

# Work Wellbeing Survey

## What do Employees Want?

by Sarah McGrath

Working with businesses who are growing their headcount and those who are building their careers, we felt it important to understand what an employee really wants from their employer.



We at 360 Search, asked our network of contacts to participate in an anonymous survey to help us understand the perception of wellness and stress in the workplace. The survey included questions about exercise, stress triggers, what employers do well, how employers responded to Covid-19, and how individuals feel about changing jobs during Covid-19

## Sourcing the data...

The survey was circulated amongst our network of contacts which range from entry level to middle managers to CEO's with ages ranging from 18 to 55 years and over.

Our aim was to reach a wide range of ages, a blend of family circumstances and a mix of levels of seniority to give us a cross section from which to work with. This helps us when working with individuals looking to further their career and when clients seek to hire. Understanding an individual's underlying motivators and barriers strengthens our selection and recruitment process. We adopt a philosophy of optimising mind, body and career.



# Who took part

We surveyed employees across a range of sectors and roles. Participants ranged from very small voluntary organisations to large private sector companies:

789

People took part in our 2020/21 Wellness Survey.

42

Is the average age of our participant group



39% of participants were female  
61% of participants were male

Our participants work in the following industries:



299

Insurance



246

Financial



98

Pensions



87

Recruitment



44

IT



15

Other

Our participants have the following roles:

88	Broker
88	Insurance
87	Recruitment
83	Finance
71	Pensions
67	Account Manager
58	Business Development
55	Mortgage
46	Compliance / HR
42	Administration
34	Underwriting
23	CEO / Director
22	Operations
13	Other
12	Marketing



# Employers approach to Wellness

Over the last three years, we have seen a huge increase in employers focusing on offering employees an alternative outlet to manage their wellbeing. Typically, it's large companies that have dedicated teams to manage this function and offering, such as an HR divisions.

Flexible working is a common question that arises when discussing new opportunities with a person, lack of flexible working has become a deal breaker in moving forward with a new job. The spread of offerings is a positive move in understanding what employees want.

## Does your employer have an interest in employee's wellbeing?

Yes – 61%

No – 39%

## What company incentives are in place to help you feel mentally and physically better at work?

Flexible Working – 37%

Wellness Programme – 14%

Gym Memberships/Exercise classes – 11%

Social Events – 7%

External Helplines/Life Coaching - 6%

Enhanced benefits – 5%

No incentives in place - 5%

Technology – 3%

Subsistence (free tea/coffee/lunch) – 3%

Additional Annual Leave – 2%

Good Salary – 1%

Great Environment – 1%



61% Say their employer has an interest in their wellbeing

25% Say flexible working is a deal breaker

30% Say their job is the biggest stressor in their life

“A high stress level is apparent as soon as I meet a person looking for a new role. A highly stressed person tends to struggle to free up time for a meeting or even an interview. This can influence their performance during the meeting as they can appear quite frustrated or unable to cope”.

We have found that some businesses have lean or inadequate staffing numbers, often as a result of tight budgets. This leads to individuals taking on extra responsibilities and increased workloads, which automatically drives stress levels up.

Pre Covid, we found that those with long commutes were generally more stressed than those who live near their job. They are more prone to leaving their current position to work closer to home even if that means taking a pay reduction. With the change in working culture to acceptance of a more remote world, leaving a role to work closer to home, has become a redundant conversation.

### How does stress affect you?

All participants reported that stress affects sleep and causes anxiety, physical symptoms include:

- Headache
- Overeating or under eating
- Restlessness
- Angry outbursts
- Lack of motivation or focus
- Fatigue
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Increased Alcohol/Tobacco use

### What are the stressors in your life?

- Job - 202
- Finances - 176
- Family Stressors - 173
- Commuting - 72
- Health - 67
- Relationships - 65
- Other - 34

**Others include:** menopause. Work place relationships and the need to be available 24/7.





# Exercise and Diet

80% Said exercise made them feel better and more energised



30% Exercise 2 to 3 times a week



98% Say exercise improves their mood



As we take into a more holistic view of ourselves, exercise and diet play a crucial role in how we feel and perform on a day-to-day basis. Managing oneself physically and mentally has become one of the most important topics of conversations that businesses are having with employees.



Our national workforce is increasingly becoming more and more inquisitive about health and seeks a deeper understanding of the direct impact of long working hours, or a demanding and stressful job on our mental and physical health. We are seeing companies implement new initiatives that involve the wellbeing of employees. This is a growing area.

