THE WELLBEING LAB 2020 WORKPLACE REPORT

THE STATE OF WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES

Talent Tools™

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A MICHELLEMCQUAID PROGRAM

AHRI
Australian HR Institute

Talent Wellbeing

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Talent **Wellbeing**

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN HR INSTITUTE

In these changing and challenging times, not only does workplace wellbeing remain a key issue for employers and government, it has fittingly moved to the top of the business and public policy agendas.

I am delighted that AHRI is continuing to work with the Wellbeing Lab on this follow-up study of wellbeing in Australian workplaces. Our initial collaboration resulted in a 2018 baseline study of Australian employees from the perspectives of the individual, the team and the organisation, in order to get a sense of where people were situated on a four-point continuum.

The 2018 data enabled us to better understand the factors that sustain thriving workplaces and those that undermine them. Employees who consistently thrive report being satisfied with their job, believe they perform well, and feel committed. Those struggling tend to feel the opposite on all counts, though some thrive despite this struggle.

As with the 2018 study, context is critical with nearly twice the proportion of males thriving (19%) compared with females (10.2%), and around a quarter of owners (24.5%) and those in the c-suite (20.9 per cent) thriving compared with technicians (3.4%) and administrative staff (5.8%), who reported they were really struggling.

Despite those figures, feelings of struggle don't necessarily undermine wellbeing and performance if workers know how to respond to opportunities to learn and grow. The HR challenge is to enable a workplace culture in which workers have sufficient autonomy to engage in open conversations about their learning, growth and wellbeing.

Not surprisingly, mental health plays a significant contributing role in employee wellbeing, with 31.8% reporting mental health issues cause them to struggle. Factors such as loneliness, physical health and finance rated as strong negative contributors to mental health, with lack of energy, anxiety and sleep deprivation showing up as consequences.

A critical finding was that workers who felt they could ask for help when struggling fared better than those who felt they could never tell anyone. Respondents to the study were asked who they would ask for help when struggling. Their responses carry a strong message for HR.

More than one in three (35.8%) report that they would confide in someone outside work, one in five (20.2%) would tell a colleague, 17.8% would talk to their boss, and 20% would not tell anyone. Only 3.3% reported they would seek help from HR, down from 6% in 2018, with similar figures for employee assistance programs (EAP).

Those who did ask HR for help reported positively about the assistance they received, but the very low number approaching HR in the first place is an issue, and may go to employee perceptions about the trustworthiness of HR. While the finding suggests HR practitioners may need to work on their reputation in order to build trust, the data may also reflect the tension HR practitioners experience as the intermediary between employer and employee.

As the professional peak body for HR, certification through AHRI is designed to build and demonstrate professional capability. Certification requires candidates to show evidence of professional attributes that include understanding the business and caring for its people. It also requires evidence that candidates are genuinely collaborative, influential and courageous.

I commend this study to business leaders and HR practitioners; it is clear that employees who are in sound physical, mental and social shape are most likely to be ready, willing and able to contribute actively to their organisation.

In releasing the 2019 findings, I thank the researchers for publishing an epilogue to this report. Their efforts to gauge the state of employee wellbeing in early 2020, to take account of a new year dominated by widespread and ferocious bushfires followed sharply by the onset of COVID-19 has added to our understanding.

Not surprisingly, this latest research discovered that 81% of employees found their level of struggle had increased, with the high thriving workers in March 2020 dropping 4% from around 14% in 2019, and 18 per cent in 2018. Although the thriving group still reported the highest levels of job satisfaction, performance and commitment, they also reported a decline in their performance, suggesting the early events of the year have taken a toll across the board. This is not surprising, and sends a clear message that in such difficult times we must all make the wellbeing of our employees, and indeed the wider community, our number one priority.

Sarah McCann-Bartlett
Chief Executive Officer
Australian HR Institute

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The Wellbeing Lab Workplace Survey was first conducted in September 2018. A sample of 1,002 randomly selected employees across Australia completed the survey, providing one of the largest comprehensive evaluations of the State of Wellbeing in Australian Workplaces since 2010.

The Workplace Survey was a variant of the PERMAH Wellbeing Survey (**www.permahsurvey.com**) developed by Dr. Peggy Kern from the University of Melbourne. The refined survey was designed to help employees and their organisations better understand the factors supporting and undermining wellbeing in the workplace and to more intelligently shape workplace wellbeing strategies.

In December 2019 we asked a new randomly selected sample of 1,007 Australian workers the same questions. Results supported the consistency and validity of the original findings. In addition, based on emerging industry trends and feedback, several new questions were added to help us better understand how the struggles workers had identified were impacting their wellbeing.

Respondents were representative of the Australian workforce and included:

GENDER	
Men	505
Women	500
Other/Not reported	2

AGE GROUPS	
25 – 34 years	281
35 – 44 years	252
45 – 54 years	253
55 – 65 years	221

LOCATIONS	
New South Wales	324
Victoria	258
Queensland	206
South Australia	71
Western Australia	106
ACT	16
Tasmania	22
Northern Territory	4

JOB ROLES	
Owners	102
Directors	16
C-Suite/Managers	176
Professionals	257
Technical Experts	58
Co-ordinators	31
Administrative	139
Customer Service	109
Contractors	38
Other	81

"Industries were representative of Australian workplaces including Agriculture, Banking, Education, Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Mining, Science, Trades and Tourism.

If you would like more information about this report or additional findings by gender, age, location, job role or industry (not reported), please contact **chelle@thewellbeinglab.com**.

Talent **Wellbeing**

1.

CURRENT STATE: WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES

In its simplest form, wellbeing is the ability to feel good and function effectively as we navigate the inevitable highs and lows of work and life. Studies – including this one – find that how we feel (physically, emotionally and socially) and how we perform at work have a mutually enhancing cycle. Work provides opportunities for ongoing learning and development, meaningful achievements and connecting with others, which nourish our wellbeing. And when we feel physically, mentally and socially well, we bring more energy, focus and motivation to work and are more productive. Thriving occurs when we consistently feel and function well.

14.7%

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS WERE CONSISTENTLY THRIVING, VERSUS 18.7% IN 2018

THRIVING ≠ PROBLEM FREE

Wellbeing ranges from languishing (low levels of wellbeing) to thriving (high levels of wellbeing). We might imagine that those who thrive have problem-free lives. But in our 2018 study, we discovered that 37% of Australian workers reported that they were *living well despite struggles* and that their levels of job satisfaction and performance were no different from workers who reported they were *consistently thriving.*
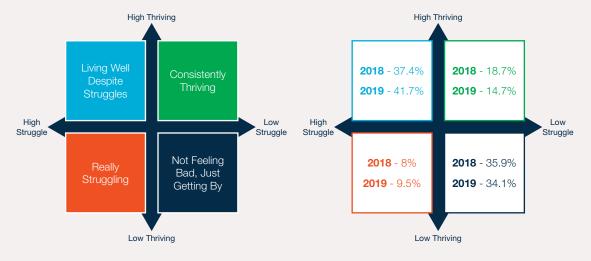
We were intrigued by the result. Perhaps it was a fluke in the sample or the wording of the question. And then we saw the same pattern in a survey of 1,000 US workers. And this pattern was replicated in the 2019 Australian sample.

Notably, both workers who reported *consistently thriving* and workers who reported *living well despite struggles* were statistically more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction, better performance and greater commitment to their organisation. They were also likely to report higher levels of performance for their team and their organisation.
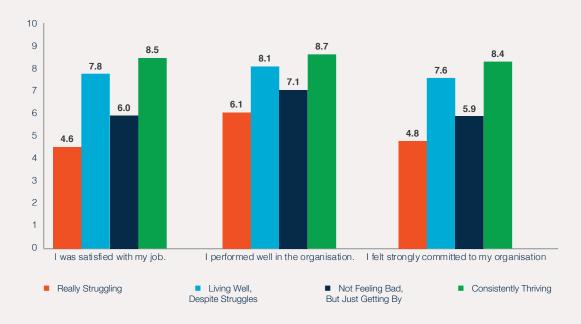
It appears that it is possible to thrive despite struggle, and it is possible to not experience wellbeing even in the absence of struggle.

