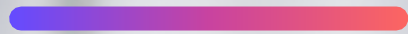


The new normal:



Mental health in recruitment

Why employers should prioritise mental health strategies in a post-COVID working world.





“

Let this number sink in for a moment.

About 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem this year – that is a quarter of the UK workforce!

In recent years, the conversation and perception of mental health has been increasingly coming into focus. The changing attitude to workplace well-being – sure to be accelerated in today's events – means mental health support isn't a perk, it's a business priority.

In the face of a global pandemic that threatens our health and upends global markets, we will be emerging from our homes to an altered world. Mental health, how organisations prioritise and champion employee wellbeing, will be especially essential to recruitment and retention of talent as the world of work recovers.

As we work from home for the foreseeable future, how we take care of our employees takes on new shape. How can organisations start or refine their employee wellness offering? To investigate, we surveyed over 1,000 UK professionals on the importance of workplace mental health wellness. We also engaged a panel of experts in the mental health and wellness, diversity and inclusion, and recruitment space to share practical tips you can take away and discuss. We hope this whitepaper becomes a catalyst for conversation about a more holistic approach to taking care of your company's most valuable asset.

”

Kirsty Adams
Chief People & Culture Officer,
Resource Solutions



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Employees want mental health support from their employers | 1 |
| Changing attitudes and changing the conversation around mental health | 2 |
| An engaged workforce is a happier workforce | 4 |
| Consider what part mental health plays in your talent attraction strategy | 5 |
| Creating Advocates for Mental Health | 7 |
| Our experts | 9 |
| About Resource Solutions | 10 |
| Connect with us | 10 |

Employees want mental health support from their employers

Our survey revealed that a third of UK professionals want support from their employers. Nearly half of the workforce surveyed said their employers do not provide any support during 'crunch time' periods where stress is high, and employees work beyond their regular hours.

49% of professionals claim their employer does not make any accommodations for regular stressful or busy periods at work.

“The generation at work right now can't understand why workplaces are so slow in prioritising mental health in a way that their universities, communities and hospitals have – employers need to catch up.”

Matthew Shaw
BBC News Editor & Co-Founder of The Whole Man Academy

“How are you looking after your own people? Your people are your brand. Diversity, inclusion, a sense of belonging, and workplace initiatives that put their health first physically and mentally – determines how the world sees your organisation.”

Peter MacDonald Hall
Principal Consultant, Veridca Consulting

Changing attitudes and changing the conversation around mental health

53%

Talking about mental health is hard. Only **53%** of professionals feel comfortable discussing their mental health at work.

33%

The biggest concern about discussing mental health within the workplace is the fear of judgement or appearing weak or incapable, with **33%** of professionals feeling this way.

Big strides forward have been made. Yet, there still continues to be a persisting stigma attached to discussing mental health.

26% of professionals said they'd likely confide in colleagues when it comes to mental health at work.

The results are even more stunning when we surveyed how many employees would be willing to confide in HR – the organisational department best placed to provide support and relief.

13% of professionals would be willing to confide in HR at their place of work.

Attitudes also differ between genders – a stark reminder that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. How an organisation approaches mental health must be nuanced and inclusive.

32% of women will look to confide with teammates, compared to just 19% of men.

26% of men would prefer to confide in their managers instead.

62% of female professionals feel stress is the most prominent mental health issue in the workplace.

62%

Whereas **43%** of men feel that depression is the most prominent issue.

43%

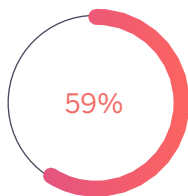




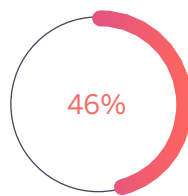
“Antiquated notions, like men who express emotions are weak, are so deeply rooted in our society that it’s preventing them from accessing support.”

