People at this end are happy to simply do their job then fill their time outside work in a way that pleases them. They're not looking for a promotion, more responsibility, or to launch or maintain a career. They might have good relationships with colleagues and enjoy the work they do, but work isn't the main source of meaning for them.

It's tempting to think that this approach is most common among people preparing for retirement. But people of every age and stage hold this philosophy. And it is a totally legitimate approach to work-life harmony.

In fact, in a climate that celebrates the relentless pursuit of promotions and status, this might be a truly subversive and rebellious approach!

Work as an end in itself

At the other end of the spectrum, work is a meaningful pursuit in itself. It provides an avenue for personal and professional learning and growth. It offers opportunities for setting and achieving goals, attaining status, and developing a flourishing career.

People at this end of the spectrum find fulfilment and satisfaction in their work. Their life outside work supports them with the energy and nourishment required for the efforts they put in at work. And this is also a totally legitimate approach to work-life harmony.

This doesn't mean that these people don't also enjoy their family, friends, hobbies, sport etc. Rather, the work itself provides a strong sense of meaning and purpose which they can't or don't find in other activities.

1.4. Work-life priorities

The work-life balance is much more about harmony between different aspects of our life. This means that it's up to you to decide what balance means to you. Don't rely on anyone else to tell you what it is or how to do it best—it's an individual proposition of your life priorities that will change over the course of life. Think about the following:

- 1) What are the things that bring meaning and pleasure?
- 2) Which of them have higher priority here and now?
- 3) Which piece can I release / decrease as important?
- 4) We take responsibility for our own lives without guilt!
- 5) Focus and concentrate on one thing at a time?

To set our priorities and to start figuring out what work-life balance looks like for you, create a vision of what your ideal experience looks like across a variety of areas:

- **Friends and family:** What do you want these relationships to look like? How large do you want your circle to be? How much interaction do you want to have?
- **A significant other:** Are you in a relationship with a partner? Do you want to be? What do you want from that relationship so that your personal needs are fulfilled?
- **Physical health:** Do you want to work out regularly? How many days a week? What type of diet works best for you, and what is the time commitment required to achieve it? How much sleep should you be getting?
- **Your professional career:** Do you enjoy the hustle of an extended work week, or is it more important for you to keep it to 40 hours?

- **Fun and leisure:** What do you do when you're not working? What would you like to be doing? What hobbies are important for you to start, restart and maintain?
- **Spirituality:** What role does faith or spiritual practice play in your life? What role do you want it to play?
- **Anything else that's important to you!**

1.5. How multitasking may affect performance?

Multitasking hinders work-life balance. It leads to stress, fatigue and imbalance in our life. Typically, a person who is switching tasks will 1) take much longer to complete the task, 2) see a considerable decrease in the quality of work, and 3) experience more personal stress.

Practical Activity 1: Where do I put my energy? (15 min)

Purpose: To help you examine where you are and where you put your energy? You will also assess if you would like to make changes to find where in life you would like to put energy into or to withdraw energy, as well as, to create a better balance among the “wants” and “needs”.

Instructions: Answer to the questions Where I am between the two poles of the dimension and where I want to be? After that, contemplate upon the two questions: What am I doing that I don't want to do? and What am I not doing that I would like to do?

Where am I between the two poles of the dimension and where I want to be? Where do I want to be in 5-10 years?

Work as a means to an end

Work as an end in itself

What am I doing that I don't want to do? (What I have, but want to change; what stops me from letting go or changing)	What am I not doing that I would like to do? (What is valuable to me, but I do not do it, due to fear, obstacles, limited beliefs)

Notes:

What is holding you back from the life you really want?

If you could change three things about your life, what would they be?

Practical Activity 2: Balancing Life Roles (25 min)

Purpose: To help you examine the relative time you spend on each of your major life roles. You will also assess if you would like to make changes to create a better balance among the roles you consider important.

Instructions: Under the column labelled “Current Level,” estimate the relative amount of time you spend on that life role. Consider whether this is how you want to spend your time. Alter the percentages under the “Preferred Level” column to reflect how you want to spend your time.

Role	Current Level (%)	Preferred Level (%)
Friends and family:		
A significant other:		
Physical health:		
Your professional career:		
Fun and leisure		
Spirituality		
Anything else that's important to you		
Total	100%	100%

In addition, answer the following questions to become clearer about what work-life balance means to you:

1. What does “Work-Life Balance” mean to you?
2. Consider the fit between your current work role and your life outside work. Are you satisfied with your work-life balance?
3. What are your values about work and where does it fit in your life as a whole?
4. What are your partner’s or family’s values about work and how does it fit into your life together?
5. What is the impact of work-life balance and imbalance on you?
6. What are the issues that you prefer (“wants”) versus those that are absolutely non-negotiable (“needs”) in terms of work-life balance?
7. What do your answers to these questions tell you about your work-life concerns?

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the article: Work-life balance or work-life harmony - <https://dariawilliamson.com/work-life-balance-or-work-life-harmony/> (10 min)
- Read the article: Is Life A Dichotomy Or Can We Really Have It All?- <https://www.keypersonofinfluence.com/life-dichotomy-can-really-have-all/> (5min)

- Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo6SP-Zhjh8> (15 min)
- Complete the video-exercise: The myth of multitasking - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCeGKxz3Q8Q> (10 min)
- Complete practical activity 1 and 2

2. Learning Unit 2 - Pleasure vs satisfaction. Principles and personal values

Personhood is a synthesis between possibility and necessity. Its continued existence is like a process of breathing - inhaling and exhaling.

Kierkegaard

Pleasure vs Satisfaction.

Matthew Kelly in his book “Off balance”, (2011) presents important concepts about pleasure and satisfaction as described below.

The problem with all this is that getting what we want is certainly not work-life balance, and getting what we want almost never leads to personal and professional satisfaction.

We seem more interested in how we want to live than we are in discovering the best way to live. Likewise, we are much more interested in developing self-expression than we are in developing selves that are worth expressing. Personal preference has triumphed over the pursuit of excellence. We want what we want, and we feel entitled to what we want.

Experiencing a deep sense of satisfaction both personally and professionally is possible—at the same time. You do not have to sacrifice personal satisfaction to have professional satisfaction, or vice versa. The reason is that very few people have the requisite self-knowledge to want the right things.

As we grow and gain this self-knowledge, we begin to want what we need because we discover that the desire to get what we want is usually tied much more to a pleasure principle than it is to any lasting satisfaction. Too often, pleasure and satisfaction are confused.

The fundamental difference between pleasure and satisfaction is that pleasure cannot be sustained beyond the activity producing it. In fact, 75 percent of the time when we are eating, we are not hungry—but we love the pleasure of eating. Satisfaction can be sustained beyond the activity producing it.

It is a mistake to think that pleasure and satisfaction go hand in hand. This satisfaction is much more important than enjoying our work—though combining both is optimal.

Satisfaction is very different. Consider this example. You come home from work, and it is your day to work out. You don't feel like exercising and would rather collapse in front of the television, but you force yourself to work out. Interestingly, whenever we get done working out, we are always glad we did—even if we had to force ourselves. That's satisfaction.

Addiction is wanting more and more of something that brings less and less satisfaction. In many ways we have become addicted to pleasure, to getting what we want, and the cost is always genuine satisfaction.

Hedonism is not an expression of freedom; it is a passport to enslavement by a thousand cravings and addictions. And in the end, it produces not pleasure but despair. Every choice we make eliminates other options, and those other options are part of the cost involved in the life we choose to live.

Principles and personal values.

Certainly, we cannot consider the question "What is the best way to live?" in a vacuum, but in a real place and time, for a specific person, with roles and responsibilities, needs, hopes, and desires. Matthew Kelly in his book "Off balance", (2011) describes three principles common of goodwill:

1. The first principle: You are here to become the best version of yourself.

The primary meaning of work is not to make money; rather, when you work hard and pay attention to the details of your work, you develop character and become a-better-version-of-yourself. Life is about saying yes to the things that help you become the best version of yourself and no to the things that don't. The first principle also has its place in the business world. Imagine an employee who is constantly asking herself, "What can I do today to help this company become the best version of itself?"

2. The second principle is: Virtue

Every culture, country, and organisation have an organising principle. But what is the ultimate organising principle—for your life, your family, an organisation, a country, or, indeed, all of humanity?

The whole world prefers virtue:

- ✓ Who would you prefer as your employees or colleagues: men and women of virtue or those riddled with vice and selfishness?
- ✓ Would you prefer your neighbours to be patient or impatient?
- ✓ Would you rather your extended family be generous or self-seeking?
- ✓ Would you prefer honest or dishonest customers?
- ✓ Would you rather have a courageous or a cowardly manager?

Virtue is a personal matter, but again the virtue of a company's employees has an enormous impact on every aspect of the business. The virtue of a company is not measured by its mission and vision statements, nor is it measured by a company's stated values. The virtue of a company is measured by the collective virtue of its employees, managers, and leadership.

When you learn how to prioritise your life, you can focus with intention on what matters and accomplish your most important goals. When you learn how to prioritise your life, you can put your core values into action. You commit to your long term goals and build the life you want.

3. The third principle is: Self-control.

Without self-control we are incapable of delaying gratification. Individualism, hedonism, and minimalism all lead to the decay of a person's self-control and the demise of his or her ability to delay gratification.

But how our biology is designed to help or to hinder the process of what is the best way to live? What is the role of dopamine for our well-being and work-life balance?

Dopamine and Serotonin. Pleasure and happiness.

Dopamine is linked with the feeling of pleasure while **serotonin** is the neurotransmitter linked with happiness.

Dopamine is one of the "feel good" chemicals in our brain interacting with pleasure and reward. Reward and reinforcement help us create our personal habits. Humans gravitate toward positive experiences and avoid negative ones. The brain encourages us to repeat pleasurable behaviour, even though it may not be the healthiest choice for our life. When there is a lack of dopamine, it can cause people to change their behaviours in ways that will help release more of this chemical. They will pursue activities that trigger their reward centre, even if these activities are harmful or do not relate with their actual needs. Dopamine is what drives us to create these patterns.

Healthy levels of dopamine drive us to seek and repeat pleasurable activities, while low levels can have an adverse physical and psychological impact.

When the brain has a healthy level of dopamine, we feel good. Our motivation increases. We're productive. We plan well. We learn quickly. We're driven, excited about life, focused, and attentive. Healthy levels of dopamine can also make us more sociable and extroverted. This "feel good" neurotransmitter also helps increase our empathy for others, making us more willing to adapt to others' needs. Dopamine can also stimulate creativity.

Low dopamine levels, also called "dopamine deficiency," can make us feel fatigued and restless. Instead of feeling full of life, low levels of dopamine can leave us feeling unmotivated, depressed, and anxious. Our ability to focus wanes, our sleeping habits suffer, our mood worsens, our body struggles to maintain a sense of vitality when the brain doesn't produce

enough dopamine. The low level of dopamine decreases our impulse control, rational thinking, and executive thinking.

Dopamine says, “This feels good, I want and need more”, while serotonin says, “This feels good, I don’t want and need more”. These are two different states. The problem is that if we do not know the difference, we are subject to continually try to reward ourselves. Reward is good, reward plus stress is not!

Pleasure	Happiness/satisfaction
This feels good, I want and need more	This feels good, I don’t want and need more
Is a short term	Is a long term
Is a visceral	Is ethereal
Is taking from	Is giving to
Is achieved alone	Is achieved in social groups
Is achievable with substances	Is not achievable with substances
In the extreme is addictive	Cannot be addictive
Is dopamine	Is serotonin

Practical Activity 3: Live your core values (10 min)

Purpose: To help you determine your core values so you can start aligning your personal goals with them.

Instructions: How are you showing up at work? In your personal relationships? For yourself? How you show up in the world is determined by your core values.

1) Determine your core values

From the list below, choose and write down every core value that resonates with you. Do not overthink your selection. As you read through the list, simply write down the words that feel like a core value to you personally. If you think of a value, you possess that is not on the list, write it down.

Abundance	Dedication	Kindness	Resourcefulness
Acceptance	Dependability	Knowledge	Responsibility
Accountability	Diversity	Leadership	Responsiveness
Achievement	Empathy	Learning	Risk Taking
Adventure	Encouragement	Love	Safety
Advocacy	Enthusiasm	Loyalty	Security
Ambition	Ethics	Making a Difference	Self-Control
Appreciation			Selflessness

Attractiveness	Excellence	Mindfulness	Service
Autonomy	Expressiveness	Motivation	Simplicity
Balance	Fairness	Optimism	Spirituality
Being the Best	Family	Open-	Stability
Benevolence	Flexibility	Mindedness	Success
Boldness	Friendships	Originality	Teamwork
Brilliance	Freedom	Passion	Thankfulness
Calmness	Fun	Performance	Thoughtfulness
Caring	Generosity	Personal	Traditionalism
Challenge	Grace	Development	Trustworthiness
Charity	Growth	Peace	Understanding
Cheerfulness	Happiness	Perfection	Uniqueness
Cleverness	Health	Playfulness	Usefulness
Collaboration	Honesty	Popularity	Versatility
Community	Humility	Power	Vision
Commitment	Humor	Preparedness	Warmth
Compassion	Inclusiveness	Proactivity	Wealth
Consistency	Independence	Proactive	Well-Being
Contribution	Individuality	Professionalism	Wisdom
Cooperation	Innovation	Punctuality	Zeal
Creativity	Inspiration	Quality	
Credibility	Intelligence	Recognition	
Curiosity	Intuition	Relationships	
Daring	Joy	Reliability	
Decisiveness		Resilience	

2) Group all similar values together from the list of values you just created.

Group them in a way that makes sense to you, personally. Create a maximum of five groupings. If you have more than five groupings, drop the least important grouping(s). See the example below.

Abundance	Acceptance	Appreciation	Balance	Cheerfulness
Growth	Compassion	Encouragement	Health	Fun
Wealth	Inclusiveness	Thankfulness	Personal Development	Happiness
Security	Intuition	Thoughtfulness	Spirituality	Humor
Freedom	Kindness	Mindfulness	Well-being	Inspiration
Independence	Love			Joy

Flexibility	Making a Difference			Optimism
Peace	Open-Mindedness			Playfulness
	Trustworthiness			
	Relationships			

3) **Choose one word within each group that represents the label for the entire group.**

Again, do not overthink your labels – there are no right or wrong answers. You are defining the answer that is right for you. See the example below – the label chosen for the grouping is bolded.

Abundance	Acceptance	Appreciation	Balance	Cheerfulness
Growth	Compassion	Encouragement	Health	Fun
Wealth	Inclusiveness	Thankfulness	Personal Development	Happiness
Security	Intuition	Thoughtfulness	Spirituality	Humour
Freedom	Kindness	Mindfulness	Well-being	Inspiration
Independence	Love			Joy
Flexibility	Making a Difference			Optimism
Peace	Open-Mindedness			Playfulness
	Trustworthiness			
	Relationships			

4) **Add a verb to each value label.**

Add a verb to each value so you can see what it looks like as an actionable core value. For example:

- Live in **freedom**.
- Seek opportunities for **making a difference**.
- Act with **mindfulness**.
- Promote **well-being**.
- Multiply **happiness**.

This will guide you in the actions you need to take to feel like you are truly living on purpose.