STATE OF WELLBEING

High Thriving

| Living Well Despite Struggles | Consistently Thriving |

High Struggle / Low Struggle

| Really Struggling | Not Feeling Bad, Just Getting By |

Low Thriving

STATE OF WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES

High Thriving

2018 - 37.4%
2019 - 41.7%

2018 - 18.7%
2019 - 14.7%

High Struggle / Low Struggle

2018 - 8%
2019 - 9.5%

2018 - 35.9%
2019 - 34.1%

Low Thriving

STATE OF WELLBEING BY INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES

	I was satisfied with my job.	I performed well in the organisation.	I felt strongly committed to my organisation
Really Struggling	4.6	6.1	4.8
Living Well, Despite Struggles	7.8	8.1	7.6
Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	6.0	7.1	5.9
Consistently Thriving	8.5	8.7	8.4

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CONTEXT MATTERS

Our results support numerous other studies that indicate that the personal and professional context of workers impacts employee wellbeing.

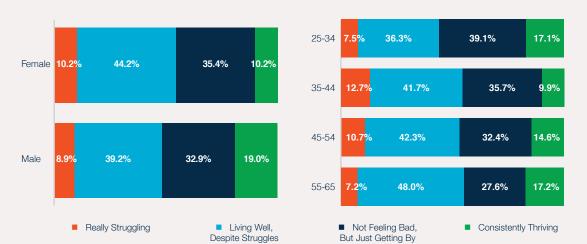Men were more likely to report that they were *consistently thriving,* while women were more likely to report that they were *living well, despite struggles*.

Workers aged 55+ years were the most likely to be *consistently thriving* or *living well despite struggles*. Workers aged 35-44 years were the most likely to be *really struggling*.

Workers in job roles with more autonomy (i.e., owners, c-level/managers and contractors) were more likely to report they were *consistently thriving*. In contrast, workers in customer service roles were the most likely to be **not feeling bad, but just getting by** or *really struggling*.
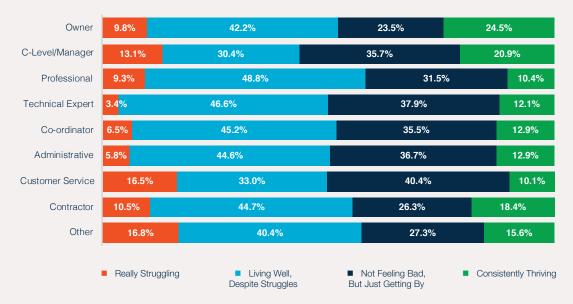
Workers in banking, finance and insurance, community and social services, and hospitality and tourism were more likely to be *really struggling*. Workers in IT and telecommunications, retail and call centres, transportation and warehousing industries were most likely to be **not feeling bad, but just getting by**. Workers in banking, finance and insurance were also the most likely to be *consistently thriving*.

STATE OF WELLBEING BY GENDER

Gender	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
Female	10.2%	44.2%	35.4%	10.2%
Male	8.9%	39.2%	32.9%	19.0%

STATE OF WELLBEING BY AGE

Age	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
25-34	7.5%	36.3%	39.1%	17.1%
35-44	12.7%	41.7%	35.7%	9.9%
45-54	10.7%	42.3%	32.4%	14.6%
55-65	7.2%	48.0%	27.6%	17.2%

STATE OF WELLBEING BY JOB ROLE

Job Role	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
Owner	9.8%	42.2%	23.5%	24.5%
C-Level/Manager	13.1%	30.4%	35.7%	20.9%
Professional	9.3%	48.8%	31.5%	10.4%
Technical Expert	3.4%	46.6%	37.9%	12.1%
Co-ordinator	6.5%	45.2%	35.5%	12.9%
Administrative	5.8%	44.6%	36.7%	12.9%
Customer Service	16.5%	33.0%	40.4%	10.1%
Contractor	10.5%	44.7%	26.3%	18.4%
Other	16.8%	40.4%	27.3%	15.6%

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AN AH-HA MOMENT

Our findings make it clear that feelings of struggle and stress don't have to undermine people's wellbeing or performance – in fact, they can enhance it, provided they know how to respond to these signs as opportunities for learning and growth.

HR need to understand the current state of wellbeing of employees, and review policies and procedures to enable a culture in which open conversations about wellbeing can occur.

Does Your Definition Of Workplace Wellbeing Give Workers The Permission To Struggle?

2. WELLBEING REQUIRES WAY POWER, WILL POWER & WE POWER

Our levels of wellbeing naturally ebb and flow as we experience the ups and downs of life. Thus, the goal is not to constantly achieve the highest amount of wellbeing, but rather to use our wellbeing scores to help ourselves and others become more intelligent and active agents who can effectively engage in and function well at work, regardless of what life throws at us. How can we be more intelligent and active agents? Our findings indicate three key ingredients: ability (way power), motivation (will power) and psychological safety (we power).

51%

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS FELT VERY CONFIDENT TO MANAGE THEIR WELLBEING, VERSUS 49% IN 2018.
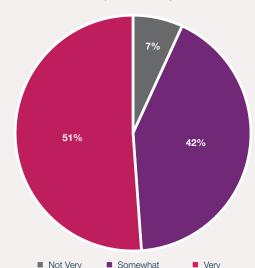
WAY POWER AND WILL POWER

Workers who reported higher levels of confidence in their ability to care for their own wellbeing were statistically more likely to be *consistently thriving* or *living well despite struggles* than other workers. Put simply, they have the way power to effectively care for their wellbeing – be that the knowledge, tools, or the support they need.

Given the investment many Australian workplaces are making in wellbeing, it was encouraging to see a slight increase from 48% to 51% in workers' confidence and ability to manage their wellbeing.
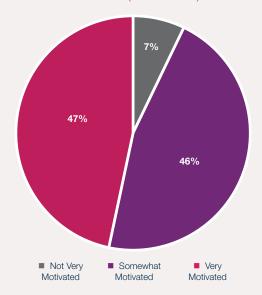
But ability alone is not enough. Thriving does not simply happen, but takes ongoing effort. Workers who reported higher levels of motivation to improve their wellbeing were also statistically more likely to be *consistently thriving* or *living well despite struggles* than other workers. Put simply, they have the will power to take actions to care for their wellbeing, whether through on-going engagement in health-promoting activities or learning new strategies.

Way power and will power provide workers with the tools they need to be more intelligent and active agents in caring for their wellbeing. They also can be sources of support for others who may be struggling with their wellbeing.

WELLBEING ABILITY (WAY POWER)

7%
51%
42%

- Not Very Confident
- Somewhat Confident
- Very Confident

WELLBEING MOTIVATION (WILL POWER)
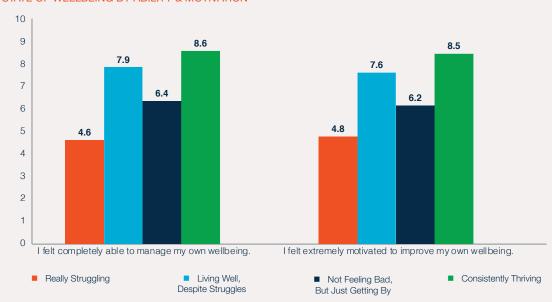
7%
47%
46%

- Not Very Motivated
- Somewhat Motivated
- Very Motivated

STATE OF WELLBEING BY ABILITY & MOTIVATION

I felt completely able to manage my own wellbeing.
4.6 | 7.9 | 6.4 | 8.6

I felt extremely motivated to improve my own wellbeing.
4.8 | 7.6 | 6.2 | 8.5

- Really Struggling
- Living Well, Despite Struggles
- Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By
- Consistently Thriving

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WE POWER PROVIDES SAFETY

Beyond individual way power and will power, the social context of the workplace also matters. Studies – including ours – find that workers experience greater wellbeing and better performance when they feel psychologically safe to bring up problems and talk honestly about mistakes with each other.