Anthony Astbury

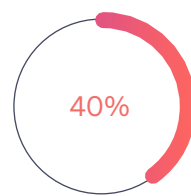
There are many mental health issues, and symptoms of those issues manifest differently in employees. Our surveyed professionals highlighted their top three concerns:



Stress



Anxiety



Depression

Employers must break the cycle of silence and stigma around discussing mental health in the workplace. They must acknowledge that mental health is complicated and commit to a top-down approach.

An important and effective benefit to an organisation is when an employee acknowledges what they’re feeling and actively seeks help before it escalates: a proactive approach is a preventative approach.

How to create positive, supportive spaces for the male professional from The Whole Man Academy:

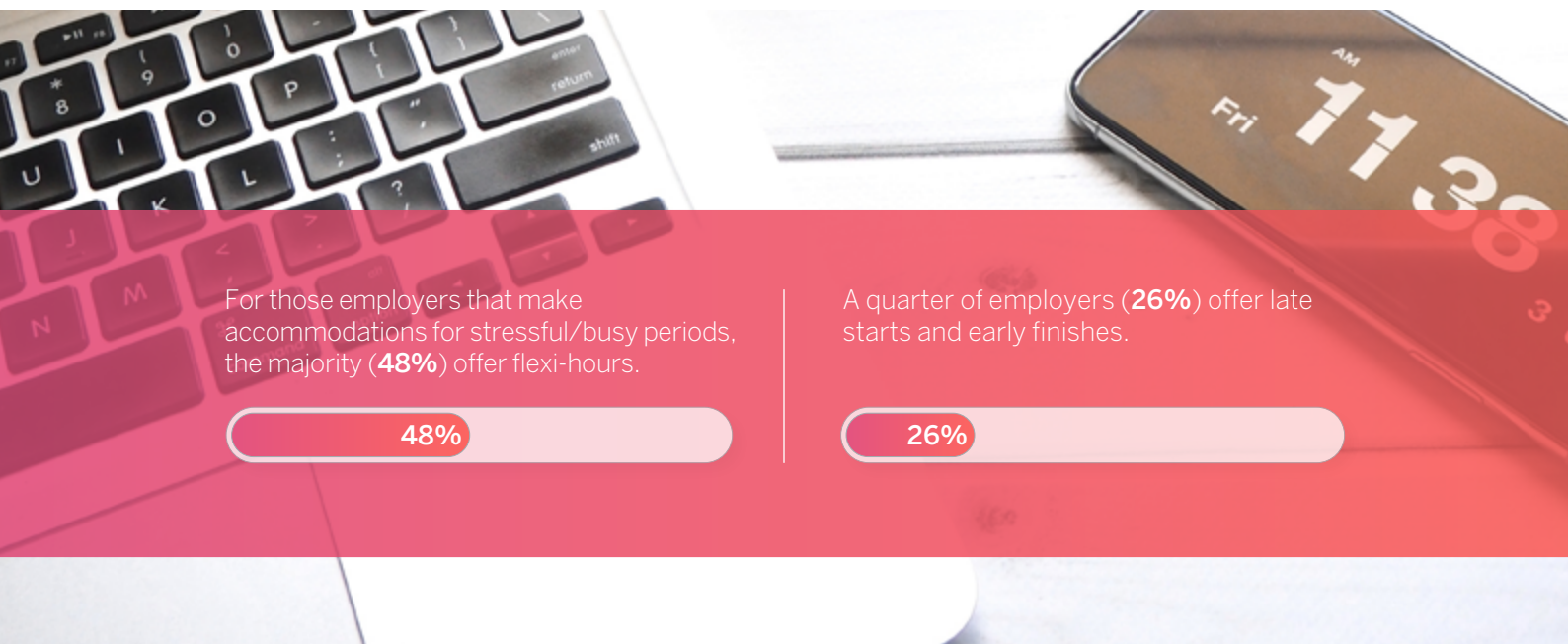
- Do an audit of those participating in your mental health programmes – are they more likely to be women? Because of various societal and generational factors, getting men to attend an event or training session with “Mental Health” in its title is difficult.
- Take a proactive approach and host workshops for men that equip them with tools to deal with the stresses of modern life, thereby building their resilience, confidence, and comfort talking about mental health.
- The Whole Man Academy hosts events that emphasise mindset, such as “how to thrive” or “how to live a balanced life”, which attracts male professionals from across the spectrum to talk about their wellbeing in a supportive space

An engaged workforce is a happier workforce

Start with flexibility.