5) Think of one simple action step about how you are going to put in practice each one of them.

6) To what extent do your core values coincide with the values of your communion?

Resource: <https://www.taproot.com/live-your-core-values-exercise-to-increase-your-success/>

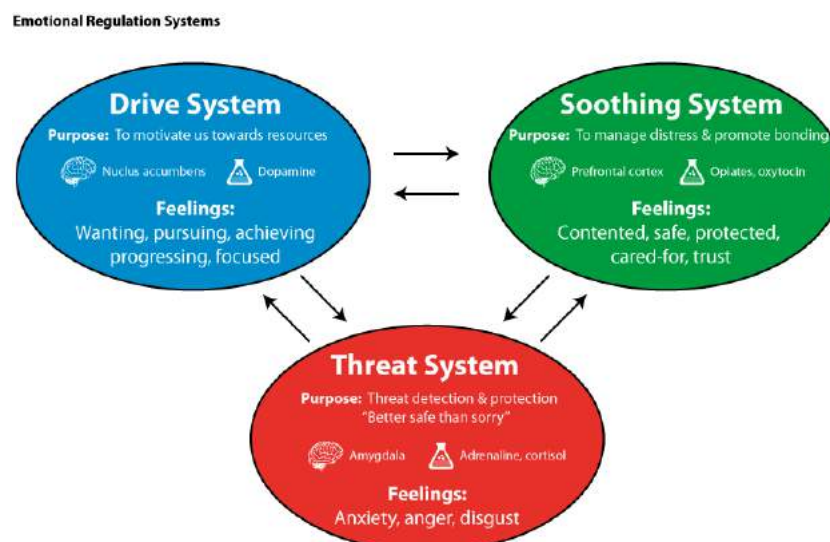
To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- ✓ Watch the video: Serotonin vs. Dopamine - 7 Key Differences Between Pleasure and Happiness - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3svaOilIis> (10 min)
- ✓ Personal Values Assessment (on-line survey based on THE BARRETT MODEL SEVEN LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS) - <https://survey.valuescentre.com/survey.html?id=s1TAEQUStmyFGafKLMkogR4E3lluZ.OgB0EGag0Ki1C1OvC8MbC5eSA&locale=en> (15 min)
- ✓ Complete practical activity 3

3. Learning 3 - How to regulate our emotional systems and have optimal mental well-being?

There is no work-life balance - it's all life. The balance must be within us

3.1. Three emotional regulation systems.



We often experience imbalance in our life, feel overworked, tired, and frustrated because we do things that do not really respond to our needs and authenticity, but rather they meet other people's external expectations and criteria. Sometimes we act out of fear to avoid pain, for example rejection, disapproval, criticism. How can we act from an authentic place of our real needs and wants? For this purpose, we will present the model of the three Emotional Regulation Systems that operate in our nervous system and how we can use each one of them to keep the balance in our life.

The model is developed by Paul Gilbert (the founder of compassion focused therapy (CFT)). It is a helpful lens to understand human thought, emotion, motivation, and behaviour. Our brain contains at least three systems of emotional regulation to respond to the things we perceive from the following systems. It's not that one system is intrinsically good and the other bad. Rather, it is all about finding balance and seeing how they work together. The three emotional systems contribute to our survival and well-being. We experience well-being and resilience when we move between the three systems freely according to our situation and needs.

The three types of emotional systems are as follows:

1) The Threat System

The threat system ensures our survival and is activated when we perceive danger or threat. The aim of the stress response of fight, flight, disgust, or freeze is to protect us, but it is often overly activated, and we assume or exaggerate the threat contributing to excessive feelings of anxiety, anger, hate, sadness and insecurity. When in doubt, we fear, attack, disgust or run away just in case it is not safe. This is also the system that is activating the inner critic, directing us out of fear, anger, or disgust. The threat system is linked to the stress neurotransmitter cortisol (a chemical in the brain).

Although evolved for our protection, the threat self-protection system can give us a very hard time indeed. It is the source of many mental health problems, and even violence. This is because it's not designed for careful thinking; it's designed for fast reactions because that may save your life. It is called "better safe than sorry" thinking.

Another way our threat system gives us a hard time is that it directs our attention in such a way that it blocks out positives. More problems arise when we get stuck in those loops where threat emotions are fuelling our thinking and then those thoughts fuel our emotions, which continue to flush through us—even when the threat is long gone. The result is that not only can we continue to feel bad long after a threat has gone, but we will also continue to block out positive experiences.

Our threat and self-protection system helps us detect and respond to threats and harms. When these emotions pass through us, they can direct our attention, thinking, and behaviour in particular ways. In looking at how the threat system works, it is helpful to reflect on how simultaneous reactions can pull us in different directions. Imagine your boss criticises your

efforts. What emotions do you feel? It may be anger associated with such thoughts as: How dare you criticise my work? What do you know anyway? You may have thoughts and mental images of shouting back, punching him, or taking your revenge at a later date. Meanwhile, there may be another part of you that feels panic and thinks, “My work isn’t good enough”. Part of you may want to run away, hand in your notice, or cry. In any given situation, quite different and conflicting emotions and behaviours can pull us in different directions.

Our threat system can block compassionate awareness! The threat system often undermines us and can affect our self-confidence. The goal is to work towards recognizing when your threat system has been triggered and, when appropriate, aim to calm it down through self-regulation. Your responsibility is to let it do its job correctly and not let it run the show.

It’s important that we are not harsh or critical of how our emotions operate, because they’re all built into us by evolution—they are not our design and not our fault. When we give up blaming and shaming ourselves, we can step back and genuinely take responsibility to work with them as best as we can. This is a key component of mindful compassion.

2) The Drive and Resource Acquisition System

Our drive and resources motivate and energise us to seek and engage with the world to meet our perceived needs and wants, to fulfil our desires (lust, power, control, greed) and values. It activates our reward centre and propels us into action to seize opportunities, to take on challenges, to achieve, to accomplish. In this state, we experience a sense of pleasure and excitement when obtaining the object of our desires or meeting our goals. The seeking system helps us detect, be interested in, and take pleasure in securing important resources that help us survive and prosper/grow, such as in finding food, partners, friends, money, and careers. It is the source of emotions like excitement and pleasure.

So, when we encounter things that could be helpful to us, we are motivated to pursue them, and if we acquire them, we get a buzz of pleasure. This buzz means that we’re likely to try to do the same thing again. Psychologists call it positive reinforcement. It turns out that it’s linked to a brain chemical called dopamine. When good things happen to us, we get a big buzz from the excitement and drive system. Passing an exam that is important to us or going on a date with someone new can give us a buzz of pleasure.

This system that helps us enjoy what we achieve is a good thing unless we become over-focused on achievement to the detriment of other things. For example, many people who suffer with their self-confidence find that they seek achievement as an antidote to feeling inadequate, threatened, and vulnerable. This striving, getting, having, achieving, and owning is almost like an addiction —partly because we are constantly overstimulating our dopamine and leads to an unhealthy level of this neurotransmitter in our nervous system.

We can also get something of a buzz from anticipating good things happening. Of course, the more we live in the daydreams of success and the more unrealistic we allow our fantasies to

become, the harder the comedown will be when we encounter our everyday reality and things don't go quite so well; also, of course, the threat system will then be activated all the more as we fail to live up to our dreams. On the other hand, there are some people who don't bother with all the effort of achieving things to feel good and look for shortcuts to these feelings - they take drugs such as cocaine and amphetamines as a way of getting that energised, positive feeling.

Some researchers are concerned that modern society intentionally overstimulates the drive and acquisition system, supercharging it, so that we end up wanting more and more—more excitement, more things to do, more things to acquire—and are never quite satisfied.

So, while the drive system is important to achieve certain things, we have to be careful that it doesn't get out of balance so that we become overly focused on achieving and feel frustrated and depressed when we do not succeed.

What is so important is the motive underlying what we are driven to do. What do you become excited about and what gives you energy? Emotions can attach themselves to very different motives, and for this reason, motives are crucial. What we place at the centre of what we want and seek in the world will determine the direction in which our drive-based emotions will take us.

3) The Contentment and Soothing System

Our soothing/affiliation system is linked to feelings of contentment in situations where we are not threatened or driven to get things we want. It is a source of emotions such as peaceful well-being, contentment, safeness, comfort and feeling connected. These emotions tend to be gentler and slower acting, but when they move through us, they also influence our attention, thinking, and behaviour in particular ways, such as opening our attention, softening anxiety, helping us to reason and reflect in more positive, gentler ways, and directing behaviour toward slower, calmer actions.

It's important to recognize that this state is not just a relaxed state, because it can involve a heightened state of awareness and openness of attention; so, for example, you are more likely to appreciate a walk in the country, noticing the smells and colours, feeling chilled out, neither wanting to achieve anything nor worried about anything; the thinking mind is "off" and you are engaged directly with your sensory world. These feelings seem linked not only to a particular balance in our **nervous** systems but also to an important chemical in the brain called an endorphin, which interestingly is also a chemical that tones down feelings of pain. There is also a hormone called oxytocin that links to our feelings of social safety and affiliation, to trust, liking people, and feeling safe and supported. In fact, the studies argued that oxytocin is associated with social support and reduces stress, and that people with low levels of oxytocin have high levels of stress response. (Heinrichs, Baumgartner, Kirschbaum, Ehlert, 2003).

This system awakens a sense of satisfaction and security, making us feel happy with the way things are, feeling safe and neither striving nor wanting. It is an inner peace that creates a sense of lack of need and increases connection with others. It is a very different feeling from the hyped-up excitement or “striving and succeeding” feelings associated with the drive system. Here, we can rest, being more accepting and non-judging. This system allows us to savour the good times, to be grateful, to observe and to gain a greater perspective.

This powerful system can make us compassionate and can be very effective for our well-being. It can moderate the other two systems of Drive and Defence when they are overly active.

3.2. The Healthy Mind Platter.

The Healthy Mind Platter was created by Dr. Daniel J. Siegel, Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute and Clinical Professor at the UCLA School of Medicine in collaboration with Dr. David Rock, Executive Director of the Neuro Leadership Institute.

The Healthy Mind Platter has seven daily essential mental activities necessary for optimum mental health and personal well-being. These seven daily activities make up the full set of “mental nutrients” that your brain and relationships need to function at their best. By engaging every day in each of these servings, you promote integration in your life and enable your brain to coordinate and balance its activities. These essential mental activities strengthen your brain’s internal connections and your connections with other people and the world around you.



Source: <https://drdansiigel.com/healthy-mind-platter/>

These seven daily activities make up the full set of “mental nutrients” that your brain and relationships need to function at their best. By engaging every day in each of these servings, you promote integration in your life and enable your brain to coordinate and balance its activities.

- 1) **Sleep time:** When we give the brain the rest it needs to consolidate learning and recover from the experiences of the day. Sufficient sleep helps concentration, emotional well-being, learning and behaviour.
- 2) **Physical time:** When we move our bodies, aerobically if possible, which strengthens the brain in many ways. Exercise improves mood, reduces stress and anxiety and increases focus.
- 3) **Focus time:** When we closely focus on tasks in a goal-orientated way, taking on challenges that make deep connections in the brain. Concentrating on solving problems, writing essays, studying, etc.
- 4) **Play time:** When we allow ourselves to be spontaneous and creative, playfully enjoying novel experiences, which helps make new connections in the brain. Joking, being silly, having fun.
- 5) **Connecting time:** When we connect with other people, ideally in person, or take time to appreciate our connection to the natural world around us, richly activating the brain’s relational circuitry. Gratitude, generosity and giving back.
- 6) **Down time:** When we are non-focused without any specific goal, and let our mind wander or simply relax, which helps our brain recharge. Chilling out. An important part of consolidating learning.
- 7) **Time in:** When we quietly reflect internally, focusing on sensations, images, feelings and thoughts, helping to better integrate the brain. Mindfulness and self-awareness activities.

You can make a self-assessment from 1 to 10 (1 being very dissatisfied; 10 being completely satisfied). Where are you in each of the 7 areas at this moment of your life? What kind of steps/intentions can you take?

Practical Activity 4: Three emotional regulation systems (20 min)

Purpose: To help assess what are your three emotional systems at this period of your life.

Instructions: Consider the three circles shown in figure below. Focus on each one for a moment, reflecting on where you spend most of your time and energy. It is all about finding balance and seeing how they work together. Write these things down in each circle.

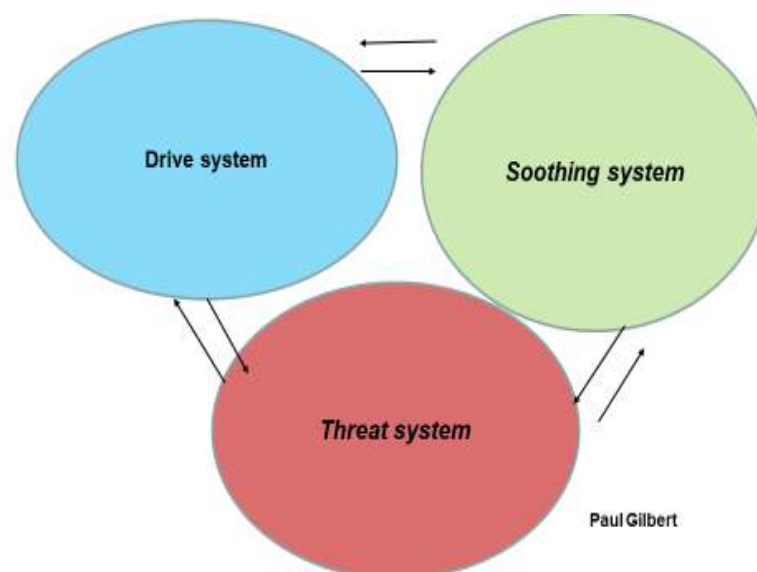
- What is the balance between them?
- Which system would you wish to cultivate more?

Threat system: Think about the things in your daily life right now that can trigger your threat system. It may be small things such as needing to get to work on time or concerns about the traffic or completing a piece of work; or it might be something more serious such as facing a divorce or a worrying health problem.

Drive system: Focus on the things in your life that give you a sense of pleasure and enjoyment: things you feel excited about and look forward to, positive things that make you want to get out of bed each day. This could be something you want to achieve, or it might be the thought of going on a holiday; it might be looking forward to coming home to a nice meal, going to the movies, or doing a good piece of work.

Keep in mind, though, that some energizers can be threat focused: for example, wanting to achieve things not for enjoyment of the thing, but because you are frightened that if you do not, then people might reject you.

Soothing system: Focus on the things in your life that give you a sense of slowing down, chilling out, and being content, and allow you to feel a sense of well-being, of not wanting to achieve anything or go anywhere because you are content with the way things are right now. What things, activities, or relationships in your life foster this sense of feeling safe, connected, and content? How much time do you spend in the soothing.



