

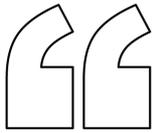
How leaders can build healthy work-life integration in the current and post COVID-19 era



Work. It's a big part of one's life and always has been. But over the last few years the always-on technologies and office-in-our-pocket has made it harder than ever to switch off and distinguish the difference between work and rest. The devices we carry allow many of us to take work not just home, but wherever we go.

This blurring of work and life was further entrenched during COVID-19 where the biggest transformation to how, where and when we work took place.

As many leaders begin to consider what work will look like in a post COVID-19 era, here are some ways to build healthy work-life integration.

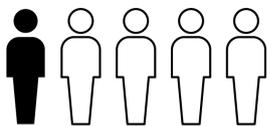


Today people see less differentiating between work-life and out-of-work-life, or one's job and one's personal values. Leaders who can regularly communicate the organisation's purpose help people to feel motivated and inspired to do their best work.

Build a culture of prioritising wellbeing

In our national survey of 1,160 workers, more than one in five (22%), said the main reason they left their previous employment situation was because of the work-life balance (or the lack thereof). For many of us, work and life, or work and rest, have become more blurred than ever.

The term 'work-life balance' is a concept used to distinguish between work responsibilities and other aspects of our personal wellbeing such as the social, relational, spiritual or financial. But as work continues to permeate other areas of our life, a new term is replacing the work-life balance equation. And that's work-life integration. This term helps us to see that work and life are ideally not in competition, but that our 'at work' life and our 'away from work' life are both key to our contributions, relationships and fulfilment.



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While COVID-19 posed many challenges, it also provided a unique opportunity to recalibrate a focus on wellbeing. Leaders who can take this focus on wellbeing and build it into the culture of their organisation will make a positive impact on their team. This might translate to encouraging people to take regular breaks from work, finish on time, or prioritise aspects

that make their work enjoyable and sustainable.

Regularly highlight the organisation's purpose

Rather than viewing work as a separate part of life, or simply an obstacle to overcome, work is an important and significant part of life. After all, people work for more than just remuneration. According to our national survey of 1,001 workers, 63% said work is extremely/very important to having a sense of purpose. Workers also said work is extremely/very important to developing them as a person (59%), making a difference in the lives of others (58%), bettering society and the world (55%) and contributing to a sense of community and belonging (54%).

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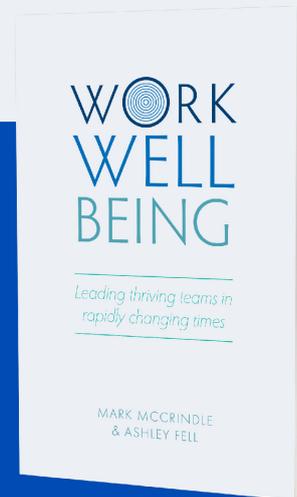
Be clear with communication

While there are many benefits to remote working such as the resulting time savings (no commute), cost savings (on travel and lunches out), and better work-life integration, our national research during the pandemic showed that there are also challenges such as the blurring of boundaries, social isolation and less opportunities for collaboration. Leaders that regularly communicate with their people, are intentional about checking in with them and look for opportunities to collaborate in new ways will help to overcome some of these challenges and in doing so help their people and the organisation to thrive in the new normal.

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