Your employees are likely working from home due to the pandemic, so why can't working from home become a permanent part of a company flexible working policy?

Opportunities to telecommute, flexible working hours, and accommodations for employees such as lieu days during stressful and busy periods at work are simple and effective strategies to bolster employee wellness.



For those employers that make accommodations for stressful/busy periods, the majority (**48%**) offer flexi-hours.

48%

A quarter of employers (**26%**) offer late starts and early finishes.

26%

Mental health initiatives that our experts suggest

"1-to-1 coaching enables people to understand themselves better and therefore visualise and verbalise the impact things have on them and the impact they have on others. It helps individual problems stop becoming team- or organisational-wide problems."

"Do an audit to understand the gap between what leadership thinks is going on in a company and what the day-to-day reality is. Reveal your blind spots, address key issues and be evidence-led in your approach to organisational-wide mental health wellness."

Cate Murden, Founder, PUSH

Consider what part mental health plays in your talent attraction strategy

Why is it important that businesses provide health benefits to address all facets of employee wellbeing?

97% of candidates feel that it is important that their future employer provides mental health and wellbeing support for employees.

To attract and retain talent, organisations need to adapt to employees' and candidates' evolving standards of work-life wellness.

This is more than a fitness credit to a gym membership, but a holistic look at what wellness means: financial planning; telecommuting; education credits; performance-based incentives; counselling; stress management workshops; sensitivity training for a harassment-free and bully-free workspace; and mandatory mental health first-aid training to all managers.

“At EY, every employee is entitled to six free counselling sessions with a trained professional, without having first to obtain a doctor's note or manager approval. There's lots of additional follow up support available, but being able to access a counsellor in this way makes it really easy and practical for people. It's just one of the ways EY is championing mental wellbeing.”

Dan Richards
Recruitment Director UK & Ireland, EY

“Consider asking for feedback from your employees to see what benefits would resonate with them – it will go a long way to ensuring current, and prospective employees, feel valued and motivated as you make structural changes within the organisation.”

Kirsty Adams
Global HR Director at Resource Solutions

Seek out support from your marketing and communications team. They will help ensure you're telling the story in the most impactful way and help you champion your strategy across departments.

Creative takes on mental health initiatives

"One of our clients created a wellness lounge, a space within its organisation that was completely tech-free. They hosted daily mindful hacks where employees could go, switch-off and reenergise to return to work afterwards. It was a powerful flagship programme they started, unique, and incredibly successful."