Workers who reported higher levels of psychological safety were statistically more likely to be *consistently thriving* or *living well despite struggles* than other workers. Wellbeing occurred when workers felt safe and included at work, even if they were struggling.
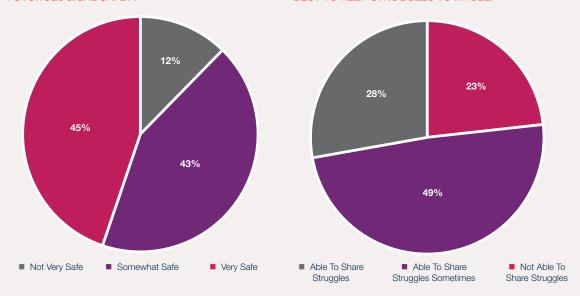
In contrast, workers who were *really struggling* or **not feeling bad, but just getting by** were statistically more likely to report that they felt it best to keep their struggles to themselves at work.

Unfortunately, over half of the sample felt that it was best to keep struggles to themselves some or all of the time, and 12% felt psychologically unsafe in their workplace.

These findings highlight the importance of normalising struggle as part of wellbeing and creating opportunities for them to talk about struggle as part of normal work experiences.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

45%
12%
43%

- Not Very Safe
- Somewhat Safe
- Very Safe

BEST TO KEEP STRUGGLES TO MYSELF

28%
23%
49%

- Able To Share Struggles
- Able To Share Struggles Sometimes
- Not Able To Share Struggles

STATE OF WELLBEING BY PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY & BEST NOT TO STARE STRUGGLES

I felt accepted and included at work even when I was struggling.
- 4.8
- 7.0
- 6.1
- 7.7

I felt it was best to keep my struggles to myself at work.
- 7.0
- 4.9
- 6.3
- 4.7

- Really Struggling
- Living Well, Despite Struggles
- Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By
- Consistently Thriving

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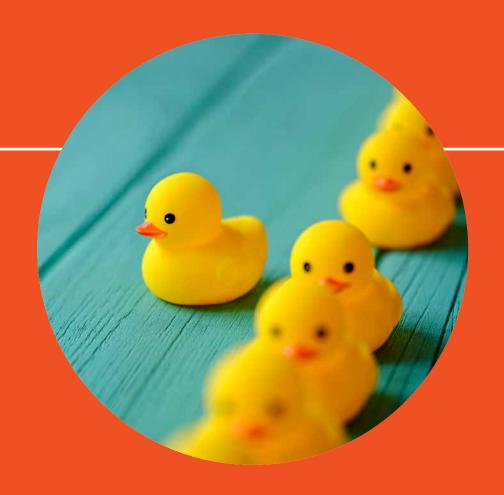turning talent into performance...

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AN AH-HA MOMENT

Normalising struggle can make it psychologically safer for workers to talk to each other about aspects at work or home that may be undermining their wellbeing. Learning how others navigate struggle can help to improve their ability and motivation to care for themselves and each other at work.

HR need to encourage and support leaders in creating a psychologically safe environment.

Do your workers feel psychologically safe enough to talk honestly with each other about their wellbeing?

3. BOOSTING THRIVING: WHY OTHER PEOPLE MATTER

Caring for our wellbeing is not a solo endeavour. Wellbeing perceptions, experiences and behaviours are diverse and spread through a complicated web of social connections.

22%

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS RATED THEIR RELATIONSHIPS AS CRITICAL TO BOOSTING THEIR WELLBEING.

WELLBEING IS DIVERSE

One way to understand, measure and action evidence-based approaches for improving wellbeing is Professor Martin Seligman's PERMAH Wellbeing Framework, which suggests wellbeing comprises: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health.

Each of the PERMAH factors provide indications of our overall feelings of wellbeing. Importantly, there is no single number or specific domain that indicates thriving. Depending on one's values and preferences, different profiles are ideal for different people. But as the six factors are interconnected and influence one another, feeling poorly in one area can result in feeling poorly in other areas as well.
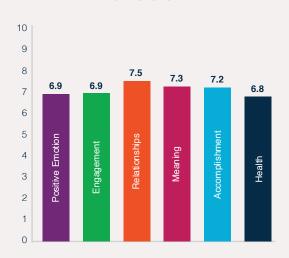
Workers who were *consistently thriving* or *living well despite struggles* reported statistically higher scores on all PERMAH factors than other workers. Meaning was particularly important for those *living well despite struggles,* and Relationships were important across all groups.

Workers, especially those who were *really struggling*, reported low levels of Positive Emotion and physical Health compared to other workers.

HIGHEST PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS

Health 14%
Positive Emotions 14%
Engagment 14%
Relationships 22%
Meaning 20%
Accomplishment 16%

PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS BY MEAN

Positive Emotion	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Accomplishment	Health
6.9	6.9	7.5	7.3	7.2	6.8

STATE OF WELLBEING BY PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS

	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
Positive Emotions	4.7	7.6	6.2	8.3
Engagement	5.2	7.6	6.1	8.3
Relationships	6.8	7.9	7.0	8.4
Meaning	5.4	7.9	6.6	8.3
Accomplishment	5.6	7.7	6.6	8.3
Health	4.2	7.5	6.0	8.4

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WELLBEING IS COLLECTIVE

Studies find that wellbeing is inherently collective. As we saw in 2018, across the PERMAH factors, participants believed that their personal wellbeing was generally higher than the wellbeing of their team or their organisation, especially for the Relationship and physical Health dimensions.

The team and organisation scores represent workplaces norms, attitudes and actions that undermine or amplify individual experiences of wellbeing. Given that researchers have found these factors can be contagious, it is important for workplaces to be mindful of the impact their choices are having on workers.

For example, studies have found that workplaces that support people's basic psychological needs of autonomy (having a sense of freedom of choice in one or more ways), competence (able to do one's work, learn and grow), and relatedness (connecting deeply with others) make it easier for people to thrive consistently. Our data suggests that the extent to which these needs were being met help to distinguish those who were *consistently thriving* and *living well despite struggles* from other workers.

COLLECTIVE PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS

Legend: Workers | Teams | Organisations

	Positive Emotion	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Accomplishment	Health
Workers	7.0	7.0	7.6	7.3	7.2	6.8
Teams	6.9	6.8	7.0	7.2	6.9	6.0
Organisations	6.8	6.8	6.5	6.8	6.8	6.0

WORKPLACE SELF-DETERMINATION WELLBEING NUTRIENTS

Legend: Really Struggling | Living Well, Despite Struggles | Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By | Consistently Thriving

	Relatedness	Competence	Autonomy
Really Struggling	5.0	5.5	4.7
Living Well, Despite Struggles	7.5	8.1	7.2
Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	6.1	6.9	5.8
Consistently Thriving	8.2	8.6	8.0

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WELLBEING REQUIRES SUPPORT

Unfortunately, we found that over a third of workplaces are providing no support for people's wellbeing. Workers who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** or *really struggling* were significantly more likely to be in workplaces where no support is available.