Resource: Gilbert. P. (2014). Mindful Compassion

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- ✓ Read the article: The three emotional regulation systems - https://www.mindfulpath.com.au/application/files/5115/6583/0031/The_three_emotional_systems.pdf (5 min)
- ✓ Watch the video: Making sense of stress with 3 circles - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TTtnw7Zizs> (13 min)
- ✓ Read the article: *Healthy Mind Platter* - <https://drdansiegel.com/healthy-mind-platter/> (10 min)
- ✓ Watch the video: *Healthy Mind Platter* - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQ_m9rkIcak (5 min)
- ✓ Complete practical activity 4

4. Learning 4 - Work-life boundary management flex styles and the role of HR and managers

To get high quality [performance], you need to be sensitive to the personal needs that employees have, Manager

4.1. Work-life boundary management flex styles

Fifty years ago, work and non-work lives were typically kept separate, and it was generally easy for us to do so. Work was carried out in the workplace and left behind when the working day was finished. Some people still prefer this approach. They are known as **Separators**.

For most of us, however, developments in technology and working practices have resulted in work becoming increasingly integrated with other aspects of our lives. Some people prefer to work this way, unsurprisingly they are known as **Integrators**.

Our reasons for integrating may be personal: we want to accommodate client needs or to carve out time in the middle of our work to deal with aspects of our personal life. Alternatively, our reasons may be driven by the expectations of others. For example, the long hours culture in our workplace may drive us to continue working once we get home.

Professor Ellen Ernst Kossek is a leading work life balance expert whose book “CEO of Me”, (2008) considers these preferences and their impact on well-being. She has identified several “flexstyles”, concedes that compromise is often part of the equation and concludes the important thing is **to feel happy and in control rather than unhappy and out of control**. So, **the level of control we have over manifesting our style** is critical to how satisfied and happy we will feel in terms of work-life balance.

There are three main flex styles that individuals use to build their working lives: **Integrators, Separators, and Volleiers**. In a nutshell:

- 1) **Integrators blend work and personal life** physically in terms of time, schedules, and space or location. Psychologically, they also mix work and personal life in terms of their day-to-day thoughts, emotions, and energy. They have difficulty drawing lines between work and family. Integrators prefer to blur the boundaries between work and non-work. Many working mothers will fall into this category, and it does have a **big upside in that they see the two roles enriching each other**. Thus, we're often reminded the same self-organisation skills developed as a parent can be useful at work, while high quality negotiation skills are almost essential for navigating toddler tantrums. **On the downside Integrators incur mental costs in switching and have less of a buffer if something goes wrong in one role**. They can find it harder to "switch off".
- 2) **Separators segment work from personal life psychologically and physically**. For example, they focus on work when at work and on home when at home. They tend not to work at home or on the weekends, but if they have to do so, they are good at creating a separate space for working at home (maybe a home office with a door). Or they can carve out a separate block of time to go in and work and get things done. Separators prefer not to socialise with work colleagues in their own time. They neither discuss work matters at home nor personal issues at work. **Clear physical, psychological, and temporal boundaries are maintained between work and home activities**. This is the traditional "male" model embedded in workplace cultures during the early part of the last century and still seen as the epitome of professional behaviour in some organisations. **The upside of being a Separator is less pressure on mental resources**. When at work you're focused on work and when at home focused on home rather than constantly switching between the two – which requires considerable mental effort. We're increasingly recognising that multi-tasking is an ineffective approach to life! **On the downside, these people are more likely to experience conflict between their work and non-work roles** – particularly if they are caring for others. For example, it can be hard to focus on work when a loved one is unwell.
- 3) **Volleyers switch back and forth**, at times experiencing work and life as tightly demarcated from each other and at other times mixing all aspects of their life.

For each of these styles of how people manage work and personal life, there are subgroups in which one group is happy and in control, and the other group is feeling unhappy, not in control, and their values are compromised.

Well-Being/ Happiness Level	Integrators	Separators	Volleyers
High (<i>Feeling in control; work and personal life have positive relationships.</i>)	Fusion Lover	Firsters (work or family first)	Quality Timer
Low (<i>Overwhelmed, overworked, out of control; work and personal life often feel at odds.</i>)	Reactors	Captives	Job Warriors

1) Flex style Category 1: Integrators

Integrators continually blend work and nonwork activities during the day. They can be found in a wide range of roles and work settings, including office and factory roles, managerial or professional jobs, and work performed from home. Under this category, there are two subgroups - Fusion **Lovers** and **Reactors**.

Yet all Integrators share some similarities in how they manage work and nonwork commitments. They *physically integrate by mixing their use of spaces*—for instance, drafting a report on their laptop at the kitchen table while the kids are watching TV or taking a moment during the workday to balance a checking account at their desk. They *mix work and nonwork mentally and emotionally*, such as mulling over a business-related problem while participating in a book discussion group or worrying about a spouse’s job interview while taking part in a business meeting.

	Flex style Category 1: Integrators
Fusion Lovers	<p>Fusion Lovers, who experience blending as positive, feeling in control, and fitting with their life values.</p> <p>The Fusion Lovers says: When I hear “boundaries,” I hear “restrictive and inflexible.”</p> <p>They enjoy switching between work and nonwork responsibilities during the day. They’re the ones who email their spouse during a meeting to see whether their teenaged daughter passed her driver’s licence test. Or they brainstorm solutions to a complex business problem while on the way to visit an elderly parent. Many of them also feel comfortable allowing work to bleed into their evenings and weekends. They thrive on remaining connected to their professional, family, community, and personal responsibilities simultaneously.</p> <p>They view multitasking as an efficient and desirable way to live. This flex style helps them save valuable time and enables them to fulfil their responsibilities across numerous dimensions of their lives.</p> <p>Fusion Lovers may also willingly and happily switch roles in response to external cues. To illustrate, a colleague phones a mother, Fusion Lover, during the evening to discuss a work problem, and he promptly stops helping her child with homework so that she can take the call.</p>
Reactors,	<p>Reactors dislike the fact they are blending and feel out of control and unhappy with how they are living their lives because it doesn’t fit with their personal preferences. They would rather keep work and personal life separate. They are unhappy and feeling out of control because they aren’t managing their lives the way they want.</p> <p>Like Fusion Lovers, Reactors shift frequently between work and nonwork activities, often handling family or personal issues while at work and dealing with professional issues while at home. Yet, unlike Fusion Lovers, Reactors would prefer to have greater control over when, where, and how they</p>

	<p>blend their many responsibilities. They respond to whatever work or non-work tasks they believe they need their attention the most at the time.</p> <p>Some have little or no support in grappling with professional and personal demands. For instance, a single parent, who has no choice but to leave the office and pick up her son from day-care early when he gets sick. Or a manager at a large corporation, who has to handle a midday phone call from a banker regarding his mortgage application because her spouse is unwilling to deal with such tasks. Some Reactors give greater weight to nonwork demands in their integration strategy. Other Reactors emphasise work priorities, often because they strongly identify themselves through their professional life.</p>
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2) Flex style Category 2: Separators

Separators keep work and nonwork activities compartmentalised throughout the day. There are two strategies that make up the Separators category: **Firsters (Work or Family) and Captives.** These flex styles are distinguished by how much control people feel they have in using their current approach and how satisfied they are with their situation.

Flex style Category 2: Separators	
Firsters	<p>Firsters feel in control of the fact their flex style involves separation between work and personal life. They choose to place one part of their life— either work or family—in the highest priority. For Work Firsters, it is time to focus on their jobs that come first in life. For Family Firsters, it is family or personal life that matters most. Work Firsters can accept that succeeding in the career requires them to be available at all hours to clients and global customers. They often work late into the night. But the bottom line is that they really enjoy the freedom and the comfort, and don't mind the hours.</p> <p>Family Firsters consider their family or personal life more important than their careers. A mother, who works in human resources and is married with three children - she is adamant about keeping her family and work life separate, specifically so she can give her children her full attention when she's home. When she's at work, she focuses on her job responsibilities. Whether one is a Family Firster is not based on one's family background, but whether an individual's dominant values are to design life decisions to enable a focus on personal time— whether it is for themselves or personal interest or for being with family or community. Family Firsters' need to have a "life" are a high personal priority.</p>
Captives	<p>Captives do not feel in control of the fact that one part of their life—either their job or their family demands—forces them to overly focus on one part of life to the sacrifice of the other. In contrast, firsters feel in control of the fact their flex style involves separation between work and personal life. They choose to place one part of</p>

	<p>their life— either work or family—in the highest priority. For Work Firsters, it is time to focus on their jobs that come first in life. For Family Firsters, it is family or personal life that matters most.</p> <p>Some Separators segment the work and nonwork aspects of their lives because their jobs or other dimensions of their lives don't lend themselves to any other approach. Perhaps they work for a company that doesn't allow flex time or telecommuting, or their job, by its very nature, must be done only in the office. Or maybe their company's culture is such that people get ahead only by putting in extensive "face time" at the office. For a Separator who prioritises family life, perhaps the lack of a partner at home means that the person must keep work from bleeding into evenings and weekends so he can care for children. The recommendations to such individuals as Captives, is reflecting their sense of being trapped in either their career role or their nonwork role.</p>
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3) Flex style Category 3: Volleiers

Volleiers integrate the work and nonwork aspects of their lives at times and separate them at other times, depending on their priorities and the circumstances of their professional and home or personal life. There are two flex styles that make up this category: **Quality Timers and Job Warriors.** Like Integrators, Volleiers use physical, temporal, and mental tactics to implement their flex style.

Flex style Category 3: Volleiers	
Quality Timers	<p>Use time cues—such as the shift from the workweek to the weekend or from a busy time to a not-so-busy time—to decide when to integrate or separate work and nonwork dimensions of their lives. Generally satisfied with their lives, they feel that they have a significant degree of control over their situation.</p> <p>For example, a mother, an accountant with children in elementary school, works intensely during the tax season—putting in as many as 60 hours a week during February, March, and April. Work comes first during this busy time of year, and family comes second. During tax season, she relies on her husband to take charge of the family's daily scheduling and activities, including ferrying the kids to and from school. She has a supportive spouse who can shoulder family responsibilities during her busy time of the year that enables her to perceive choice—to manage work and nonwork life to enable quality time at both. If she had no such support, she might well feel that she had significantly less control.</p> <p>When the workload eases, she can become a Fusion Lover—mixing professional and personal communications throughout the day and taking work breaks to dispatch barn and household chores</p>
Job Warriors	<p>Job Warriors face more constraints in when and how they switch between integrating and separating work and non-work. Often in jobs that require them to work from the road as well as at the office and from home, Job Warriors frequently compartmentalise professional and personal activities while travelling for work</p>

or working from the office. They tend to mix the career and personal or family dimensions of their lives while working from home.

Many of them feel that their job structure or family or personal circumstances leave them little or no control over how they manage conflicting demands. These individuals often have jobs with heavy workloads and simply too much to do in too little time. Sure they have some latitude over when and where they do it, but the physical workload or the travel demands give them limited slack at times over when they integrate and when they separate. **So they go through periods of high integration when they feel they are in control and can blend as they need to—often when travel or workloads are not so high—and then they go through periods of high separation when they are forced to separate.**

In one week, they could move from being on a global trip or working until midnight on a client proposal during the height of tax season, to going to a day or two of being the only one watching the kids because now it is their partner’s turn to focus on work because the partner has been covering for the Job Warrior.

Practical activity 5: Discerning your overall flexstyle category (self-assessment tool); 15 min

Instructions: This part of the self-assessment helps you determine whether you’re an Integrator, Separator, or Volleyer. Read each statement. Circle the number indicating how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

No	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree not disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	All in all, I try to keep work and personal life separated most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Except in an emergency, I generally try to take care of personal or family needs at work only when I’m on break or during my lunch hour	1	2	3	4	5
3	During my workday, there is very little blurring of boundaries between time spent on work and time spent on personal activities.	1	2	3	4	5

4	It is clear where my work life ends and my family or personal life begins.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I rarely attend to personal or family issues during the workday.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I almost never do extra work after normal work hours.	1	2	3	4	5
7	In general, I don't take work-related phone calls or e-mails during evenings, weekends, holidays, or vacations.	1	2	3	4	5
8	In general, I talk as little as possible about my family or personal issues with most people I work with	1	2	3	4	5
9	I usually handle emails related to my family or personal life separately from emails related to my work.	1	2	3	4	5
10	When I'm at home, I rarely think about work, so I can fully get away from my job.	1	2	3	4	5
11	If I work or ever were to work from home, I would work in a space that is designated for that purpose only.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I do not think about my family, friends, and personal interests when at work, so I can focus.	1	2	3	4	5
13	With most of my family and friends, I tend not to talk about work issues as I like to keep work separate.	1	2	3	4	5

14	If I work from home (or were ever to work from home) I make it clear that family and friends should not interrupt me unless it is important to do so.1	1	2	3	4	5
15	If I work from home (or were ever to work from home) I wouldn't handle household or family responsibilities until the workday is finished.	1	2	3	4	5
	Calculating your score: Add up the total number of circles you placed in each column and write the totals in the boxes to the right.	1	2	3	4	5

Interpreting the score: If you circled “1” and “2” for most of the statements, you are likely a Separator. If you circled “4” or “5” for most of the statements, you are probably an Integrator. If you circled a wide variety of statements, ranging between 1 and 5, you are probably a Volleyer.

After making this self-assessment you may already know whether you're an Integrator, Volleyer, or Separator. But it may be more difficult to determine which strategy you use within that category. If you're an Integrator, are you a Fusion Lover or a Reactor? If you're a Separator, are you a Work or Family Firster or a Captive? If you were a Volleyer, are you a Timer or Job Warrior? **Clues to your strategy include how much control you believe you have in managing your life demands, as well as how satisfied you are with the current quality of your life.**

For additional self-assessments, you can find in the book of Professor Ellen Ernst Kossek “The CEO of me”.

4.2. Changing the flex style for better relationships between work and personal Life

Change begins with self-awareness and assessment of the flex style you currently have and its benefits and pitfalls. For many people, just knowing in your head that you need to change won't be enough—you have to be motivated to change and take personal action. So, the next step after self-monitoring and awareness is to get over your natural reluctance to give up familiar ways of doing things, even if they aren't working for you anymore.

The following questions can also provide helpful data as part of your self-assessment of the need to change your flex style:

- 1) To what extent is my current flex style draining time and energy away from what really matters to me?
- 2) Do the trade-offs and stress that come with the flex style I'm currently using outweigh the benefits I am receiving?
- 3) Do my family, friends, or co-workers who are affected by my flex style think I need to make changes?
- 4) Can I envision more effective ways of managing my life that I would like to try?
- 5) Can I envision the barriers to change, and am I willing to surmount them?
- 6) Can I identify resources (money, people, knowledge, and so on) that may help me make a change?
- 7) Am I willing to consider both incremental changes to my current flex style as well as a major overhaul if necessary?

If you answered "yes" to several of these questions, you are probably ready to commit to changing your flex style.

To create real change that enables us to take control of our lives, we cannot continue to make choices without recognizing the downsides of these choices. We must take off the blinders that keep us from seeing that there are more options and ways of living and managing our flex style. The inability to see what is creating some problems can be magnified when we have a major change in our life or work situation.

There are several 5 main tenets to keep in mind regardless of your flexstyle.