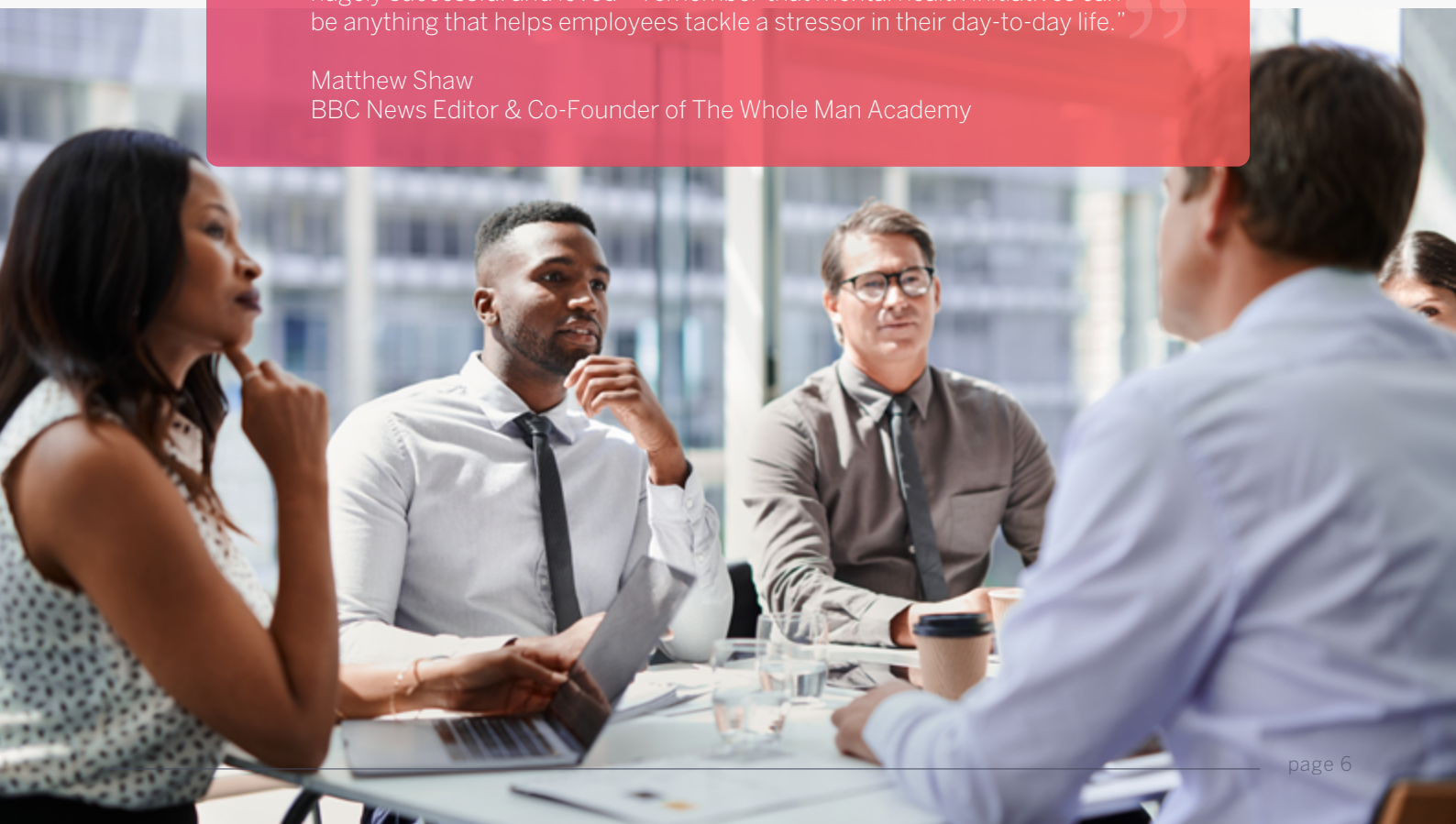
Cate Murden
Founder, PUSH

"One organisation hosted a "Fiesta Friday" whereby employees' families could come in and connect. They really cultivated a sense of belonging and community amongst their people. I've also seen an intervention called "Coffee Roulette" where they randomly selected two people across the business and paired them to have coffee. It's increased feelings of teamship and enabled cognitive diversity – where two people with completely different ways of thinking could connect and built on different ideas.

Peter MacDonald Hall
Principal Consultant, Verdica Consulting

“One of our most successful things we've done as part of our mental health strategy at the BBC was host personal finance workshops. They were hugely successful and loved – remember that mental health initiatives can be anything that helps employees tackle a stressor in their day-to-day life.”