For workplaces that do provide wellbeing support, Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) were the most popular form of support offered, but were also seen as the least effective. In contrast, wellbeing coaching, which was offered in less than 10% of workplaces, was seen as the most effective form of wellbeing support. Every form of support was more likely to improve workers' ability to care for their wellbeing than doing nothing.
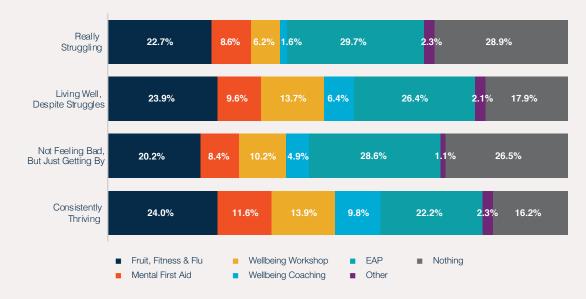
Workers who were *consistently thriving* and those who were *living well despite struggles* were statistically more likely to be provided with wellbeing coaching and wellbeing workshops to support their wellbeing. While the continued investment in employee health (the 3Fs of Fruit, Fitness and Flu shots) and EAPs is encouraging, workplaces need to recognise that more diverse forms of workplace wellbeing supports may be required to improve the ability and motivation of workers to care for their wellbeing.

WORKPLACE SUPPORT

Fruit, Fitness & Flu: 36.1
Mental First Aid: 15.1
Wellbeing Workshop: 19.2
Wellbeing Coaching: 9.7
EAP: 42.6
Other: 3.0
Nothing: 33.9

WELLBEING ABILITY BY WORKPLACE SUPPORT

Fruit, Fitness & Flu: 7.4
Mental First Aid: 7.5
Wellbeing Workshop: 7.6
Wellbeing Coaching: 8.1
EAP: 7.0
Other: 7.5
Nothing: 6.9

STATE OF WELLBEING BY WELLBEING SUPPORT

	Fruit, Fitness & Flu	Mental First Aid	Wellbeing Workshop	Wellbeing Coaching	EAP	Other	Nothing
Really Struggling	22.7%	8.6%	6.2%	1.6%	29.7%	2.3%	28.9%
Living Well, Despite Struggles	23.9%	9.6%	13.7%	6.4%	26.4%	2.1%	17.9%
Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	20.2%	8.4%	10.2%	4.9%	28.6%	1.1%	26.5%
Consistently Thriving	24.0%	11.6%	13.9%	9.8%	22.2%	2.3%	16.2%

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AN AH-HA MOMENT

Caring for workers' wellbeing requires diverse and sustained support at the levels of 'me' (workers), 'we' (teams) and 'us' (whole workplace) to create a thriving workplace environment.

HR should look to support EAP with other proactive initiatives that encourage education, conversations, and support tools in the workplace about wellbeing.

Does your wellbeing strategy prioritise diverse forms of support to help workers, teams and your workplace care for each other's wellbeing?

4.

REDUCING STRUGGLE: MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH

Feelings of struggle and stress are signs that something important for us is unfolding and needs our attention and action. It's when struggle is ignored and avoided for too long that people start breaking. To avoid prolonging struggle unnecessarily, we must be able to notice when we or others are struggling, ask for help when needed and have the way power + will power + we power to ease our suffering.

31.8%

AUSTRALIAN WORKERS REPORT THAT THE BIGGEST CAUSE OF STRUGGLE AT WORK IS THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.

BIGGEST CAUSES OF STRUGGLE

The leading cause of struggle (at 31.8%), especially for those who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** and for those who were *really struggling,* was their mental health. Workers who were *living well despite struggles* were less likely to struggle with mental health; instead, struggles arose from other people at work, their physical health or money at home.
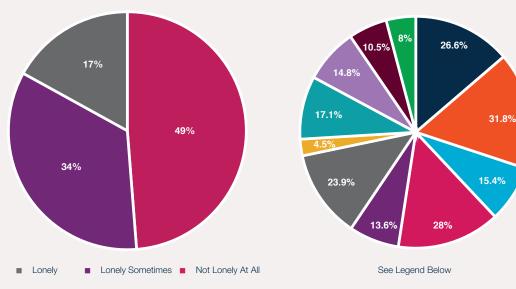
Relationships are a double-edged sword, depending on the quality of those relationships. While workers' relationships with others was the biggest boost for their wellbeing, 51% of workers felt lonely sometimes or very lonely. Dealing with their colleagues and clients at work, one's boss and people outside of work represented 57% of reported struggles.

Struggling with their physical health was also a common challenge for many workers (26.6%), particularly those who were not feeling bad but just getting by and those who were *really struggling*. Managing money at home also was a common struggle (23.9%).
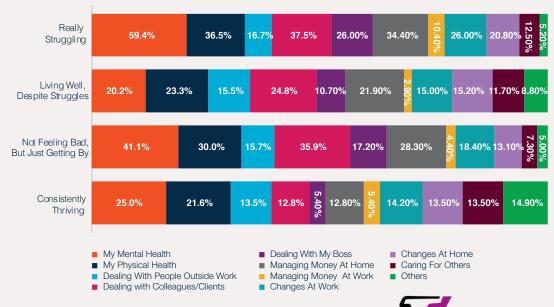
Of concern, workers who were *really struggling* were more likely to struggle with every challenge listed, with the exception of caring for others.

LONELINESS AT WORK

- Lonely
- Lonely Sometimes
- Not Lonely At All

TOP 3 STRUGGLES AT WORK BY % FREQUENCY

See Legend Below

STATE OF WELLBEING BY STRUGGLES

	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
My Mental Health	59.4%	20.2%	41.1%	25.0%
My Physical Health	36.5%	23.3%	30.0%	21.6%
Dealing With People Outside Work	16.7%	15.5%	15.7%	13.5%
Dealing with Colleagues/Clients	37.5%	24.8%	35.9%	12.8%
Dealing With My Boss	26.00%	10.70%	17.20%	5.40%
Managing Money At Home	34.40%	21.90%	28.30%	12.80%
Managing Money At Work	10.40%	2.90%	4.40%	5.40%
Changes At Work	26.00%	15.00%	18.40%	14.20%
Changes At Home	20.80%	15.20%	13.10%	13.50%
Caring For Others	12.50%	11.70%	7.30%	13.50%
Others	5.20%	8.80%	5.00%	14.90%

Legend:
- My Mental Health
- My Physical Health
- Dealing With People Outside Work
- Dealing with Colleagues/Clients
- Dealing With My Boss
- Managing Money At Home
- Managing Money At Work
- Changes At Work
- Changes At Home
- Caring For Others
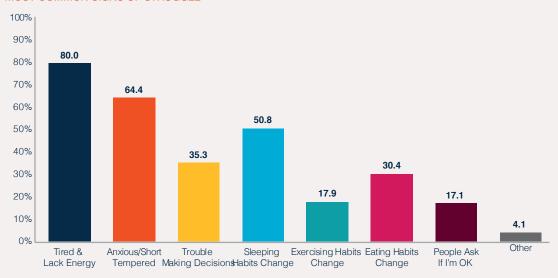- Others

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NOTICING STRUGGLE

Workers were most likely to report feeling tired and lacking energy as the first thing they notice when they're struggling. This was followed by feeling anxious and/or short tempered and a change in sleeping habits.

Workers who were *living well despite struggles* were significantly more likely to notice any signs of struggle than other workers.
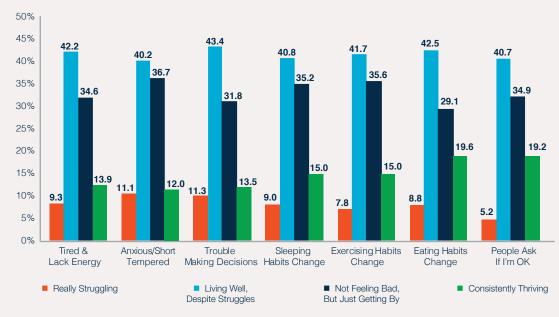
Workers who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** and those who were *really struggling* were more likely to notice that they were feeling anxious and/or short tempered.

Workers who were *consistently thriving* were more likely to notice that their eating habits had changed, or be asked by people if they were okay.