First rule:	<i>Every style has trade-offs</i>	Unfortunately, no style is perfect. You need to recognize these trade-offs and conduct some self-reflection on what trade-offs you absolutely could not live with , before attempting to make changes to your flex style.
Second rule:	<i>The importance of consciously making a choice on which flex style would offer you the best alignment with your values</i>	Unfortunately, no style is perfect. You need to recognize this. You must take action. Otherwise, people in your life such as your boss or your family will make decisions that take away your ability to make choices. Not making a choice is actually making a choice to let others decide your flex style.
Third rule:	<i>Some of the flex styles, such as Reactors, Captives, or Job Warriors, are not sustainable over time or good for our mental and physical health and those of family members we live with.</i>	These generally are styles where we do not feel in control, those that truly can take away our ability to have personal power over the meshing of work and personal life. When flex styles of any stripe are forced on us— when we consciously or unconsciously live our lives in ways different than our preferences and identities suggest, we feel like we have little control over our lives.

		<p>Stress increases, and well-being takes a nosedive in how we experience our personal mastery of interactions at the office, at home, or within our communities.</p> <p>In general, having more control and the ability to choose when you separate between work and family and when you integrate is good and will make your life better.</p>
Fourth rule:	<i>When you have a life that is overloaded with too much work and family demands to realistically regularly handle, minor tinkering with your current flex style may not be enough</i>	<p>You may need to move toward a major style shift. Typically for people with far too much on their plate, the ultimate solution is to make the tough choice to cut back on your total life workload to customise your life to focus on the life buckets that are the most meaningful.</p> <p>You may also consider looking at part-time work or reduced-load work options to cut back on work. Minor tactics like not checking email at certain times won't fully help if things keep piling up.</p>
Fifth rule	<i>To be aware of the fact that when you are undergoing a major personal or professional change, you should be open to reviewing your flex style, because it is likely to be out of alignment</i>	<p>There are key times in over the course of our lives (births, changing or losing jobs, marriage, divorce, death of a loved one, and so on) that may be good times for us to reassess and make some change as we are more receptive and open to change at these key life switching points.</p>

Tips for better managing your flex style

For example, if you are unhappy with the outcomes of being a Family Firster, and yet don't want to shift to another style, you might work to reduce the negative career threats from being sometimes out of touch with work. Of course, not all the downsides of each flex style can be easily overcome without considering a major life change to a new flex style, particularly if you're a Captive, Reactor, or Job Warrior. More drastic changes or a shift in style will be necessary in some cases, as shown below.

Flex style		Primary Disadvantages	Tips for Better Managing Your Flex style
S A P E R	Family Firster	<p>Negative impact on career</p> <p>Possible negative co-worker, client, or supervisor reactions</p>	<p>Contribute unique value at work in ways that don't impinge on family time. For example, volunteer to take on a task that your colleagues aren't interested in.</p>

A T T O R S		Lack of support across work and family domains	Build a reputation for credibility and reliability at work. For instance, make your regular work hours well known to others and stick to them. And cultivate positive relationships with your boss and co-workers by helping others in need and providing positive feedback to others.
	Work Firsters	Risk of missing out on key family events or personal interests Potential for overwork and burnout Lack of support across work and family domains	Carve out quality time for family or self—for example, by taking an afternoon off occasionally. Use your time and energy wisely: Work on the most important projects during the time of day when you have the most energy. Designate certain times of day for checking and responding to email (rather than responding each time your monitor chimes). Make lunch appointments to force yourself to take a midday break. Keep a weekly log documenting the amount of time you spend on work versus non-work priorities. If you find that you typically leave little or no time for nonwork interests, take steps to improve the balance.
	Captive	Miss key family and life events Role conflict and stress Less developed nonwork life Families/friends can become short-changed or victims of our nonwork demands. Lack of cross-domain support	Find a stress-management approach that works for you. Simple techniques such as regular exercise can reduce stress and the health problems associated with it. Use your entire work break for personal revitalization.
V O L L E Y E R S	Quality Time	Confusion over which demand is more pressing. Risk of pursuing both work and network activities in middle-of-the-road way, with mediocre outcomes for both Role confusion possible for family and co-workers Job creep Increased cognitive complexity. Difficulty setting priorities Role confusion	Block out large chunks of time for focusing on work or family/personal/community life—you'll reduce switching costs and give your best attention to each role. Have periods where you turn off communication devices such as cell phone

	<p>Job Warrior</p>	<p>Difficulty switching from separating and focusing on work while travelling to integrating with family when home.</p> <p>Fatigue Overloaded weekends spent on mundane household tasks that workers with more flexible schedules can do in the week.</p> <p>Miss life and work events happening during the week.</p> <p>Vulnerable to breakdown of support system; may not work for someone who lacks a partner who can pitch hit while you are on the road or in a heavy work phase.</p> <p>Sunday night blues as leaving for road or another grinding long work week Job creep Increased cognitive complexity.</p> <p>Difficulty setting priorities.</p> <p>Role confusion</p>	<p>Use travel time to ease transition.</p> <p>Begin shifting modes while in transit to ease adjustment after you arrive. For example, stop thinking about work on the drive home and start thinking about weekend activities.</p> <p>Focus your time on activities you value most when you are home.</p>
<p>I N T E G R A T O R</p>	<p>Fusion Lovers</p>	<p>Job or family creep (long days)</p> <p>Others’ escalating expectations about your availability</p> <p>Switching costs from frequent transitions</p> <p>Seen as unprofessional if integrate family or other personal interests into work</p>	<p>Track your work hours for a week or two, along with the number and length of “breaks” you take.</p> <p>You’ll become more conscious of destructive work patterns.</p> <p>Limit the number of breaks per day.</p> <p>Set dates for revisiting whether your flex style approach is working for you.</p>
	<p>Reactor</p>	<p>Others’ escalating expectations that you’ll be available whenever they need you.</p> <p>Switching costs from frequent transitions between work and non-work—higher even than other Integrators because dislike switching</p> <p>Job or family creep (long days)</p> <p>Seen as unprofessional if integrate family into work time.</p> <p>Overload and loss of feeling of control.</p> <p>Frustration and burnout</p>	<p>Resist the urge to take on more and more, at work or at home.</p> <p>Develop realistic expectations of yourself and communicate them to others.</p> <p>Try to minimise the number of times you switch between work and non-work.</p>

		Dissatisfaction with performance in both work and personal life roles	
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To learn the most from your own habit tracking records, watch for patterns. Do certain days or times always cause you stress?

Practical activity 6 - Habit tracking your flexstyle (10 min)

Instructions: Change at a personal level needs to begin with some reflection. This involves self-monitoring of your behaviour. You can do this by keeping a time diary of when your moods are bad over the day, when you experience conflict or tension, and in what context. You can also reflect on how these feelings are linked to the kind of flex style you currently have, and this can help you understand how to craft change and identify trouble spots. It can be as simple as keeping a chart, like the one shown.

Think about the worst day that you wrote about. What made it unique? Were there any triggers - salient events that seemed to trigger the bad day? Read the third column and check whether your tense moments tend to come when you are separating, blending, or volleying between the two. This can give you a signal of the direction in which you need to change. Fill in the table below.

Day	I felt most tense, overwhelmed, or conflicted when ...	Was I integrating or separating home and work or volleying between the two?	What were my options?	I felt most peaceful and happy when...

Mon	I realised the contractor was coming tomorrow to finish the work at the same time I'd need to pick up my son from day-care when I had a work deadline to meet.	Integrating: Reacting	Do it all myself staying up late to finish the work; Negotiate with my spouse to meet the need of the contractor; Start to find new backups – new sitter; Negotiate to cut workload or get help from a colleague.	The house was quiet and I could focus to meet my work; We all went out in the yard to work in the garden.

4.2. The role of the HR and managers for work-life balance

The role of the workplace and its contribution to work-life balance

Work-life balance is an essential aspect to take into account when considering employee health and productivity, and each company must find the methods that work for their organisations as a whole. Since the pandemic started, the traditional ideas around work have been thrown upside down. The health crisis has accelerated changes in the way we work. **People want to take ownership of their own lives, and we've all started to think more about the ways that our work and personal lives integrate with one another.**

According to a new The "Job Optimism" research, MENLO PARK, Calif., June 15, 2021 (PRNewswire) from global staffing firm Robert Half more than 2,800 professionals tracks employee sentiment on current and future career prospects and reveals key implications for employers:

- Nearly 1 in 3 professionals **(31%) prefer to work for an organisation that better aligns with their personal values**, so they had a shift in perspective due to the pandemic;
- **71% of employees would leave a company whose values don't align with their own**;
- The corporate programmes that are **most important to workers are employee well-being (70%)** and diversity, equity, and inclusion (47%).

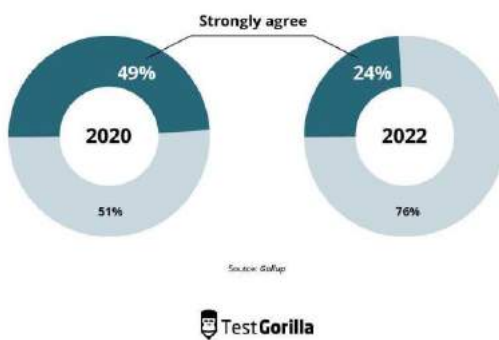
"Today's employees have high expectations of their employer. They want to belong to an organisation that puts people first and takes action to create positive change in the workplace and community" said Lynne Smith, Robert Half senior vice president of global human resources.

The role of the workplace and its contribution to work-life balance will continue to change over the next few years. As it develops, we'll see the emergence of four different 'workplaces' that all need to be considered when seeking to provide employees with a good work-life balance.

- 1) **The emotional workplace:** The emotional workplace will revolve around culture, well-being, social capital, and trust.
- 2) **The physical workplace:** This workplace will look at the future of physical offices, how our roles and purpose evolve, and whether there is even a need for physical offices in the future.
- 3) **The technological workplace:** As technology continues to advance, we must think about how it will foster new business models, ways of working and employee experiences.
- 4) **The purposeful workplace:** Finally, there is the purposeful workplace which will consider evolving ideas of leadership, organisational models, values, and employee engagement.

Why is setting boundaries at work important?

Employees who believe their company cares about their wellbeing



sharply from 2020 to 2022.

Setting healthy boundaries at work reduces burnout and shows employees that their company respects their needs. Employee burnout is a serious problem costing employees their health and, in turn, productivity and performance for your organisation.

When people don't have work boundaries, they end up stretched thin, stressed, and doing work that isn't their responsibility. In other words, they do things they aren't being paid to do.

This can also lead to resentment toward their employers. The percentage of employees who believe their company cares about their well-being dropped

Tips for helping your staff set healthy boundaries at work.

As an HR professional, you can build a culture around boundaries and give your staff the tools they need to set healthy ones.

Strategy	Description
Ask about boundaries during the hiring process and make sure there is a match	Assess potential candidates' boundaries during the early stages, and see if they align with your company culture
Make it a policy for employees to communicate and reach an agreement on their boundaries	Ensure employees communicate and clarify their boundaries with colleagues and leaders
Set up a culture of coaching and honest one-on-one meetings	Talk about work boundaries during one-on-one meetings with workers so that they're comfortable setting boundaries pertaining to private information
Create clear roles and responsibilities for all your employees.	Prevent employees from becoming overworked by clarifying their responsibilities
Empower your employees with tech tools to help them delegate and share their workload	Help your employees share their workload when they need it by giving them the right software
Make sure employees take their allocated time off	Ensure employees aren't voluntarily opting out of vacation time and that they're taking beneficial time off
Create clear roles and responsibilities for all your employees	Prevent employees from becoming overworked by clarifying their responsibilities
Create a policy that discourages communication and notifications outside of work hours	Encourage a better work-life balance by reducing the messages employees get outside of work
Be sure to step in, mediate, and help find solutions when conflicts arise	Do your best to mediate conflict caused by miscommunication and crossed boundaries

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- ✓ Read the article: An HR professional's guide to setting boundaries at work- <https://www.testgorilla.com/blog/an-hr-professionals-guide-to-setting-boundaries-at-work/> (10 min)
- ✓ Complete practical activity 5 and 6

5. Synopsis

Work-life balance is a broad concept evoking a prioritising between "work" (career or ambition) on the one hand and "life" (pleasure, leisure, family or spiritual development) on the other.

The idea of work-life balance is a bit wrong because it articulates the concept of a perfect 50/50 split between your work life and your private life, between pleasure and satisfaction, between "wants" and "needs". This concept suggests that work is bad, and life is good. The reality is much more fluid. There is no such thing as a "perfect" balance that will work for every person and at every stage of life.

The model will explain that it is more about work-life harmony than work-life balance.

6. List of references

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Kelly, M. (2011) Off Balance Getting Beyond the Work-Life Balance Myth to Personal and Professional Satisfaction

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7. Glossary

Polarities - opposite parts that work in tandem or in contrast to one another to help clarify meaning.

Neurotransmitter - chemical messengers that the body can't function without. Their job is to carry chemical signals ("messages") from one neuron (nerve cell) to the next target cell.

Dopamine - Dopamine is one of the "feel good" chemicals in our brain interacting with pleasure and reward.

Dopamine deficiency - Low dopamine levels can make us feel fatigued and restless.

Three emotional regulation systems - Our brain contains at least three systems – Threat system, Drive system and Soothing system - of emotional regulation to respond to the things we perceive from the following systems. It is a helpful lens through which to understand human thought, emotion, motivation, and behaviour. The model is developed by Paul Gilbert (the founder of compassion focused therapy (CFT)).

The Healthy Mind Platter - The Healthy Mind Platter has seven daily essential mental activities necessary for optimum mental health and personal well-being. These seven daily activities make up the full set of “mental nutrients”. The Healthy Mind Platter model was created by Dr. Daniel J. Siegel, Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute and Clinical Professor at the UCLA School of Medicine

8. Assessment plan Module 5

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Work-life balance vs work-life harmony. The relationship with my work.</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about priorities and values for addressing personal and family needs in order to achieve work-life balance.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<p><i>Learning outcome 1: Learners will be able to define what -the difference between Work-life balance and Work-life harmony is, Work as a means to an end and Work as an end in itself.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcome 2: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about how to set priorities in order to achieve work-life balance.</i></p>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions, open question, sentence completion</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Lilia Georgieva , CATRO Bulgaria
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	The traditional idea of work-life balance articulates the concept of a perfect 50/50 split between your work life and your private life and treats work and life as separate things.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. Is the correct answer, well done!