Matthew Shaw
BBC News Editor & Co-Founder of The Whole Man Academy

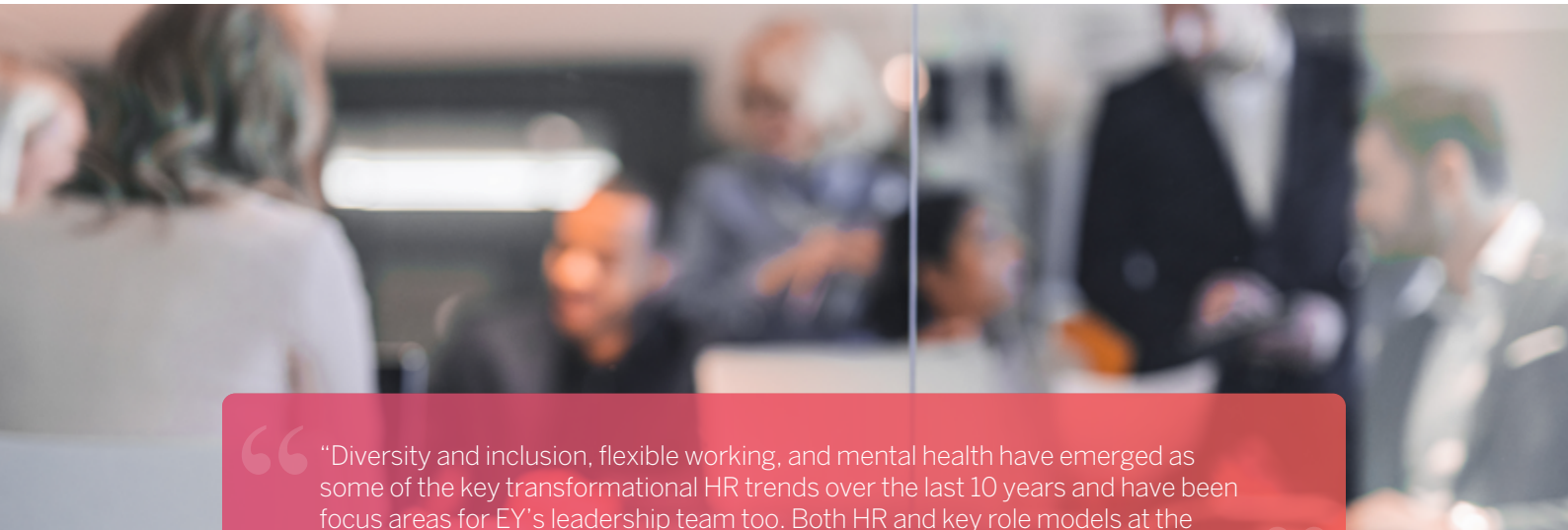


Creating advocates for mental health

An organisational-wide mental health strategy and culture has to begin at the top.

HR often functions as a facilitator, but if there isn't two-way support, any mental health initiative will simply be another program that won't get institutionalised as a part of the workplace culture.

Employees model their behaviour to emulate the qualities and traits of their senior leadership team. If leaders are visible, effective, lead with emotional intelligence and aren't afraid to show their vulnerabilities, then their employees will follow suit.



“Diversity and inclusion, flexible working, and mental health have emerged as some of the key transformational HR trends over the last 10 years and have been focus areas for EY's leadership team too. Both HR and key role models at the top have helped incorporate these into the workplace culture to drive positive change.”

Dan Richards

Tap into the greater awareness there is now surrounding mental health wellness programs. Implementing mandatory training across an organisation is as transformative as it is necessary. More than a third of professionals we surveyed indicated they don't know how to respond to peers struggling or showing signs of mental health struggle.

35% of respondents who suspected a colleague might be suffering from a mental health issue did nothing about it, feeling it was not their place to do so.

35%

32% of respondents who suspected a colleague might be suffering from a mental health issue indicated they did not know how to handle the situation.

32%

Almost half (**49%**) of our respondents have not received any training around mental health issues, such as dealing with stress, interacting with colleagues who suffer from mental health issues, and mental health first aid.