MOST COMMON SIGNS OF STRUGGLE

Sign	%
Tired & Lack Energy	80.0
Anxious/Short Tempered	64.4
Trouble Making Decisions	35.3
Sleeping Habits Change	50.8
Exercising Habits Change	17.9
Eating Habits Change	30.4
People Ask If I'm OK	17.1
Other	4.1

STATE OF WELLBEING COMMON SIGNS OF STRUGGLE

Sign	Really Struggling	Living Well, Despite Struggles	Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	Consistently Thriving
Tired & Lack Energy	9.3	42.2	34.6	13.9
Anxious/Short Tempered	11.1	40.2	36.7	12.0
Trouble Making Decisions	11.3	43.4	31.8	13.5
Sleeping Habits Change	9.0	40.8	35.2	15.0
Exercising Habits Change	7.8	41.7	35.6	15.0
Eating Habits Change	8.8	42.5	29.1	19.6
People Ask If I'm OK	5.2	40.7	34.9	19.2

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RELUCTANCE TO ASK FOR HELP

Workers who asked others for help when struggling were significantly more likely to experience higher levels of wellbeing. Yet one in five workers indicated that they would never tell anyone they were struggling, with workers who are **not feeling bad but just getting by** or those who are *really struggling* less likely than other workers to seek help.

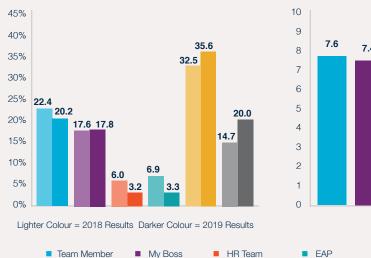Of concern, fewer workers were willing to reach out for help to people at work than in 2018.

Pointing again to the importance of relationships, workers were most likely to turn to someone outside of work for help, even though people outside of work were less effective in supporting wellbeing. Within the workplace, team members were the most likely people workers turned to for help and were generally a good form of support.
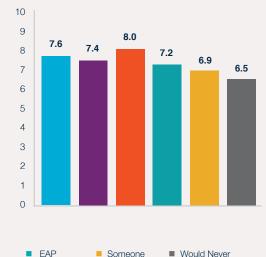
Worth noting is that workers rarely (3.2%) asked the HR team for help, but those who did found them the most helpful support.

Supporting the we power of wellbeing, the data suggests that HR teams, leaders and team members all appear to have a valuable role to play when it comes to supporting workers' wellbeing.

FIRST PERSON I ASK FOR HELP WHEN STRUGGLING

Lighter Colour = 2018 Results Darker Colour = 2019 Results

- Team Member: 22.4, 20.2
- My Boss: 17.6, 17.8
- HR Team: 6.0, 3.2
- EAP: 6.9, 3.3
- Someone Outside Work: 32.5, 35.6
- Would Never Tell Anyone: 14.7, 20.0

Legend: Team Member ■ My Boss ■ HR Team ■ EAP ■ Someone Outside Work ■ Would Never Tell Anyone

WELLBEING ABILITY BY WHO I ASK FOR HELP

- 7.6
- 7.4
- 8.0
- 7.2
- 6.9
- 6.5
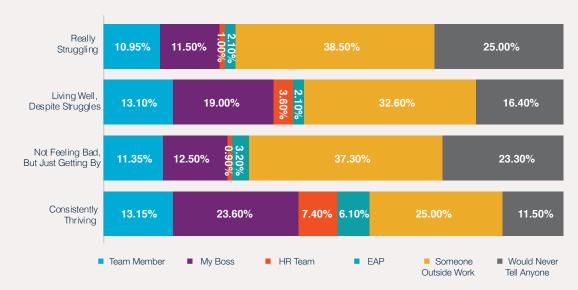
STATE OF WELLBEING BY WHO I ASK FOR HELP

	Team Member	My Boss	HR Team	EAP	Someone Outside Work	Would Never Tell Anyone
Really Struggling	10.95%	11.50%	1.00%	2.10%	38.50%	25.00%
Living Well, Despite Struggles	13.10%	19.00%	3.60%	2.10%	32.60%	16.40%
Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	11.35%	12.50%	0.90%	3.20%	37.30%	23.30%
Consistently Thriving	13.15%	23.60%	7.40%	6.10%	25.00%	11.50%

Legend: Team Member ■ My Boss ■ HR Team ■ EAP ■ Someone Outside Work ■ Would Never Tell Anyone

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AN AH-HA MOMENT

Workers' ability to notice when they are struggling and their willingness to ask for help – particularly from their HR team, their boss, or team members – impacts their ability to care for their wellbeing as they navigate the common struggles of mental and physical health and challenging workplace relationships.

HR need to work on their trustworthiness and credibility to take effective action on wellbeing.

Do you know what the most common struggles are for workers in your workplace? How are you helping your HR teams, leaders and team members to be the psychologically safe people to turn to when workers are struggling with their wellbeing?

EPILOGUE

POST BUSHFIRES,
CORONAVIRUS,
AND ECONOMIC
DOWNTURN

91%

OF AUSTRALIAN WORKERS
ARE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE
ECONOMIC DOWNTURN.

ABOUT THIS FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Our data was gathered. As the report you've just read was being finalised, hundreds of bushfires swept across Australia, requiring people in rural parts of Australia to be evacuated, blanketing our cities in thick smoke, destroying land and buildings, and causing 34 deaths.

The fires were barely extinguished when countries worldwide found themselves grappling with the Coronavirus pandemic, which has resulted in Australia closing its borders and shutting down non-essential businesses. One in ten Australians have lost their jobs, and there are a rising number of confirmed cases and deaths.

In mid-March 2020 – just prior to non-essential workplaces being closed down – with the help of Dr. Peggy Kern from the University of Melbourne, we created an additional set of questions to gauge the levels of concern about the impact of the bushfires, Coronavirus, and the economy on workplace wellbeing and performance.

We asked the December 2019 respondents to retake the survey. 352 respondents completed the survey again. An additional 667 respondents also completed the survey. This epilogue presents the perspectives of the 1,019 workers and includes:

GENDER	
Men	494
Women	523
Other/Not reported	2

AGE GROUPS	
25 – 34 years	278
35 – 44 years	262
45 – 54 years	256
55 – 65 years	223

LOCATIONS	
New South Wales	310
Victoria	261
Queensland	219
South Australia	74
Western Australia	105
ACT	21
Tasmania	24
Northern Territory	5

JOB ROLES	
Owners	115
Directors	33
C-Suite/Managers	194
Professionals	254
Technical Experts	57
Co-ordinators	28
Administrative	147
Customer Service	91
Contractors	36
Other	64

Industries again were representative of Australian workplaces, including Agriculture, Banking, Education, Telecommunications, Manufacturing, Mining, Science, Trades, and Tourism.

If you would like more information about this report, or additional findings by gender, age, location, job role, or industry (not reported), please contact **chelle@thewellbeinglab.com**.

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THRIVING DOESN'T GUARANTEE RESILIENCE

Given the rapid and unpredictable changes that most Australians have experienced since the start of 2020, it was not surprising to find that 81% of workers felt their levels of struggle had increased. This has resulted in statistically significant changes in workers' levels of wellbeing.

The number of workers who were *consistently thriving* declined by 4%. Although these workers continued to report the highest levels of job satisfaction, performance, and commitment to their organisation, they also experienced a significant decline in their levels of performance, suggesting that the challenges are impacting their functionality, and they may find it harder to navigate the struggles ahead of them.

In contrast, workers who were *living well despite struggles* experienced no decline in their levels of job satisfaction, performance, and commitment to their organisation, and continued to report significantly higher levels than those who were **not feeling bad but just getting by,** or *really struggling*. The challenges might provide these workers with an opportunity to continue to demonstrate how to thrive despite struggle.

Workers who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** experienced a significant increase in their levels of job satisfaction and commitment to their organisation. And the number of workers *really struggling* declined, suggesting that levels of struggle may be relative to what is happening in the world around us.