	The idea of work-life balance is a bit wrong, because it articulates the concept of a perfect 50/50 split between your work life and your private life. The reality is much more fluid. There is no such thing as a "perfect" balance that will work for every person and at every stage of life.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided as well as the online article on Work-life balance or work-life harmony.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Work-life harmony is about...
Possible answers	<p>A. It's like building a jigsaw puzzle with the individual pieces of work, family, friends, health, hobbies and so on;</p> <p>B. It means making conscious choices about what we will prioritise and why;</p> <p>C. There is no single formula for how to achieve work-life harmony. It looks different for each person, and how he achieves it will vary over time;</p> <p>D. Suggests that work = bad and life = good;</p> <p>E. Casts work and life as a zero-sum game. If we excel or put in extra effort at work, then our lives will suffer as a result</p>
Correct answer	A), B) and C)
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done! Work-life harmony is about finding a way to weave together the different aspects of our lives. Doing this produces a greater sense of well-being and satisfaction than might be achieved through work or non-work time alone
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided as well as the online article on Work-life balance or work-life harmony.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3

Question	Polarities in life is an either/or situation, a split in which a field is made up of separate, competing, either-or parts instead of integrated elements in relationship to one another that form a whole.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False.
Response to correct answer	B. is the correct answer. Well done! Polarities in life are the continuum between two opposite parts and complementary parts and the movement and rhythm between them brings meaning to the whole.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 1.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	4
Question	Give one difference between Work as a means to an end and Work as an end in itself
Possible answers	Open questions
Correct answer	Open questions
Response to correct answer	<p>Is the correct answer, well done!</p> <p><u>Work as a means to an end</u></p> <p>At one end of the spectrum, work is a mere technicality; it is about getting the paycheck. People at this end are happy to simply do their job then fill their time outside work in a way that pleases them. They're not looking for a promotion, more responsibility, or to launch or maintain a career. They might have good relationships with colleagues and enjoy the work they do, but work isn't the main source of meaning for them.</p> <p>It's tempting to think this approach is most common among people preparing for retirement. But people of every age and stage hold this philosophy. And it is a totally legitimate approach to work-life harmony.</p> <p>In fact, in a climate that celebrates the relentless pursuit of promotions and status, this might be a truly subversive and rebellious approach!</p> <p><u>Work as an end in itself</u></p>

	<p>At the other end of the spectrum, work is a meaningful pursuit in itself. It provides an avenue for personal and professional learning and growth. It offers opportunities for setting and achieving goals, attaining status, and developing a flourishing career.</p> <p>People at this end of the spectrum find fulfilment and satisfaction in their work. Their life outside work supports them with the energy and nourishment required for the efforts they put in at work. And this is also a totally legitimate approach to work-life harmony.</p> <p>This doesn't mean that these people don't also enjoy their family, friends, hobbies, sport etc. Rather, the work itself provides a strong sense of meaning and purpose which they can't or don't find in other activities.</p>
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read the text from Learning Unit 1.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	5
Question	Multitasking hinders the work-life balance and leads to stress, fatigue, and imbalance in our life.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A.
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, Excellent! Multitasking hinders the work-life balance and leads to stress, fatigue, and imbalance in our life.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read the text from Learning Unit 1. You could also watch the video provided "The myth of multitasking".
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit (Assessment Unit)	2	<i>Pleasure vs Satisfaction. Principles and personal values</i>
Scope of the assessment		<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about values</i>

	<i>for addressing personal and family needs in order to achieve work life balance.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 3: Learners will be able to define what is the difference between Pleasure and satisfaction. Learning outcome 4: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about what are their core values that help them to achieve work life balance.</i>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Liliya Georgieva, CATRO Bulgaria
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	The fundamental difference between pleasure and satisfaction is that pleasure cannot be sustained beyond the activity producing it. Satisfaction can be sustained beyond the activity producing it.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A.
Response to correct answer	A is the correct answer. Excellent! Pleasure cannot be sustained beyond the activity producing it. Satisfaction can be sustained beyond the activity producing it.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	Low dopamine levels can ...
Possible answers	A. Make us feel fatigued and restless. Instead of feeling full of life. B. Increase our motivation, productivity and we're driven, excited about life, focused, and attentive.

	C. Make our sleeping habits suffer, our mood worsen, and our body struggles to maintain. D. Make us more social and extroverted.
Correct answer	A) and C)
Response to correct answer	A and C are the correct answers. Bravo!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2. You could also watch the video provided.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	The difference between dopamine and serotonin is:
Possible answers	A. Dopamine is linked with the feeling of pleasure while serotonin is the neurotransmitter linked with happiness. B. Dopamine says, “This feels good, I want and need more” while serotonin says, “This feels good, but I don’t want and need more”. C. Dopamin is short term while serotonin is a long term. D. Dopamin is taking from while the serotonin is giving to.
Correct answer	All of the above
Response to correct answer	A, B, C and D Is the correct answer. Great Work!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 2. You could also watch the video.
Times the question can be taken	3

Learning Unit 3 (Assessment Unit)	<i>How to regulate our emotional system and have optimal mental well-being?</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about how to balance the three Emotional Regulation Systems and to optimise our Healthy Mind Platter.</i>

Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 5: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about how to balance Emotional Regulation Systems and their optimal Mental Health Platter.</i>
Assessment method	<i>Open questions, Multiple choice questions, True/False</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Liliya Georgieva, CATRO Bulgaria
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	The three emotional regulation systems are Threat system, Drive system and Soothing system. Which is the correct answer:
Possible answers	<p>A. It's not that one system is intrinsically good and the other bad. Rather, it is all about finding balance and seeing how they work together.</p> <p>B. The three emotional systems contribute to our survival and well-being.</p> <p>C. We experience well-being and resilience when we have more of the Soothing system.</p> <p>D. The soothing system can moderate the other two systems of Drive and Threat when they are overly active.</p>
Correct answer	A), B) and D)
Response to correct answer	A), B) and D) are the correct answers. Excellent!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 3. You could also watch the article video provided.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	The Soothing system awakens a sense of satisfaction and security, making us feel happy with the way things are," feeling safe and neither striving nor wanting. It is an inner peace that creates a sense of lack of need and increases the connection with others.
Possible answers	A. True

	B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A is correct. Great Work!
Response to wrong answer(s)	If you are not sure about the answer, please read the text from Learning Unit 3. You could also read the article provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	The seven areas of Healthy Mind Platter are Sleep time, Physical time, Focus time, play time, Connecting time, Down time, and Time in
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A.True
Response to correct answer	Great! The seven areas of Healthy Mind Platter are Sleep time, Physical time, Focus time, play time, Connecting time, Down time, and Time in
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 3. You could also watch the video provided.
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 4 (Assessment Unit)	<i>Work-life boundary management flex styles and the role of HR and managers.</i>
Scope of the assessment	<i>The aim of the assessment is to support your learning and provide you with a sense of what knowledge you have gained about work-life balance boundary management on an individual and organisational level.</i>
Learning Outcomes assessed	<i>Learning outcome 6: Learners will be able to apply knowledge about what is work-life boundary management, what are the three main flex styles of boundary management – Integrators, Separators and Volleyers, how we can change our flex style when</i>

	<i>it is needed and what is the role of HR experts and managers for supporting employees' work-life integration.</i>
Assessment method	<i>True - False statement, Multiple choice questions</i>
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10min
Author(s)	Lilia Georgieva , CATRO Bulgaria
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	The level of control we have over manifesting our boundary management style is not connected with the way we feel satisfied and happy in terms of work-life balance
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	B. False
Response to correct answer	B. B Is the correct answer, well done! The level of control we have over manifesting our boundary management style is critical to how satisfied and happy we will feel in terms of work-life balance
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 4.
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	2
Question	Which is true about the three main flex styles that individuals use to build their working lives: Integrators, Separators, and Volleyers . A. On the downside Integrators incur mental costs in switching and have less of a buffer if something goes wrong in one role. They can find it harder to “switch off”. B. The upside of being a Separator is less pressure on mental resources. On the downside, these people are more likely to experience conflict between their work and non-work roles – particularly if they are caring for others.

	C. Volleyers switch back and forth, at times experiencing work and life as tightly demarcated from each other and at other times mixing all aspects of their life.
Possible answers	A), B) and C)
Correct answer	A), B) and C) On the downside Integrators incur mental costs in switching and have less of a buffer if something goes wrong in one role. They can find it harder to “switch off”. The upside of being a Separator is less pressure on mental resources. On the downside, these people are more likely to experience conflict between their work and non-work roles – particularly if they are caring for others. Volleyers switch back and forth, at times experiencing work and life as tightly demarcated from each other and at other times mixing all aspects of their life.
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read the text from Learning Unit 4.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	3
Question	Separators are divided in the following subgroups: A. Fusion Lovers and Captives; B. Work firsters, Family firsters and Captives C. Quality Timer and Reactors D. Captives and Job Warriors
Possible answers	A, B, C, D
Correct answer	B Separators segment work from personal life psychologically and physically. They are divided into Firsters (work or family) and Captives.
Response to correct answer	Is the correct answer, well done!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Please read the text from Learning Unit 4.

Times the question can be taken	2
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<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	4
Question	The Reactors, Captives and Job Warriors are considered to be with low well-being level and out of control while Fusion Lovers, Firsters (work or family first) and Quality Timer are considered to have high level of well-being and with high level of control.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. is the correct answer. Well done!
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the text from Learning Unit 4.
Times the question can be taken	3

Module 6: Work-related stress management

Abstract

Module 5 provides learners insight into the definition and the key features of stress. The Module is divided into 3 units of 2 and a half hours duration each. You will learn what stress is and what threads it represents for individuals and organisations. We will have a closer look at the causes of stress at the workplace and discuss strategies to assess, prevent and reduce it. Finally, we will introduce the concept of stress resilience and provide some tips and exercises for active coping.

Learning Units:

Learning Unit 1 – What is stress.

Learning Unit 2 – Causes of stress at workplace.

Learning Unit 3 – Work-related stress prevention and management

At the end of each unit, you will be asked to complete a multiple-choice test. The last test will also include a reflective open question.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this Module, the learners will:

Learning outcome 1: Understand what stress is, how people react to stress and what are the consequences of stress for individuals and organisations;

Learning outcome 2: Know common causes of work-related stress.

Learning outcome 3: Be able to assess the main stressors at workplace.

Learning outcome 4: Be able to propose and apply strategies to prevent work-related stress.

Learning outcome 5: Be able to apply solutions to manage and reduce stress at the workplace.

Keywords

Work-related stress, stress at workplace, stress prevention, stress management, stress resilience

Identity of the Module	
Module	Work-related stress management
Short description of the module / abstract	<p>Module 5 titled “Work-related stress management” provides learners with information about how to deal with stress which is related to the work situation. The Module is divided into 3 units with a total duration of 2 and a half hours. You will learn what stress is and what challenges it represents for individuals and organisations. We will have a closer look at the causes of stress in the workplace and discuss strategies to assess, prevent and reduce it. Finally, we will introduce the concept of resilience and provide some tips and exercises for active coping.</p> <p>At the end of this Module, the learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ understand what stress is, how people react to stress and what are the consequences of stress for individuals and organisations. ➤ know common causes of work-related stress. ➤ be able to assess the main stressors in the workplace. ➤ be able to propose and apply strategies to prevent work-related stress. ➤ be able to apply solutions to manage and reduce stress at the workplace. <p>At the end of each unit, you will be asked to complete a multiple-choice test. The last test will also include a reflective open question.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<p>At the end of this Module, learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ understand what stress is, how people react to stress and what are the consequences of stress for individuals and organisations; ➤ know common causes of work-related stress. ➤ be able to assess the main stressors in the workplace. ➤ be able to propose and apply strategies to prevent work-related stress. ➤ be able to apply solutions to manage and reduce stress at the workplace.
Learning Units	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What is stress</i> 2. <i>Causes of stress at workplace</i> 3. <i>Work-related stress prevention and management</i>

Learning core material	Learning Unit		Learning Material	
	<i>What is stress</i>		<i>Text, Presentation, videos</i>	
	<i>Causes of stress at workplace</i>		<i>Text, Presentation, videos, worksheets</i>	
	<i>Work-related stress prevention and management</i>		<i>Text, articles, worksheets</i>	
Assessment method	Learning Unit		Assessment	
	<i>What is stress</i>		<i>Multiple choice</i>	
	<i>Causes of stress at workplace</i>		<i>Multiple choice</i>	
	<i>Work-related stress prevention and management</i>		<i>Multiple choice and open questions</i>	
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	150 minutes + 30 minutes (for the assessment)			
Author(s)	CESIE			
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO			

Dear participants,

My name is Francesca Conti from CESIE, and I welcome you to Module 5 “Work-related stress management.”

The aims of the Module are to:

- explain what stress is and what threads it represents for individuals and organisations;
- look closer to the causes of stress in the workplace.
- discuss the importance of stress risk assessment.
- propose strategies to prevent and reduce stress in the workplace.
- discuss the importance of stress resilience and provide some tips and exercises for active coping.

The Module is **structured** in three learning units, namely:

1. What is stress
2. Causes of stress at workplace
3. Work-related stress prevention and management

Chapter 1 defines stress and discusses the individuals’ reaction to stress. It also explains how work-related stress affects organisations and their performance.

Chapter 2 presents common causes of stress at the workplace divided into work contents and work context.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to work-related stress prevention and management, discussing the importance of the HR department in managing stress at the workplace, presenting the process of stress risk assessment, prevention and offering possible solutions to different causes of work-related stress. Finally, the chapter provides some ideas on how to increase individuals’ stress resilience and the ability to calm down and cope with stressful situations.

Finally, your **assessment** consists of 3 tests with multiple choice to be completed at the competition of each unit.

1. Learning Unit 1 - What is stress

Stress is the **body's reaction** to **feeling threatened, or under pressure, facing a challenge or demand**.

Originally, stress was conceived as pressure from **the environment**, then as strain **within the person**. The generally accepted definition today is one of **interaction between the situation and the individual**. It is the **psychological** and **physical** state that results when the **resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope** with the demands and pressures of the situation (Michie, 2002).

Stress is a feeling of **emotional or physical tension**. It can come from any event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.

The degree of stress experienced by individuals depends on the functioning of **two protective physiological mechanisms: alarm reaction and adaptation**.

Alarm reaction

When confronted with a threat, the first response is **physiological arousal**: muscles tense and breathing and heart rate become more rapid. The natural reaction to such stress is “**fight or flight**”. Present day threats tend to be more psychological—for example, unjustified verbal attack by a superior at work. In such situations, it is usually not socially acceptable to act by “fight or flight” (Michie, 2002).

Adaptation

The second adaptive mechanism allows us to cease responding after learning more about the stress stimuli and understanding the source of stress in the environment is no longer a threat to our safety. Over time, our response dwindles. If this process did not function, we would eventually collapse from physical wear and tear, and mental exhaustion (Michie, 2002).

1.1 Acute versus chronic stress

In short bursts, stress can be **positive**, such as when it helps you avoid danger or meet a deadline. But when stress lasts for a long time, it may harm your health.

- **Acute stress** is short-term stress that goes away quickly. It occurs in potentially dangerous situations such as during a fight, or when you do something new or exciting such as starting a new job. This type of stress is very useful because it helps you manage these situations. All people experience acute stress from time to time.
- **Chronic stress**, on the other hand, is stress that **lasts for a longer** period of time and is usually caused by an unsatisfactory life or work situation, such as an unhappy marriage, money problems, or troubles at job. Any type of stress that goes on **for**

weeks or months is chronic stress. People suffering from chronic stress can become so used to it that they don't realise it is a problem. If chronic stress is not managed, it may lead to serious health problems (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2022).

1.2 Reactions to stress

People react differently to stressful situations – their resistance to stress as well as manifestation of stress reaction can vary widely. However, some common signs of stress can be seen in changes of people's **feeling, behaviour, and physical symptoms**. See some examples below.

Feelings	Behaviour	Physical symptoms
Anxiety	Being withdrawn	Palpitations
Depression	Acting aggressive	Headaches
Irritability	Being tearful	Nausea
Fatigue	Being unmotivated	Excessive sweating
Hyper sensibility	Acting impatient	Tiredness or insomnia

Employees working under enormous pressure are more likely to encounter difficulties of **concentration, decision making and problem solving**. They also can be hypersensitive to criticism (Michie, 2002).