49%

The majority of respondents (**51%**) say they have never suspected that a colleague may be suffering with poor mental health or wellbeing at work.

51%



“One of the key things you need to do as an employer is create psychological safety to build a culture of trust. Employees are less likely to talk about what’s going on in their life and open up about any challenges they may be facing if they don’t trust you.”

Dan Richards
Recruitment Director UK & Ireland, EY

Case study: EY

EY believes mental health issues are prevalent in every area of life and work, and they are determined that they should not be ignored. On their journey to break down the mental health stigma, EY shares stories of their own people, including senior leaders, talking openly about their own experiences of depression, anxiety, and alcoholism. EY’s Mental Health Network, led by employees, acts as a key source of support. It runs a buddy scheme, pairing people who have had similar experiences, for example returning to work following a period of ill health.

Our experts

Anthony Astbury & Matthew Shaw Founders, Whole Man Academy

In 2018, two friends, BBC news editor and mental health campaigner Matthew Shaw and City broker-turned-life-coach Anthony Astbury founded the Whole Man Academy—a community where men get together to talk mindset, mental strength and male identity in the 21st century. The Whole Man Academy's public and corporate events, workshops, and 1-2-1 coaching sessions are designed to help men build a strong mindset and improve their resilience in today's challenging and demanding world. Previous Whole Man Academy guest speakers include footballer and boxer Leon McKenzie and style icon David Gandy.

wholemanacademy.com

Dan Richards Recruitment Director UK & Ireland, EY

EY's Mental Health Network, led by employees, acts as a key source of support. It runs a buddy scheme, pairing people who have had similar experiences, for example returning to work following a period of ill health. EY has trained over 700 Mental Health First Aiders to provide support and guidance for its people. Dan manages all UK and Ireland recruitment, including executive and Partner hiring, and hires to extensive graduate, school leaver and intern programmes. Dan is also a Trustee of the EY Foundation and a London First Skills Group committee member.

ukcareers.ey.com

Cate Murden Founder, PUSH

For almost two decades Cate enjoyed an exciting, fast-paced career in media. Cate was Head of Partnerships at one of London's largest, most successful media agencies. However, the demands of the job took its toll on and in 2014 Cate was signed off work with stress. Armed with newly found insight from firsthand experience, Cate launched PUSH, determined to help businesses help their employees because having energised, motivated and happy people makes great business sense.

pushmindandbody.com

Peter Macdonald Hall Principal Consultant, Vercida Consulting

Peter is highly respected as a subject matter expert on workplace diversity and inclusion, unconscious bias and inclusive leadership. His career in D&I spans over 20 years, including senior roles across private, charity and public sectors – most notably as Director for Diversity & Inclusion for a boutique recruitment firm in the City of London. His achievements include gaining accreditation and awards for organisation and national and international culture change benchmarks, such as the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (Top 100 Employers) and The Equality Framework for Local Government.

vercidagroup.com

Australia
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
Chile
Czech Republic
France
Germany
Hong Kong
India
Indonesia
Ireland
Japan
Luxembourg
Mainland China
Malaysia
Mexico
Netherlands
New Zealand
Philippines
Portugal
Singapore
South Africa
South Korea
Spain
Switzerland
Taiwan
Thailand
UAE
UK
USA
Vietnam

About Resource Solutions

Established in 1997, Resource Solutions is a provider of Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) and Managed Service Provider (MSP) solutions. As part of the Robert Walters Group – a world-leading specialist professional recruitment consultancy, our business has considerable resources at its disposal. With a global footprint across 31 countries, we're able to work in close partnership with organisations and manage everything from global accounts with demanding resourcing strategies to single sites with lower recruitment volumes. We currently source and recruit for clients in over 60 countries, manage a recruitment budget of over £2 billion and hire tens of thousands of employees each year.

Connect with us



Debs Keogh

Sales Director, Resource Solutions
debs.keogh@resourcesolutions.com

www.resourcesolutions.com