2020 LEVELS STRUGGLE INCREASED
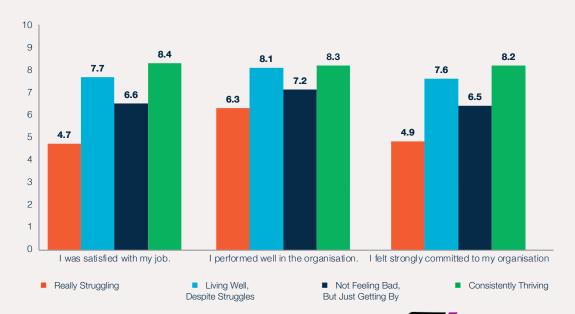
- No Increase
- Moderate Increase
- High Increase

19%
39%
42%

2020 STATE OF WELLBEING IN WORKPLACES

High Thriving

High Struggle

Low Struggle

2019 - 41.7%
2020 - 43.7%
↑ 2%

2019 - 14.7%
2020 - 10.7%
↓ 4%

2019 - 9.5%
2020 - 7.4%
↓ 2.1%

2019 - 34.1%
2020 - 38.3%
↑ 4.2%

Low Thriving

2020 STATE OF WELLBEING BY INDIVIDUAL OUTCOMES

	I was satisfied with my job.	I performed well in the organisation.	I felt strongly committed to my organisation
Really Struggling	4.7	6.3	4.9
Living Well, Despite Struggles	7.7	8.1	7.6
Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By	6.6	7.2	6.5
Consistently Thriving	8.4	8.3	8.2

- Really Struggling
- Living Well, Despite Struggles
- Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By
- Consistently Thriving

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WAY POWER, WILL POWER, & WE POWER

Workers who reported higher levels of confidence in their ability to care for their wellbeing (way power) continued to be more likely to be *consistently thriving*, or *living well despite struggles*, than other workers.

However, those who were *consistently thriving* reported a significant decline in their feelings about their wellbeing ability. In contrast, those who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** reported significant increases in their ability to manage their own wellbeing, which may be related to the significant increase they also reported in their feelings of safety to talk about problems and mistakes at work.

Workers who reported higher levels of motivation to improve their wellbeing (will power) continued to be more likely to be *consistently thriving*, or *living well despite struggles*, than other workers.
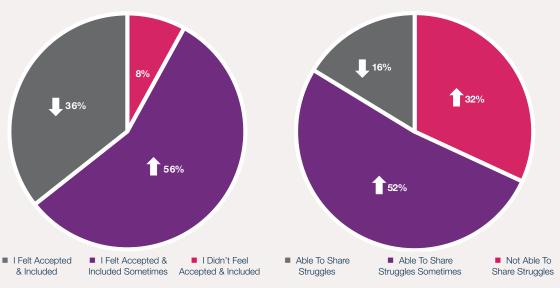
Workers who reported higher levels of psychological safety (we power) continued to be statistically more likely to be *consistently thriving*, or *living well despite struggles*, than other workers. While workers who were **not feeling bad but just getting by** significantly improved their feelings of psychological safety, most workers still only sometimes felt able to share their struggles with others.

2020 STATE OF WELLBEING BY ABILITY, MOTIVATION & PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Legend:
- Really Struggling
- Living Well, Despite Struggles
- Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By
- Consistently Thriving

ACCEPTED & INCLUDED EVEN WHEN STRUGGLING

- I Felt Accepted & Included
- I Felt Accepted & Included Sometimes
- I Didn't Feel Accepted & Included

ABLE TO SHARE STRUGGLES

- Able To Share Struggles
- Able To Share Struggles Sometimes
- Not Able To Share Struggles

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WELLBEING BECOMES MORE COLLECTIVE
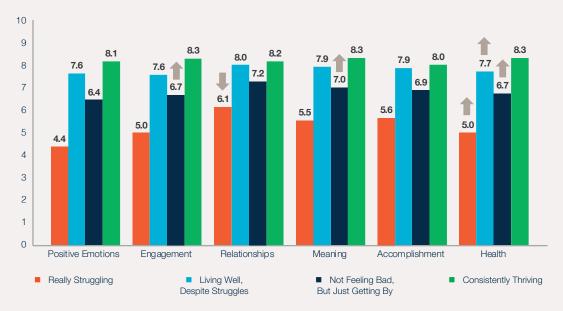
Workers who were *consistently thriving*, or *living well despite struggles* reported statistically higher scores on all PERMAH factors than other workers. Still, workers who were *consistently thriving* did experience small, non-significant declines in Positive Emotion, Relationships, Accomplishment, and Health.

Interestingly, Health improved significantly for workers who were *living well despite struggles*, those who were **not feeling bad but just getting by**, and those who were *really struggling*. This might reflect a different season (beginning of autumn versus beginning of summer), or reflect the salience of physical health at this time. Notably, 82% of workers reported feeling anxious about catching or spreading the Coronavirus.

Workers who were *really struggling* reported a significant decline in their Relationships, which is concerning given the consistent research that suggests other people are one of the most important factors for our wellbeing. Struggling individuals may be particularly vulnerable in social isolation practices.

Interestingly, workers reported significant improvements in their team's support for their Relationships and Health, and their organisations support for Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, and Health. This was particularly true for workers who were **not feeling bad but just getting by**, and may offer insights into why these workers feel significantly more able to care for their wellbeing.

STATE OF WELLBEING BY PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS

Legend: Really Struggling · Living Well, Despite Struggles · Not Feeling Bad, But Just Getting By · Consistently Thriving

COLLECTIVE PERMAH WELLBEING FACTORS

Legend: Individual · Team · Organisation

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CHANGING THE SHAPE OF STRUGGLE

Workers' mental health and managing money at home, followed by changes at work became the biggest causes of struggle for workers. Given the economic challenges facing workers and workplaces, these changes are understandable.

Interestingly, workers who reported high levels of worry and anxiety about the impact of Coronavirus or the economy were performing just as well as those workers with low levels of worry and anxiety. In contrast, workers who reported medium levels of worry and anxiety about these challenges were significantly more likely to report lower levels of performance.
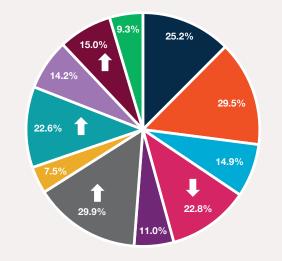
Why might this be the case? Worry about the virus or the economy might motivate productive action, whereas moderate worry might reflect uncertainty and passivity, undermining performance. For immediate performance, a little or a lot of anxiety – may be better, though, over the longer term, high levels of anxiety likely become less productive.

Workers have become significantly more likely to tell others about their struggles, but they continue to be reluctant to ask for help from their HR teams. In the face of the impact of the bushfires and Coronavirus. It provides an opportunity for HR teams to visibly show their ability to provide support and make a positive difference for workers' wellbeing during these challenging times.