If stress persists, the body stays alert and there are changes in **neuroendocrine, cardiovascular, autonomic, and immunological functioning**, leading to **physical and mental illnesses**, typically high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression, or anxiety (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2022).

1.3 Stress at the workplace

According to the World Health Organization, work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with **work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities** and which challenge their ability to cope. Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have **little support from supervisors and colleagues**, as well as **little control over work processes**. On the other hand, workers are **less likely to experience work-related stress** when demands and pressures of work are **matched** to their **knowledge and abilities**, they feel confident and have **control** over the work, receive **support** from supervisors and colleagues, and can **participate** in decisions that concern their jobs (World Health Organization, 2020).

Numerous company surveys show that modern workers feel stressed out on the job, affecting their **sleep, health, relationships, productivity and sense of well-being**. Coronavirus pandemic brought additional pressure because of furloughs, job losses, worries about getting sick, feeling isolated while working remotely (Wilkie, 2020).

Stress in work context can **undermine the achievement of goals**, both for individuals and for organisations.

Problems of stress	
Threats on individual level	Workplace and organisation level
Physical and mental health	Increased absenteeism and presenteeism
Overall well-being and quality of life	Reduced quantity and quality of work
Functioning and goal achievement	Reduced job satisfaction and morale (harassment, violence at work, etc.)
Self-esteem and confidence	Poor communication and increased conflicts
Personal and professional development	Problems with recruitment and increased turnover

Table resource: Michie, 2002

1.4 Pressure versus stress

Some amount of pressure is unavoidable at almost any workplace. The contemporary work environment can be very demanding and competitive. Some fields are naturally more likely to produce significant pressure, such as **medical professions, nurses, caregivers, social workers, soldiers and top chief officers** (Examples of the most stressful jobs, Indeed 2021).

Reasonable work challenges or pressure perceived by an individual as acceptable may be positive, keeping workers **alert, motivated, able to work and learn**. However, when that pressure becomes **excessive** or otherwise **unmanageable** it leads to stress. Stress can damage an employees' health and business performance (World Health Organization, 2020).

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the text above
- Watch the following videos:
 - o Stress 101 - Understanding Stress and How to Manage It – Health Texas Medical Group: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Hto1HeMrYQ>
 - o Good Stress Vs. Bad Stress, University of California Television: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhscx8Dwn94>
 - o How Job Stress Affects Your Health | WSJ video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHgWwSGZ-o>
- Test your individual stress level: <https://www.stress.org.uk/individual-stress-test/>

2. Learning Unit 2 - Causes of stress at the workplace

Work-related stress is mostly caused by **poor work organisation, poor work design, poor management, unsatisfactory working conditions, and lack of support** (World Health Organization, 2020).

Poor work organisation and design are structural problems in a company or organisation not providing clear and coherent job description, appropriate workload, clearly set processes and operations. **Poor management** may include lack of control and support, excessive control, overlapping supervising roles and conflict of roles, or poor management skills. **Unhealthy human relations** at the workplace are also very strong stressors, extreme cases include bossing, mobbing, bullying or harassment.

According to the World Health Organisation (2020), work-related stress hazards can be divided into **work content** and **work context**.

Work contents:

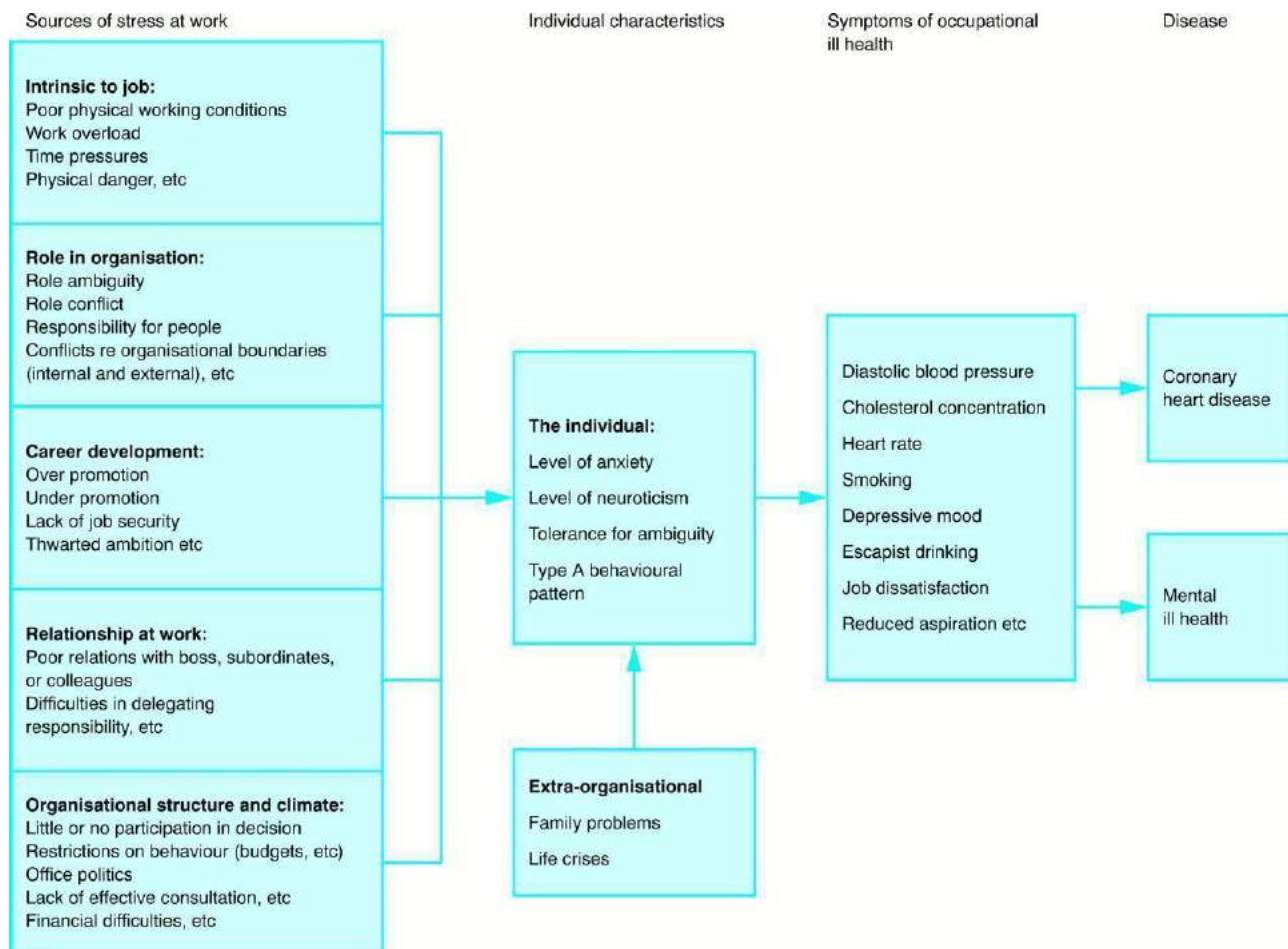
- **job content** (monotony, under-stimulation, meaningless of tasks, lack of variety, etc.);
- **workload and work pace** (too much or too little to do, work under time pressure, etc.);
- **working hours** (strict or inflexible, long and unsocial, unpredictable, badly designed shift systems);
- **participation and control** (lack of participation in decision-making, lack of control over work processes, pace, hours, methods, and the work environment).

Work context:

- **career development, status and pay** (job insecurity, lack of promotion opportunities, under- or over-promotion, work of low social value, piece rate payment schemes, unclear or unfair performance evaluation systems, being over- or under-skilled for a job);
- **the worker's role in the organisation** (unclear role, conflicting roles);
- **interpersonal relationships** (inadequate, inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision, poor relationships with colleagues, bullying/harassment and violence, isolated or solitary work, etc.);
- **organisational culture** (poor communication, poor leadership, lack of behavioural rule, lack of clarity about organisational objectives, structures and strategies);
- **work-life balance** (conflicting demands of work and home, lack of support for domestic problems at work, lack of support for work problems at home, lack of organisational rules and policies to support work-life balance).

Excessive demands leading to work-related stress are sometimes embedded in **highly competitive and performance-oriented organisational culture** in the form of **unpaid overtime or “presenteeism”** (Michie, 2002).

A model of stress at work



Imagine resource: Michie, 2002

However, people don't face stress exclusively at work, their load of stress and pressure is **accumulating from all life situations and environments**, and these spheres of human lives affect each other and jeopardise **work-life balance**.

Especially long or uncertain working hours, unexpected overtimes, the necessity of taking work home, long daily commuting etc. have a negative impact on family and social life, reducing time for leisure activities and recreation. Healthy lifestyle, including good interpersonal relationships, stable family life, enough sleep and outdoor activities are instrumental for building **stress resilience** (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022), which is an important buffer against the stress caused by work.

It goes the other way around too, domestic pressures such as childcare responsibilities, financial worries, bereavement, and housing problems may affect a person's robustness at work. Thus, a **vicious cycle** is set up in which stress is caused in either area of one's life (Michie, 2002).

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the text above
- Study the model of stress at work.
- Think of and write down the major stressors in your life. Which of them have an impact on your work? How could these be eliminated or reduced? Mark your responses to the worksheet (see the Annex).
- Watch the following video: Work related stress:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekDLeerpSk>

3. Learning Unit 3 - Work-related stress prevention and management

Work-related stress, especially long-term and chronic stress, is harmful for both employees and organisations. To avoid negative consequences of a stressful workplace, managers and HR professionals need to be aware of the issue, be able to recognise excessive work pressure, prevent and manage it. In organisational context, stress management can be seen as a part of strategic management, performance management, policies on employee care, development, and well-being programmes.

3.1 The role of HR managers

The HR manager is a key agent in dealing with stress at the workplace. The HR department, besides traditional operations such as recruitment, selection, hiring, onboarding, training and development, administration or offboarding, should be **the guardian of employees' well-being, fairness, and morality in the company**. Furthermore, HR professionals' goal is to attract and retain high-quality employees using their best potential to the good of the organisation. Stressed and demoralised employees are hardly able to fulfil their potential and achieve optimum performance. For this reason, for the good of employees, the organisation and eventually also the society, HR professionals have to be aware of work-related stress risks and capable of finding ways to increase workers' well-being and minimise workplace stress.

HR department's role includes:

- Monitor and identify potential stressors at the workplace (physical environment, work organisation, interpersonal relations).

- Assess the psychosocial risks of work-related stressors for employees and the organisation.
- Ensure minimisation of these psychosocial risks to prevent work-related stress (regularly analyse the work environment, organisational culture, offer programmes for employees' well-being).
- Provide support to employees in stress prevention and solution (in the form of individual consultation, providing opportunities to express concerns and difficulties at work, giving enough space to confide without being judged or persecuted).
- Provide support to managers in stress prevention and management (regular communication with managers, ability to propose appropriate arrangements to manage work-related stress in both managers and employees).
- Develop and sustain a well-being culture in the company.

Line and direct managers should be aware of the signs of employees suffering from stress, such as **decreased productivity** and **quality of work**. In some cases, reducing the workload, postponing deadlines and providing additional support may ease the level of pressure and solve the problem (Wilkie, 2020). In other cases, an HR professional should be involved to revise the work and propose systematic stress management strategies.

3.2 Work-related stress risk assessment

Work stress can be effectively managed only when the employer is aware of the risks. Responding to the following questions can help identify and assess the risks of work-related stress:

- Could work stress be affecting the health of our employees?
- Is there a system in place to monitor the stress risks in our organisation?
- Do our employees show signs of stress?
- What are the potential stressors?
- Is there an imbalance of work demand and resources?
- How can the stress problem be solved?

Approaches to exploring existing work-related stress risks:

There are two main sources of information needed for risk assessment: collection and analysis of (1) **quantitative** and (2) **qualitative data**.

- **Firstly**, monitor and assess employees' sickness absence, staff turnover, changes in individual and group performance levels, accidents and mistakes at the workplace, conflicts within teams, undesirable behaviours (violence and harassment) and notice any changes. Investigate any significant decline in any of the indicators. (Please note that this list of quantitative data is not exhaustive).

- **Secondly**, talk with managers and especially employees about their work, problems they might face and whether they feel the work is affecting their health. Ask about challenging situations and their reactions. Avoid asking directly if they “are stressed”. Instead, you can ask about three best and worst aspects of their job, exploring whether these are under their control and if they receive adequate support. Ask questions about specific jobs, working contexts and conditions to be able to identify the stressors (Leka, 2003). (Please note that this list of qualitative data is not exhaustive).

To conduct a thorough assessment of the well-being situation in your organisation, you can also refer to the Systematic Psychosocial Risk Assessment method mentioned in Module 2 of this Training Programme.

3.3 The prevention of work stress

It is always easier and wiser to prevent stress at the workplace than addressing its consequences. Furthermore, European and national legislation requires employers to assess and address all risks to employee health and safety, including their mental health.

There are numerous ways on how to prevent or at least minimise the risk of work stress. WHO divided three levels of prevention (Leka, 2003):

Primary prevention

In primary stress prevention, work stress is reduced through adequate **ergonomics** of the workplace and work environment, **work design**, and **organisational and management development**. A realistic and clear job description, clear organisation structure, assignment of roles and responsibilities as well as well-arranged work practices and operations are instrumental for preventing work-related stress. HR departments and managers should therefore pay close attention to these fundamental organisational aspects.

Once job descriptions, organisational structures and processes are set, management needs to make sure they are **clearly communicated to all employees**. The better employees understand their job, role and responsibilities, the more they will be able to direct the appropriate efforts towards doing it well. If they know what, when and how to do it, they will be less likely to feel under excessive pressure. At the same time, employees need to be offered enough opportunities to talk to their manager and be heard. Managers should communicate work expectations clearly, making sure they are comprehensible, consistent with the job description and acceptable to the employee, considering their skills, abilities, and existing workload.

Secondary prevention

The World Health Organisation proposes the design and implementation of company-specific and needs-driven **education and training** programmes (Leka, 2003). Such programmes could include encouraging managers and employees to take part in webinars and courses on stress management, the development of organisational wellness programmes, offering fitness opportunities, yoga, and meditation sessions at workplace, or providing benefits promoting employees physical and mental health, relaxation and self-care. Useful are also training programmes strengthening employees' coping skills such as training on time management, problem solving, and communication. Moreover, the launch of Employee Assistance Programmes addresses work-related issues as well as stressors tied up to personal, family-specific or social risks and provides employees and their direct family members to ask for support, guidance and counselling with mental health professionals.

Tertiary prevention

Thirdly, WHO proposes reducing the impact of stress by developing a more **sensitive and responsible management system** and enhanced occupational health provision (Leka, 2003). Organisations need to work on creating a positive **climate and culture** and focus on raising awareness of the importance of employees' well-being and health among management and encourage managers to lead by example, applying good practices of stress prevention and management. In this way, the organisation will support the building of employees' **stress resilience**, helping them to cope with acute stress and preventing accumulation of stress from turning into chronic stress. Michie (2002) explains that training helps prevent stress through becoming aware of the signs of stress using this to interrupt behaviour patterns when the stress reaction is just the beginning. Training might also help develop skills of active coping and relaxation, developing a lifestyle that creates a buffer (resilience) against stress.