#### What physical exercise do you practice?

CrossFit - 27%  
Attend gym and/or gym class - 56%  
Walking - 81%  
Outdoor activities - 37%  
Running - 41%  
Cycling - 33%  
Boxing - 26%  
Team Sports - 35%  
Other - 31%

#### How often do you exercise?

0 times a weeks - 17  
1 - 2 times a week - 137  
2 - 3 times a week - 272  
3 - 4 times a week - 124  
4 - 5 times a week - 117  
5+ times a week - 122

#### Do you think exercise has an impact on your emotional and mental health?

Yes – 773  
No – 16

#### Does Exercise help emotions and mood?

Yes – 98%  
No – 2%

#### Does Diet have an impact?

No – 16%  
Yes – 84%



“We see a return in more frequent counteroffers as one of the most significant factors for job offers to fall through”

How long have you worked in your current company?

- 1 Year or less - 24%
- 1 year – 5 years - 43%
- 6 years – 10 years - 14%
- 11 years – 19 years - 10%
- More than 20 years – 9%

Is there room for progression?

- Yes - 61%
- No - 49%

Do you enjoy your job?

- Yes - 84%
- No - 26%

When did you last change jobs?

- Less than 1 year – 19%
- 1 – 3 years ago – 22%
- 3 – 5 years ago – 12%
- 5 – 10 years ago – 12%
- More than 10 years – 35%

Why did you feel it was the right time to change jobs?

- Ambition – 25%
- Redundancy – 20%
- Family Reasons – 30%
- Better package – 10%
- Other – 15%

Did you receive a counteroffer?

- Yes - 21%
- No - 79%

If yes to receiving a counteroffer, have the agreed improvements and/or detail of the counter been delivered upon?

- Yes – 31%
- No – 69%



## What is the main reason you stay in your job?

- 1. Money**  
In the current economic climate money is an important factor when thinking about switching jobs, money was the number one reason people stayed in their job
- 2. Flexitime/working from home**  
Flexibility and the option to work from home was the second reason people stayed in their job
- 3. Opportunity to move up career ladder**  
Climbing the career ladder is still very important to our participants, they actively seek promotions and new challenges
- 4. Positivity of leader**  
Evidence shows that positive leaders increase the flow of positive emotions within their organisations
- 5. Healthcare**  
Access to private healthcare was the fifth reason people stayed in their job
- 6. Pension**  
Due to how defined-benefit plans are structured, the longer you work for the company, the better the eventual payout is going to be
- 7. Recognition for work**  
Celebrating success and recognising your people is fundamental to productive employees
- 8. Wellbeing programme**  
Employee wellbeing is becoming more of a conversation in organisations and important to employees
- 9. Social events**  
Social events were the least important reason people stayed in their job



People who respect and appreciate their co workers tend to get along with them and the sense of team belonging is a big reason why people stay with companies. Feeling as though you can lean on your team and trust them to work with you is a crucial part of the workplace satisfaction, it will be interesting to see how work relationships change as we all work more remotely and flexibly.



# What can employers do better?

What can your employer do to improve your working conditions?

Most responded by saying flexi working patterns or more working from home options and an update to the attitudes of management team.

Install hot running water, modern heating, install a fire escape as we work upstairs with no way out if there was a fire below

Our working environment is brutal - there's no hot water!

Incorporate physical activity, we work long hours and it's hard to find time to squeeze in after work with kids. Flexibility of a morning class or lunch sessions would be great.

What are you dissatisfied with currently in your role/company?

Major themes were lack of progression and poor performance of the management team.

There is no clear communication from our management team, I feel like the goalposts are constantly being moved

They try to bring in too many changes at once and the owner keeps hiring her family members over many others who are far more qualified!

They need to listen and communicate in a professional manner and install someone in a HR so any grievances can be aired in a less intimidating way

What does your employer do well?

The majority said good marketing, PR and client retention, good health benefits and office environment.

They acknowledge good work and help people progress their career internally

Currently waiting on a standing desk, then my life will be complete. In fairness my company are very proactive and I haven't been waiting long for it to be approved

They are really good at selling themselves



# What can employers do better?

Do you feel you're paid appropriately?

Yes – 56% No - 44%

I want a pay rise and recognition for the work I do that makes a difference in terms of growing the business and improving compliance

My basic salary is fine but my company needs to provide a pension and lead by example

My employer needs to start providing realistic targets, increased employee benefits, pension, maternity leave, flexi-time and health insurance supplement etc.

What should your employer change immediately?

Major themes were staff behaviors in the office and provide working from home or flexi-time benefits and upgrades to IT.

Do something about bullying and harassment in the office and be more approachable to conversations about this

Our technology isn't reducing our workload we need a complete overhaul of our IT hardware and software as it's making all tasks take longer and our data is in multiple places

We need better IT and up to date software

Does your employer consider your mental health?