TOP 3 STRUGGLES AT WORK

- My Mental Health
- My Physical Health
- Dealing With People Outside Work
- Dealing with Colleagues/Clients
- Dealing With My Boss
- Managing Money At Home
- Managing Money At Work
- Changes At Work
- A Colleague
- My Boss
- HR Team
- EAP
- Someone Outside Work
- Never Tell Anyone
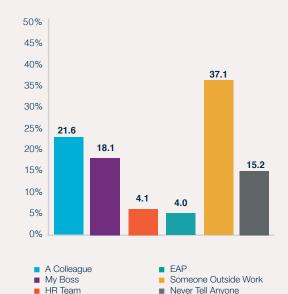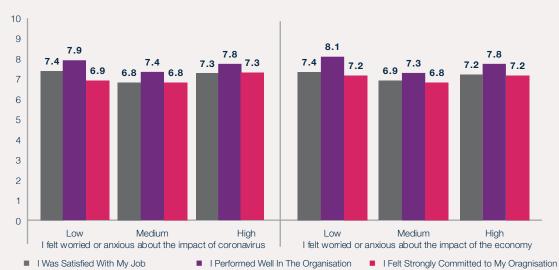
CORONAVIRUS WHO I ASK FOR HELP

IMPACT OF WORRY & ANXIETY ABOUT CORONAVIRUS & THE ECONOMY

I felt worried or anxious about the impact of coronavirus — I felt worried or anxious about the impact of the economy

- I Was Satisfied With My Job
- I Performed Well In The Organisation
- I Felt Strongly Committed to My Oragnisation

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UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE FUTURE

While it is not surprising that 82% of workers are feeling worried and anxious about the impact of the Coronavirus, of particular concern are the 18% of workers who are not worried or anxious about catching or spreading Coronavirus. Unfortunately, given the highly contagious nature of the Coronavirus, it may only take this 18% of workers to spread further chaos into our workplaces and communities.
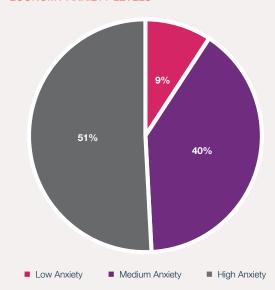
Workplaces should also be concerned that only 24% of workers feel certain about what actions they should be taking in response to Coronavirus. While community updates are changing daily, 76% of workers are likely to benefit from clear and consistent communication on the actions their workplaces want them to be taking.

Finally, although this data was gathered just prior to the shutdown in Australia of non-essential businesses, 91% of workers were already anxious about the impact of the economic downturn. The impact of this can be seen in the significant surge of workers struggling with money at home. With analysts predicting that Australia may be headed for one of its worst recessions, workplaces need to be mindful of ways to support their workers through these struggles.
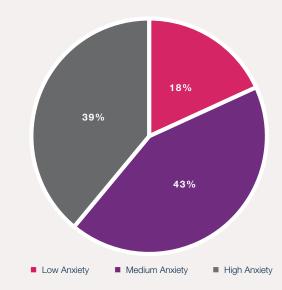
CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY LEVELS

18%
41%
41%

■ Low Anxiety ■ Medium Anxiety ■ High Anxiety

ECONOMY ANXIETY LEVELS

9%
51%
40%

■ Low Anxiety ■ Medium Anxiety ■ High Anxiety
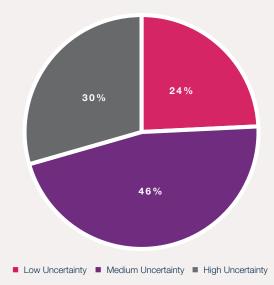
CORONAVIRUS ANXIETY CATCHING/SHARING

18%
39%
43%

■ Low Anxiety ■ Medium Anxiety ■ High Anxiety

CORONAVIRUS UNCERTAINTY ACTIONS TO TAKE

24%
30%
46%

■ Low Uncertainty ■ Medium Uncertainty ■ High Uncertainty

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AN AH-HA MOMENT

During times of extreme disruption or change, caring for our wellbeing individually and collectively continues to rely on workers' way power (ability), will power (motivation), and we power (psychological safety), as they learn how to navigate struggle together.

HR teams have an important role to play in supporting workers' wellbeing during these times as more workers' turn to them when struggling and rely on their teams and workplaces to help support their wellbeing.

How are you helping your workers continue to care for their wellbeing during this time of unprecedented challenge and change?

HOW DOES YOUR WORKPLACE SCORE?

Consider your current workplace's approach to wellbeing. Next, answer the questions below using a scale of: 0 (Not At All) to 5 (We're Doing This Extremely Well).

WORKPLACE WELLBEING STRATEGY	YOUR SCORE (0 – 5)
1. We measure worker wellbeing in ways that assess levels of thriving and struggle annually (or more frequently).	
2. We measure the success of our wellbeing efforts by tracking workers' ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing.	
3. We ask our workers what causes them to struggle when it comes to caring for their wellbeing at work.	
4. Our workers feel safe to talk about their struggles at work.	
5. Our workers have been trained in small, everyday wellbeing practices (e.g., PERMAH or others) that they can use for themselves and/or their teams.	
6. We provide workplace-funded or workplace supported (e.g., leader or staff led) coaching for workers' wellbeing.	
7. We provide a range of other workplace-funded forms of support for workers' wellbeing (e.g., fruit, fitness, flu, EAP, mental first aid.	
8. We intentionally look for ways to support workers' opportunities for autonomy, competence and connection as they go about their jobs.	
9. Our workers understand all the ways our HR team can help support their wellbeing when they are struggling.	
10. Our workers feel safe to reach out to our HR team and/or their leaders when they are struggling with their wellbeing.	
11. Our leaders assess the potential impact of workplace strategies, policies and practices on worker wellbeing before they act.	
12. Our leaders understand that our workplace wellbeing strategy is an ongoing investment and not a one-time initiative or program.	
YOUR TOTAL	

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YOUR RESULTS

Tally your score to understand the current status of your workplace wellbeing efforts and the actions you may wish to take to improve worker wellbeing.

JUST GETTING STARTED
Score = 0 – 10

It's still early days for your workplace wellbeing strategy – even if you've been talking about wellbeing for a while. We once asked Professor Martin Seligman, "If there was only one thing you could do to improve wellbeing in any workplace what would it be?" He said: "Measure it. Because if Leader A knows that Leader B's team is doing better on wellbeing, they will find all sorts of ways themselves to start improving their team's wellbeing."

As you measure and share the results of wellbeing in your workplace, be sure to explore your workers' levels of thriving and struggle. And remember that because wellbeing naturally ebbs and flows, your goal shouldn't be perfect wellbeing scores, but rather an increase in workers' ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing and their levels of psychological safety. Change begins with conversations, so don't underestimate the power of talking openly and frequently about results. And it's important that workers don't feel like they have to achieve specific scores – safety to share honestly will be more helpful for workers and the organisation than reaching a particular number or result.

If you already have these measures in place, then check out the recommendations below for gaining traction.

GAINING TRACTION
Score = 11 – 31

Congratulations! You're taking important steps forward to improving wellbeing in your workplace. To realise the value of the investments you're making, it's worth checking that you have wellbeing measures in place that are capturing workers' levels of thriving and struggle, changes in their ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing and their levels of psychological safety. Remember that wellbeing ebbs and flows, so if you are trying to measure your success by an increase in people's wellbeing scores, this can undermine psychological safety and is likely to be misleading.

Continue to invest in your workers' ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing consistently by sharing an evidence-based toolbox of small, everyday wellbeing practices (i.e. PERMAH or others) they can use for themselves and/or their teams. Encourage teams to practise and hold each other accountable to supportive practices. To amplify the returns on this investment, make sure you are providing workplace-funded or workplace supported (e.g., leader or staff led) coaching for workers' wellbeing. This doesn't have to be one-on-one coaching, small group coaching (even within existing team meetings) can be an effective way to provide workers with the accountability, support and recognition they need to sustain their wellbeing efforts and to normalise caring for and talking about their wellbeing at work.

Finally, look for ways to demonstrate your sincerity and commitment for supporting worker's opportunities for autonomy, competence and connection as they go about their jobs. Encourage leaders to assess the potential impact of workplace strategies, policies and practices on worker wellbeing before they act.

STEPPING IT UP
Score = 31 – 50

You can be proud of the steps you've taken in your workplace to support your workers' wellbeing. To ensure you can demonstrate the impact you're having, check that you have wellbeing measures in place that are capturing workers' levels of thriving and struggle and changes in their ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing and their levels of psychological safety.