Additionally, Michie (2002) states general principles of preventing work-related stress applied in Scandinavia. These include:

- Adaptation of **working conditions** to people's differing physical and mental aptitudes (such as ASD).
- Giving employees the opportunity to **participate** in the design of their own work situation, and in the processes of change and development affecting their work.
- Designing technology, work organisation, and job content so that the employee is **not exposed to physical or mental strains** that may lead to illness or accidents.
- Avoiding or limiting **closely controlled or restricted work**.
- Designing work so that it provides opportunities for **variety, social contact, and cooperation** as well as coherence between different working operations.
- Providing opportunities for **personal and vocational development**.

3.4 Solutions to stress

The prevention and management of workplace stress requires **organisational level interventions**, because it is the organisation that creates the stress. An approach that is limited to helping those already experiencing stress is insufficient.

Only after having identified and assessed the existing or potential stressors at the workplace, can you evaluate and propose the most **adequate interventions** to help employees and teams to cope with work-related stress. For example, if the cause of stress is work overload and unsocial working hours, offering a yoga lesson at 7am won't have a very relaxing effect on the individual.

In the following section, we will present and discuss some strategies for the management and employees on **reduction or elimination of the stress causes**.

Cause of stress: problems with job content (monotony, under-stimulation, meaningless of tasks, lack of variety)

- **Solution - personal level:** Revision of the job content based on a close analysis of the job tasks, observation, and interviews with managers and especially workers on the job.
- **Solution - organisational level:** Employees must be given opportunities to speak with their managers and be involved to some extent in decision-making regarding their job content, given and asked for feedback. Work with employee's motivation.

Cause of stress: working overtime

- **Solution - management level:** Setting boundaries. Managers should avoid placing demands on employees during out-of-work hours. Employees may never get a mental break from being at work, knowing that their manager can call anytime (The important role HR plays in reducing workplace stress, 2019). Setting boundaries can help significantly. Boundaries can be identical with fixed working hours. In case of flexible working hours, there should be a shared calendar or system of "emergency shifts" when the employee knows that he/she may receive a work call also when not at work. However, these should not be unexpected and should make part of working hours or be recognised as paid overtime. That said, the boundaries must be respected by managers but also by employees, who for different reasons may work in the evenings. If this case occurs regularly, employees should talk to their manager and find out why they feel the need to work overtime.
- **Solution - organisational level:** Make sure workers are taking regular breaks during working hours, encourage managers to lead by example. Breaks are not only obligatory by law, it's also a time to take a rest, refresh, socialise with colleagues and arrange personal business such as taking an appointment with a doctor.

Cause of stress: overwhelming demands and workload

- **Solution - personal level:** Again, an analysis of the job, responsibilities and time required to perform work tasks is necessary. Supervising manager and the employee must be involved. This will allow you to revise and reduce the workload adequately. Tasks can be redistributed among other employees; managers, colleagues or interns can also provide support. Identify if the problem is the amount of work or the lack of competencies. If the demands exceed the employee's competencies, consider providing them with additional training or reassigning the task to a more qualified colleague. If the problem lies in too many activities, involving an assistant or intern to whom supportive tasks can be delegated can resolve the problem with stressful workload.
- **Solution - organisational level:** Don't underestimate the importance of training. Nowadays, many work processes are rapidly moving to the digital environment, traditionally manual operations are being automated, and software is accelerating administration tasks. However, these achievements of the modern age are only helpful and make work more efficient if used properly. Some workers may find these transformations more difficult than others and need additional training or support.
- Some job roles are composed of very different tasks which may create strong pressure on employees. For example, if a worker has to communicate with clients, colleagues and partners, and at the same time work on the development of a product which requires a longer period of undisturbed concentration. In such a case, establishing "untouchable days" may be the right solution to provide the worker with the time to focus on deep creative work without disturbing the flow. An "untouchable day" is a day flagged in the calendar where nothing can interrupt the worker – no emails, calls, meetings. It can be two days a week, or one day in two weeks, depending on the needs and possibilities of the worker, team, and organisations. These days should be planned ahead and communicated with everyone who might be concerned. Read more about "untouchable days" [here](#).

Cause of stress: long or unsocial working hours, difficulties in balancing work and personal/social duties

- **Solution - management level:** If possible and relevant, allowing flexible working hours or partly remote work may resolve problems with working hours hindering work-life balance. If this is not possible for serious reasons concerning the organisation of work and the organisational goals, a predictable and well-designed shift system is necessary to enable employees to plan their time off work.

Cause of stress: lack of control over work

- **Solution - management level:** Allow employees' participation in decision-making in matters directly concerning their work, such as the pace, working hours, methods and

the working environment. Provide opportunities to speak with managers and the HR department, employees must know that they are heard. Plan a regular team and 1:1 meeting with direct managers.

Cause of stress: interpersonal relations

- **Solution - organisational level:** Identify the core of interpersonal problems, observe the working environment, talk to employees and managers to find out what the stressors are. Some of the typical issues include unsupportive supervision, poor relationships with colleagues, isolated work, in the worst cases bullying, harassment and violence. The latter mustn't be tolerated and the manager together with the HR department must intervene immediately.
- Problems with teamwork and relations among workers as well as workers and managers can be improved with team-building activities (on-the-job, or even more effectively off-the-job). To be able to recognise and tackle issues in interpersonal relations provides open and transparent communication channels, encourage open and honest communication among team members and between employees and managers.
- **Solution - management level:** Problems with insufficient or unsupportive supervision can be prevented by providing managers with training in management and leadership skills, improving their management and communication style.

Evaluate all interventions applied to be able to assess their effectiveness and make the necessary improvements.

Finally, success in managing and preventing stress will depend on **the culture in the organisation**. A culture of **openness and understanding**, rather than of **blame and criticism**, is essential. Building this type of culture requires active leadership and role models from the top of the organisation, the development and implementation of a stress policy throughout the organisation, and systems to identify problems early and to review and improve the strategies developed to address them. A culture of involving people in decisions, keeping them informed about what is happening in the organisation, and providing good amenities and recreation facilities reduce stress (Michie, 2002).

3.5 Resilience building and individual stress management

Another way organisations can and should prevent and reduce work-related stress of their employees is raising awareness of and supporting the building of **stress resilience**.

Stress resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, or threats or significant sources of stress (The American Psychological Association). It's the ability to recognise and acknowledge that a situation has become stressful and choose a response that leads to the best solution and growth. On the other hand, it is not resistance or

avoidance to stress. Even people with a great deal of resilience will still experience stress (Wagnild, 2022).

Building stress resilience is a long process but incorporating at least some of the following advice will help make it stronger and stronger over time and make it easier to get through stressful situations. Based on (Managing stress and building resilience – tips, Mind 2022).

1. Look after your well-being

Strengthen your well-being by finding time to spend with people you like, developing your interests and hobbies and being in nature. Find time to stop and relax. Importantly, look after your physical and mental health by getting enough sleep, eating healthily, and doing physical activities.

2. Build your support network

Being able to count on support from people you trust can make coping with stressful situations easier. It can be friends and family, mentors, managers and HR department at work, or support from peers.

3. Learn to recognise your stressors

Being able to identify what may trigger stress can help you prepare for it. Knowing what you can and cannot change could help you work out the best way to deal with stress. Try to go in your head through situations that come up often and that you worry about, such as attending a business meeting or giving a presentation. Try to stay on top of the situation and analyse it, think about the best way to cope with the situation. Reflecting on stressful situations may sometimes be upsetting. If the stress and pain are strong, consider talking to someone you trust about them.

4. Organise your time

- **In a working** environment, many people feel stressed because of having a lot of things to manage. In this case, changing the way we organise our time can help us feel more in control.
- Identify when you have the most energy. If you are “a morning person”, schedule the most important tasks at that time of the day to help you concentrate better.
- Create your personal to-do lists and prioritise the tasks. You might find it helpful to create a timetable, planning when to spend time on each task.
- Break down huge tasks in smaller steps and set smaller, achievable targets, it can help you feel more satisfied and in control.
- Vary your activities throughout your workday, balancing more demanding tasks with easier ones. If your job allows it, you can set a personal rule, that you will read and respond to emails only two hours a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to have more undisturbed time for creative work.

- Multitasking is a highly required skill nowadays, but it is usually very stressful and not effective. Try not to do too much at once, focus on single tasks and on completing them well. Prioritise tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- Learn to say no. Let people know if their demands are unreasonable or unrealistic.
- Have breaks and take your time to relax during your working hours.
- If the work is too much or exceeds your capacity, ask for help. This applies to personal life too.

3.6 Stress relieving exercises at the workplace

We will conclude this module by proposing some simple **tips** and **exercises** which people can do directly in their workplace to calm down and cope with stressful situations.

1. Do something else

Is the work too much? You don't know what to do and feel that your stress is building up? Stop for a moment, step away from your work, and do something else.

- Read an article or a few pages of a book. Getting lost in another world can provide a welcome distraction from a stressful situation and return you to a calmer state.
- Make yourself a cup of tea. It can be a nice moment of alone time, meditation or chatting with a co-worker who's also on a tea break.

2. Move

- **Get up from your desk.** You can take a walk around the office, visit a colleague to leave a memo in person instead of emailing it. Running an errand, taking a letter to the Post Office, can provide a welcome distraction and a change of scenery for a few minutes.
- Do a few **stretching exercises** at your desk or if possible, in a relaxed area, it will help relieve the tension in your muscles and oxygenate your brain.
[Check these desk stretches to help you de-stress at work](#)
- With accumulation of stress, some muscles, especially in the neck and shoulders, can hurt. Try progressive muscle relaxation to let go of that tension. It can also be a nice breathing and meditation exercise. Close your eyes, breathe in with your nose and out with your mouth. Focus on slowly tensing and then relaxing your muscles, one group at a time. Start with your toes and work your way up to your neck.

3. Breathe

Many people don't pay much attention to something as vital as breath. Becoming more aware of your breath and performing a few deep breathing exercises can

produce a natural relaxation response. Deep breathing increases the supply of oxygen to your brain and helps promote a state of calmness. Deep breathing is so powerful that The American Institute of Stress even named it the best stress reduction technique of all (Morin, 2015). Try some of these simple breathing exercises to help you overcome stressful situations and anxiety at work:

- **Mindful Diaphragmatic Breathing:** Get into a comfortable position, close your eyes, and start to notice your breath. Breathe normally while paying attention to the pace and depth. Is your breath deep, shallow, quick or slow? Just notice. Becoming aware of your breathing can help you to become more mindful of your body's response to stress and can help you notice when you need to deliberately relax your breathing.
- **Counted Breathing:** As you **inhale**, place your tongue on the roof of your mouth right behind your teeth, then breathe through your nose and **slowly count down from five**; on the **exhale**, let the air escape through your mouth and **count back up to eight**. Then repeat.
- **Visualisation Breathing:** As you **inhale**, imagine that all the stress in your body is coming from your extremities and into your chest. Then, as you **exhale**, imagine that the stress is leaving your body through your breath and dissipating right in front of you. Slowly, deliberately repeat the process (Scott, 2020).

4. Meditate

Deep breathing is an imperative for meditation, but if it doesn't seem enough and stressful thoughts seem to be haunting you, try a guided meditation. There are various mobile apps and videos available online. You just need to get in a comfortable position, put on headphones and start.

- Headspace Mini Meditation "[Let Go of Stress](#)" (1:06)
- Headspace Mini meditation "[Breathe](#)" (1:10)
- Headspace Mini meditation "[Managing Anxious Thoughts And Stress With Mindfulness](#)" (2:27)

To complete this Learning Unit, you have to:

- Read the text above
- Use the worksheet from the previous unit, review it and try to propose adequate solutions to workplace stressors you identified previously. Write your responses to the worksheet (See annex).
- Think of your daily routine and how it can be improved to help you strengthen your stress resilience. Try some of the stress-relieving exercises yourself.

4. Synopsis

Stress is the **body's reaction** to **feeling threatened or under pressure**. **Work-related stress** is the response people may have when presented with **work demands and pressures** that are **not matched to their knowledge and abilities** and which challenge their ability to cope. There are numerous **threats** of work-related stress both for **individuals and organisations**. For that reason, it's in organisations' best interest to prevent and reduce stress in the workplace. Work-related stress can come from many different **sources**, including **work contents and context**. Organisations have to **assess stress risks** in the workplace and analyse the **stressors** to be able to take adequate actions for its prevention and reduction. Finally, every individual should be aware of the stress in their lives, take steps to build their **resilience** and learn some strategies of **active coping**.

5. Glossary

Stress - Stress is the body's reaction to feeling threatened or under pressure, a challenge or demand. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation.

Stressor - A stressor is anything that causes the release of stress hormones. There are two broad categories of stressors: Physiological (or physical) stressors and Psychological Stressors (Stressors, 2017).

Stress management - Stress management offers a range of strategies to help you better deal with stress and difficulty (adversity) in your life. Managing stress can help you lead a more balanced, healthier life. Stress is an automatic physical, mental and emotional response to a challenging event (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 2021).

Work-life balance - the extent to which investment in roles is consistent with the importance or salience an individual places on a role (Kalliath and Brough, 2008). Work-life balance is achieved when personal resources are adequate to meet demands in work and family roles, thereby enabling effective participation in each domain (Voydanoff, 2002).

Stress resilience - Resilience is sometimes defined as a psychological process developed in response to intense life stressors that facilitates healthy functioning (Johnson et al., 2009). Stress resilience is the natural inborn ability to bounce back from the anxiety response that is an inevitable part of life (Seppala, 2021).

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7. Annexes: Worksheets

Module 5: Work-related stress management Unit 2 Causes of stress at workplace Worksheet	
My stressors What makes you feel stressed? Think of your work environment, situations, tasks and other stimuli.	My reaction to stress What is your body's reaction? How do you feel and act under pressure? (feelings, thinking, behaviour, physical symptoms)

Module 4: Work-related stress management Unit 3 Work-related stress prevention and management Worksheet	
My stressors	Possible preventive measures and solutions

8. Assessment plan Module 6

Learning Unit 1 (Assessment Unit)	What is stress
Scope of the assessment	The scope of this assessment is to verify learners' understanding of physical and psychological stress, their ability to distinguish acute and chronic stress, and their knowledge of a variety of human reactions to stress, including stress signs and symptoms. The first unit also covers the problematics of stress at the workplace and its consequences for employees and organisations.
Learning Outcomes assessed	Understand what stress is, how people react to stress and what are the consequences of stress for individuals and organisations.