Yes – 43% No - 57%

He needs to be more positive with us, I'm fed up of the negativity, he always finds a fault but can never praise a job well done

I would love more positivity in the office and recognition for good work, when you go above and beyond it's mentally draining and a little appreciation would go a long way

Yes, they let us bring our dogs to work and encourage to go outside at lunchtime



# Covid-19

The COVID-19 crisis has continued to have a significant impact on the labour market in Ireland. As per the CRO, from October 2020, the standard measure of Monthly Unemployment was 7.3% in October 2020, the COVID-19 adjusted measure of unemployment reached as high as 20.2% if all claimants of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment were classified as unemployed.

The application of the standard methodology gives a seasonally adjusted Monthly Unemployment Rate of 7.3% for October 2020, unchanged from September 2020 and up from 4.7% in October 2019.

The seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed was 180,500 in October 2020, compared to 180,400 in September 2020.

When compared to October 2019, there was an annual increase of 66,300 in the seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed.

In October 2020, the Monthly Unemployment Rate was 6.9% for males and 7.7% for females.

Breaking the results down by broad age group, the traditional Monthly Unemployment Rate for those aged 15 to 24 years was 19.0% in October 2020, while it was 5.6% for those aged 25 to 74 years

How do you feel your employer has adapted your working conditions in line with the coronavirus outbreak?

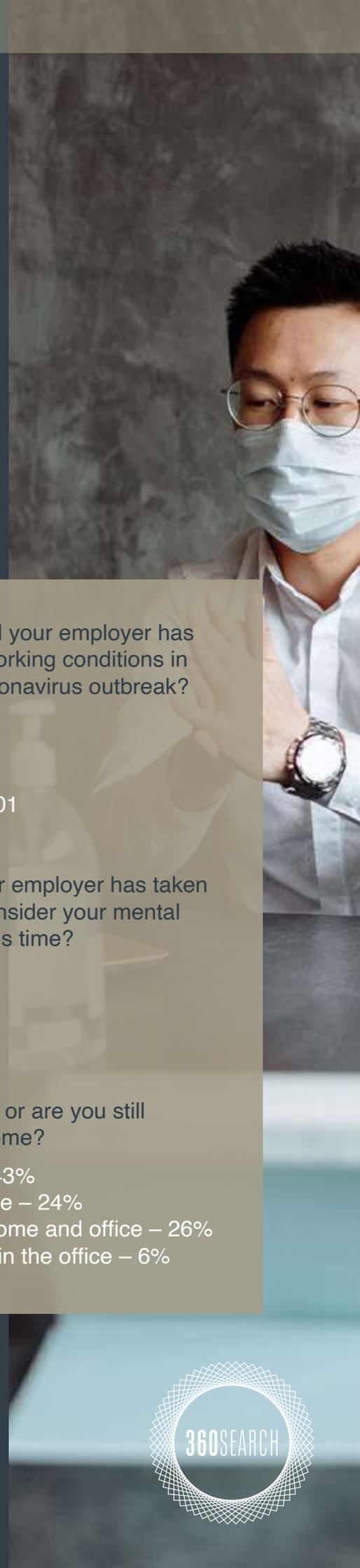
Very well – 442  
Well – 142  
Poorly – 104  
Very Poorly – 101

Do you feel your employer has taken measures to consider your mental health during this time?

Yes – 38%  
No – 29%  
Some – 33%

Have you been, or are you still working from home?

Still at home – 43%  
Back in the office – 24%  
Split between home and office – 26%  
Always worked in the office – 6%



91% Have not taken time off sick in the last 12 months



78% Say their mental health suffered during the last year



23% Are currently looking to change jobs



Of the 47% of the population who have had their employment impacted by Covid-19, just over a third (34%) have started remote working from home and 23% of these employment affected persons have seen a change to their work hours. Of those 47% whose employment has been affected, 14% have lost employment and 33% have been temporarily laid off due to the covid-19 pandemic.

What has been your experience of working from home?

Excellent - 41%  
Great, but isolated - 41%  
It's Ok - 6%  
Working from home is not effective - 12%

Have you been off work due to sickness

Yes – 9%  
No – 91%

Have you been sick this year but continued to work from home?

Yes – 19%  
No – 81%

Has your emotional or mental health suffered during the course of the year?

Yes – 78%  
No – 20%  
Rather not say - 2%

Is working from home going to be a postcoronavirus option moving forward?

Yes – 78%  
No, going back to the office – 16%  
Unsure - 6%

What does the ideal working week look like?

Work from home full time – 17%  
Go back to the office full time – 11%  
Flexible working - 72%

How confident would you be to change jobs in the current climate?

Changed jobs recently – 28%  
Actively looking - 23%  
Looking with caution – 5%  
Not looking - 44%





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### Researched and written by Sarah McGrath

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