Consider additional strategies you can add, keeping wellbeing a focus and mixing up what is available, so that the efforts taken don't become stale or taken for granted. Remember that cultivating wellbeing takes ongoing work and effort. If you're not already providing workplace-funded or workplace supported (e.g., leader or staff led) coaching for workers' wellbeing to amplify the investments you've made in educating your workers' on caring for their wellbeing, this is worth adding. Remember, this doesn't have to be one-on-one coaching. Small group coaching (even within existing team meetings) can be an effective way to provide workers with the accountability, support and recognition they need to sustain their wellbeing efforts and to further heighten psychological safety.

Finally, consider what else you can do to help leaders and your HR teams be the go-to sources of wellbeing support when your workers are struggling. Ensure that leaders are visibly and repeatedly demonstrating and communicating actions you are taking to support workers' wellbeing. What are you doing to model caring for your own wellbeing? How can you reassure workers it is safe to turn to you when they are struggling with their wellbeing?

CONSISTENTLY THRIVING
Score = 51 – 60

Congratulations! You are leading the way when it comes to caring for the wellbeing of your workers. Keep measuring the impact you're having on workers' levels of thriving and struggle, changes in their ability and motivation to care for their wellbeing and their levels of psychological safety. Be mindful that we are wired to adapt over time and so these scores may flatten or dip at times. Don't despair, instead take them as a sign that your workers are ready for new challenges.

Our brains love novelty, which means it is also likely that wellbeing practices that once energised your workers' may become less effective over time. Consider top-up education sessions, bringing in new evidence-based initiatives and encouraging workers to provide and implement their own creative ideas. Mix up small coaching groups across your workplace so people have the chance to connect and learn from different people as they continue to care for their wellbeing.

Finally, consider turning over the design of your workplace wellbeing strategy to your workers. Invite them to share what's working well when it comes to the way your workplace supports their wellbeing, and what they believe success looks like for the future of wellbeing in your workplace. Allow them to design pathways forward to realise these wellbeing hopes, give them permission to self-organise and take responsibility for the actions they want to own, and help them set up feedback mechanism to track the impact they are having and adjust as needed.

This doesn't mean that leaders or HR teams no longer take responsibility for workplace wellbeing, but rather that you honour and follow the energy of what your workers want for their wellbeing wherever you can. This shared design and ownership of your workplace wellbeing strategy will help ensure long-term commitment and sustain people's energy for prioritising wellbeing.

WANT MORE?

TAKE THE FREE PERMAH WELLBEING SURVEY

Measure your wellbeing and see how you're doing when it comes to your levels of thriving and struggle and your abilities and motivation to care for your wellbeing at www.permahsurvey.com. You can even create a free personal wellbeing plan, drawing on more than 200 evidence-based wellbeing actions. You can also use this tool for teams or entire workplaces.

BOOK A WORKPLACE WELLBEING STRATEGY BRIEFING

Take a deeper dive into the workplace wellbeing research and accelerate your HR or Leadership team's understanding of how to improve workplace wellbeing and assess how your workplace is currently performing. Drawing on an appreciative human centered design process and tailored to meet the needs of your team, this briefing is designed to give you the confidence, support and actions you need to improve wellbeing across your workplace. Click here to learn more about booking your session.

CERTIFY WORKPLACE WELLBEING CHAMPIONS

Put the latest research and practises for improving wellbeing at your workers fingertips. 91% of participants in our workplace wellbeing training programs are confident they can apply the knowledge and skills they learned, and 98% recommend our programs to others. Tailored for the needs of your workplace, upskilling internal wellbeing champions – be they leaders, your HR team or staff – is an affordable and effective way to care for your workers' wellbeing.

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ABOUT THE WELLBEING LAB RESEARCHERS

DR. PEGGY KERN

Dr Peggy Kern is an associate professor at the Centre for Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education. Her research is collaborative in nature and draws on a variety of methodologies to examine questions around who thrives in life and why, including understanding and measuring healthy functioning, identifying individual and social factors impacting life trajectories, and systems informed approaches to wellbeing. She has published 3 books and over 85 peer-reviewed articles and chapters. You can find out more about Peggy's work at **www.peggykern.org**

DR. PAIGE WILLIAMS

Determined to help leaders move beyond just the need for resilience so they can become anti-fragile. Paige Williams, PhD teaches people how to leverage their energy, attitudes and mindsets to benefit from the dynamic, complex, and uncertain environment in which most organizations operate. A lecturer and researcher at the Centre for Positive Psychology at the University of Melbourne, Paige uses a potent blend of positive psychology, neuroscience, leadership research, and her years of international business leadership experience to provide practical, evidence-based pathways to help people and organizations thrive through change. You can find out more about Paige's work at **www.drpaigewilliams.com**.

DR. MICHELLE MCQUAID

Dr. Michelle McQuaid is a best-selling author, workplace wellbeing teacher and playful change activator. An honorary fellow at the University of Melbourne's Graduate School of Education, in addition to hosting the highly acclaimed weekly podcast, "Making Positive Psychology Work" which features leading researchers and practitioners from around the world, Michelle blogs for Psychology Today, The Huffington Post and Thrive, and her work has been featured in Forbes, The Harvard Business Review, The Wall Street Journal, Boss Magazine, The Age and more. You can find more of Michelle's work at **www.michellemcquaid.com**

DANIELLE JACOBS

Danielle Jacobs is a registered psychologist and wellbeing specialist, speaker, trainer and coach. Danielle uses evidence-based organizational scholarship and positive psychology practises within businesses across Australia to help their people flourish, improve their mental and physical health and achieve peak performance at the individual, team and organizational levels. She also leads the Australasian delivery of world-renowned and high impact Potentialife leadership development program (the brain-child of Dr. Tal Ben Shahar), is a Certified and Licensed Tiny Habits® Coach, and an affiliate member of APS College of Organisational Psychologists. You can find more about Danielle's work at **www.daniellejacobs.com.au**

ABOUT THE AHRI RESEARCHERS

SARAH MCCANN-BARTLETT – MAHRI

Sarah McCann is the incoming Chief Executive Officer of the Australian HR Institute. She has extensive, global experience in membership and trade bodies and has held senior roles across a variety of sectors in Australia, the UK, and the USA. Sarah was Director General (CEO) of the British Constructional Steelwork Association from September 2011 to December 2019. In this role, she established a new sector apprenticeship program, created a new market development program to drive market share gains for constructional steelwork, and drove rapid growth of the group's certification arm. Sarah holds Commerce and Arts degrees from the University of Melbourne, an MBA from Monash University, and postgraduate qualifications in marketing. She is a Fellow of the UK Institute of Directors. Sarah lives in Melbourne with her husband and 12-year-old son, and their three dogs.

KIM SCHOFIELD – FCPHRI

Kim has extensive experience in Human Resource Management and capability development gained through his accumulated 25 years of service in the UK Health Service, UK Local Government, UK Private Sector and the WA State Government for the last 14 years. Kim is currently leading the Australian HR Institute's HR Certification strategy. He also facilitates a range of customised, public and qualification programs in Australia and internationally in both public and private sector organisations for AHRI on HR and management topics. Kim's consultancy experience includes the provision of specialist advice to organisations experiencing human resource issues, in addition to learning and development solutions.

SAMANTHA SMITH

Samantha has been working as the Research Coordinator at AHRI for the last year, and is skilled in research design, writing and data analysis. She has recently completed her Masters of Arts in Psychology, specialising in Social Cognition and Religious Belief, from the University of Otago in New Zealand. Samantha's current research interests are cultural change in relation to HR and metrics, the future of work and AI and automation.

PAUL BEGLEY

Paul has been with AHRI since February 2002. He is responsible for liaison with government and relations with the national media, having previously worked in the communications role. Prior to AHRI, his background includes publishing and instructional design positions with Deakin University, a managing editor role with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, and a period as a ministerial speechwriter and in-house journalist. Paul has an arts degree and a diploma of education.

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