Assessment method	Multiple choice
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	15 minutes
Author(s)	Francesca Conti, CESIE
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
Question No.	1
Question	Stress is the body's reaction to feeling threatened, or under pressure, facing a challenge or demand.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	A. Is the correct answer, well done! Stress is the body's reaction to feeling threatened, or under pressure, facing a challenge or demand. Originally, it was conceived as pressure from the environment, then as strain within the person. The generally accepted definition today is one of interaction between the situation and the individual. It is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation (Michie, 2002).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the Learning Unit 1 "What is stress" again!
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	Complete the sentence: "The degree of stress experienced by individuals depends on the functioning of two protective physiological mechanisms..."
Possible answers	A. Acute reaction and chronic reaction B. Alarm reaction and adaptation

Correct answer	B. The degree of stress experienced by individuals depends on the functioning of two protective physiological mechanisms: alarm reaction and adaptation.
Response to correct answer	B. The degree of stress experienced by individuals depends on the functioning of two protective physiological mechanisms: alarm reaction and adaptation. Alarm reaction When confronted with a threat, the first response is physiological arousal: muscles tense and breathing and heart rate become more rapid. The natural reaction to such stress is “fight or flee”. Present day threats tend to be more psychological—for example, unjustified verbal attack by a superior at work. In such situations, it is usually not socially acceptable to act by “fight or flight” (Michie, 2002). Adaptation The second adaptive mechanism allows us to cease responding after learning more about the stress stimuli and understanding the source of stress in the environment is no longer a threat to our safety. Over time, our response dwindles. If this process did not function, we would eventually collapse from physical wear and tear, and mental exhaustion (Michie, 2002).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read the Learning Unit 1 “What is stress” again!
Times the question can be taken	2

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	Which of the following statements are correct? <i>(more correct answers possible)</i>
Possible answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. In short bursts, stress can be positive. B. Stress is always harmful to a person. C. If chronic stress is not managed, it may lead to serious health problems. D. People suffering from chronic stress are always well aware of the problem.

Correct answer	A. In short bursts, stress can be positive. C. If chronic stress is not managed, it may lead to serious health problems.
Response to correct answer	A., C. In short bursts, stress can be positive, such as when it helps you avoid danger or meet a deadline. But when stress lasts for a long time, it may harm your health. If chronic stress is not managed, it may lead to serious health problems. Chronic stress is stress that lasts for a longer period of time and is usually caused by an unsatisfactory life or work situation, such as an unhappy marriage, money problems, or troubles at job. Any type of stress that goes on for weeks or months is chronic stress. People suffering from chronic stress can become so used to it that they don't realise it is a problem. If chronic stress is not managed, it may lead to serious health problems (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2022).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the Learning Unit 1.1 Acute versus chronic stress.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	4
Question (stem)	Which of the following problems of stress represent threats on the workplace and organisational level? <i>(more correct answers possible)</i>
Possible answers	A. Increased absenteeism B. Problems with recruitment and increased turnover C. Reduced quantity and quality of work D. Increased conflicts
Correct answer	A. Increased absenteeism B. Problems with recruitment and increased turnover C. Reduced quantity and quality of work D. Increased conflicts
Response to correct answer	All answers are correct Stress in work context can undermine the achievement of goals, both for individuals and for organisations.

	Problems of stress	
	Threats on individual level	Workplace and organisation level
	Health physical and mental	Increased absenteeism
	Overall well-being and quality of life	Reduced quantity and quality of work
	Functioning and goal achievement	Reduced job satisfaction and morale
	Self-esteem and confidence	Poor communication and increased conflicts
	Personal and professional development	Problems with recruitment and increased turnover
Table resource: Michie, 2002		
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the Learning Unit 1.3 Stress at the workplace.	
Times the question can be taken	3	

Learning Unit 2 (Assessment Unit)	Causes of stress at workplace
Scope of the assessment	The scope of this assessment is to verify learners' knowledge of common causes of work-related stress with origins in work contents and work context, and their understanding of the model of stress at work.
Learning Outcomes assessed	Know common causes of work-related stress.
Assessment method	Multiple choice
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	10 minutes
Author(s)	Francesca Conti, CESIE
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1

Question (stem)	According to the World Health Organisation (2020), work-related stress hazards related to work content include: <i>(more correct answers)</i>
Possible answers	A. monotony of work B. excessive workload C. well-being culture D. lack of participation in decision-making
Correct answer	A. monotony of work B. excessive workload D. lack of participation in decision-making
Response to correct answer	A., B., D. According to the World Health Organisation (2020), work-related stress hazards can be divided into work content and work context . Work contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● job content (monotony, under-stimulation, meaningless of tasks, lack of variety, etc.); ● workload and work pace (too much or too little to do, work under time pressure, etc.); ● working hours (strict or inflexible, long and unsocial, unpredictable, badly designed shift systems); ● participation and control (lack of participation in decision-making, lack of control over work processes, pace, hours, methods, and the work environment).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 2 “Causes of stress at the workplace”.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	According to the World Health Organisation (2020), work-related stress hazards related to the work context include: <i>(more correct answers)</i>
Possible answers	A. inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision B. problems with work-life balance C. job insecurity

	D. lack of participation in decision-making
Correct answer	A. inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision B. problems with work-life balance C. job insecurity
Response to correct answer	A., B., C. According to the World Health Organisation (2020), work-related stress hazards can be divided into work content and work context. Work context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● career development, status and pay (job insecurity, lack of promotion opportunities, under- or over-promotion, work of low social value, piece rate payment schemes, unclear or unfair performance evaluation systems, being over- or under-skilled for a job); ● the worker’s role in the organisation (unclear role, conflicting roles); ● interpersonal relationships (inadequate, inconsiderate or unsupportive supervision, poor relationships with colleagues, bullying/harassment and violence, isolated or solitary work, etc.); ● organisational culture (poor communication, poor leadership, lack of behavioural rule, lack of clarity about organisational objectives, structures and strategies); ● work-life balance (conflicting demands of work and home, lack of support for domestic problems at work, lack of support for work problems at home, lack of organisational rules and policies to support work-life balance).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 2 “Causes of stress at the workplace”.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3
Question (stem)	Stress and pressure are accumulating from all life situations and environments, and these spheres of human lives affect each other and jeopardise work-life balance. This means that stress

	encountered at home can negatively affect work performance and vice versa.
Possible answers	A. True B. False
Correct answer	A. True
Response to correct answer	<p>A.</p> <p>People don't face stress exclusively at work, their load of stress and pressure is accumulating from all life situations and environments, and these spheres of human lives affect each other and jeopardise work-life balance.</p> <p>Especially long or uncertain working hours, unexpected overtimes, the necessity of taking work home, long daily commuting etc. have a negative impact on family and social life, reducing time for leisure activities and recreation. Healthy lifestyle, including good interpersonal relationships, stable family life, enough sleep and outdoor activities are instrumental for building stress resilience (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022), which is an important buffer against the stress caused by work.</p> <p>It goes the other way around too, domestic pressures such as childcare responsibilities, financial worries, bereavement, and housing problems may affect a person's robustness at work. Thus, a vicious cycle is set up in which the stress caused in either area of one's life (Michie, 2002).</p>
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 2 "Causes of stress at the workplace".
Times the question can be taken	2

Learning Unit 3 (Assessment Unit)	Work-related stress prevention and management
Scope of the assessment	The scope of this assessment is to verify what learners understand about work-related stress assessment and if they have the skills to identify the stressors at the workplace and propose adequate tackling strategies to prevent and reduce stress at the workplace.

Learning Outcomes assessed	Be able to assess the main stressors at the workplace. Be able to propose and apply strategies to prevent work-related stress. Be able to apply solutions to manage and reduce stress at the workplace.
Assessment method	Multiple choice
Workload (Estimated study time) (min)	30 minutes
Author(s)	Francesca Conti, CESIE
Reviewers	Yang Yang, Konstantinos Giannakopoulos, PULSO

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	1
Question (stem)	There are two main sources of information needed for risk assessment: collection and analysis of (1) quantitative and (2) qualitative data. What are the sources of quantitative data about work-related stress in an organisation? <i>(more correct answers)</i>
Possible answers	A. employees' sickness absence B. staff turnover C. interviews with supervisors D. accidents and mistakes at workplace
Correct answer	A. employees' sickness absence B. staff turnover D. accidents and mistakes at workplace
Response to correct answer	A., B., D. There are two main sources of information needed for risk assessment: collection and analysis of (1) quantitative and (2) qualitative data . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, monitor employees' sickness absence, staff turnover, changes in individual and group performance levels, accidents and mistakes at the workplace and notice any changes. Investigate any significant decline in any of the indicators.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 3 on Work-related stress risk assessment.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	2
Question (stem)	There are two main sources of information needed for risk assessment: collection and analysis of (1) quantitative and (2) qualitative data. What are the sources of qualitative data about work-related stress in an organisation? <i>(more correct answers)</i>
Possible answers	A. statistics of accidents at the workplace B. observation of teamwork C. interviews with employees D. interviews with managers
Correct answer	B. observation of teamwork C. interviews with employees D. interviews with managers
Response to correct answer	B., C., D There are two main sources of information needed for risk assessment: collection and analysis of (1) quantitative and (2) qualitative data . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondly, talk with managers and especially employees about their work, problems they face and whether they feel the work is affecting their health. Ask about challenging situations and their reactions. Avoid asking directly if they “are stressed”. Instead, you can ask about three best and worst aspects of their job, exploring whether these are under their control and if they receive adequate support. Ask questions about specific jobs, working contexts and conditions to be able to identify the stressors (Leka, 2003).
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the Learning Unit 3 on Work-related stress risk assessment.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	3

Question (stem)	Which of the following measures are considered by WHO as primary work-related stress prevention? <i>(more correct answers possible)</i>
Possible answers	A. adequate ergonomics B. clear work design C. realistic job description B. clear organisational structure
Correct answer	A. adequate ergonomics B. clear work design C. realistic job description D. clear organisational structure
Response to correct answer	A., B., C., D. In primary stress prevention, work stress is reduced through adequate ergonomics of the workplace and work environment, work design, and organisational and management development. A realistic and clear job description, clear organisation structure, assignment of roles and responsibilities as well as well-arranged work practices and operations are instrumental for preventing work-related stress. HR departments and managers should therefore pay close attention to these fundamental organisational aspects. Once job descriptions, organisational structures and processes are set, management needs to make sure they are clearly communicated to all employees. The better employees understand their job, role, and responsibilities, the more they will be able to direct the appropriate efforts towards doing it well. If they know what, when and how to do it, they will less likely feel under excessive pressure. At the same time, employees need to be offered enough opportunities to talk to their manager and be heard. Managers should communicate work expectations clearly, making sure they are comprehensible, consistent with the job description and acceptable by the employee, considering their skills, abilities, and existing workload.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 3.3 The prevention of work stress.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	4
Question (stem)	Which of the following measures are considered by WHO as secondary work-related stress prevention? <i>(more correct answers possible)</i>
Possible answers	A. nice and modern offices B. education and training C. realistic job description D. providing benefits promoting employees' physical and mental health
Correct answer	B. education and training D. providing benefits promoting employees' physical and mental health
Response to correct answer	A., D. Secondary prevention The World Health Organisation considers reducing stress through providing workers with relevant education and training (Leka, 2003). This could include encouraging managers and employees to take part in webinars and courses on stress management, the development of organisational wellness programmes, offering fitness opportunities, yoga and meditation sessions at workplace, or providing benefits promoting employees physical and mental health, relaxation and self-care. Useful are also training programmes strengthening employees' coping skills such as training on time management, problem solving, and communication.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again Learning Unit 3 on prevention of work stress.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	5
Question (stem)	Which of the following measures are considered by WHO as tertiary work-related stress prevention? <i>(more correct answers possible)</i>

Possible answers	A. developing a more sensitive and responsible management systems. B. support building of employees' stress resilience C. hiring people with strong stress resilience. D. increasing the employees' salary
Correct answer	A. developing a more sensitive and responsible management systems. B. support building of employees' stress resilience
Response to correct answer	A., B. Tertiary prevention Thirdly, WHO proposes reducing the impact of stress by developing a more sensitive and responsible management system and enhanced occupational health provision (Leka, 2003). Organisations need to work on creating a positive climate and culture and focus on raising awareness of the importance of employees' well-being and health among management and encourage managers to lead by example, applying good practices of stress prevention and management. In this way, the organisation will support the building of employees' stress resilience, helping them to cope with acute stress and preventing accumulation of stress from turning into chronic stress. Michie (2002) explains that training helps prevent stress through becoming aware of the signs of stress using this to interrupt behaviour patterns when the stress reaction is just beginning. Training might also help develop skills of active coping and relaxation, developing a lifestyle that creates a buffer (resilience) against stress.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Wrong answer. Please read again the Learning Unit 3 on prevention of work stress.
Times the question can be taken	3

<i>Question template</i>	
No.	6
Question (stem)	Write your proposal of a possible solution to this model situation: a senior employee lately suffers from work-related stress due to excessive workload, he isn't able to manage all the tasks in time and often takes the work at home.

	<i>(open question, min 100 words, max 150 words)</i>
Possible answers	Open question, a text of min 100 and max 150 words is required.
Correct answer	Any text of the length required?
Response to correct answer	<p>Cause of stress: working overtime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solution: Setting boundaries. Managers should avoid placing demands on employees during out-of-work hours. Employees may never get a mental break from being at work, knowing that their manager can call anytime (The important role HR plays in reducing workplace stress, 2019). Setting boundaries can help significantly. Boundaries can be identical with fixed working hours. In case of flexible working hours, there should be a shared calendar or a system of “emergency shifts” when the employee knows that he/she may receive a work call also when not at work. However, these should not be unexpected and should make part of working hours or be recognised as paid overtime. That said, the boundaries must be respected by managers but also by employees, who for different reasons may work in the evenings. If this case occurs regularly, employees should talk to their manager and find out why they feel the need to work overtime. ➤ Make sure workers are taking regular breaks during working hours, encourage managers to lead by example. Breaks are not only obligatory by law, it's also a time to take a rest, refresh, socialise with colleagues and also arrange personal business such as taking an appointment with a doctor. <p>Cause of stress: overwhelming demands and workload</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solution: Again, an analysis of the job, responsibilities and time required to perform work tasks is necessary. Supervising manager and the employee must be involved. This will allow you to revise and reduce the workload adequately. Tasks can be redistributed among other employees; managers, colleagues or interns can also provide support. Identify if the problem is the amount of work or the lack of competencies. If the

	<p>demands exceed the employee’s competencies, consider providing them with additional training or reassigning the task to a more qualified colleague. If the problem lies in too many activities, involving an assistant or intern to whom supportive tasks can be delegated can resolve the problem with stressful workload.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Don't underestimate the importance of training. Nowadays, many work processes are rapidly moving to the digital environment, traditionally manual operations are being automated, and software is accelerating administration tasks. However, these achievements of the modern age are only helpful and make work more efficient if used properly. Some workers may find these transformations more difficult than others and need additional training or support. ➤ Some job roles are composed of very different tasks which may create strong pressure on employees. For example, if a worker has to communicate with clients, colleagues and partners, and at the same time work on the development of a product which requires a longer period of undisturbed concentration. In such a case, establishing “untouchable days” may be the right solution to provide the worker with the time to focus on deep creative work without disturbing the flow. An “untouchable day” is a day flagged in the calendar where nothing can interrupt the worker – no emails, calls, meetings. It can be two days a week, or one day in two weeks, depending on the needs and possibilities of the worker, team, and organisations. These days should be planned ahead and communicated with everyone who might be concerned. Read more about “untouchable days” here.
Response to wrong answer(s)	Read the Learning Unit 3.4 Solutions to stress for some inspiration. Focus on the causes of stress “working overtime” and “overwhelming demands and workload”.
Times the question can be taken	2