



20²⁴ STATE OF WORKPLACE EMPATHY

The Barriers to Mental Wellbeing at Work

Businessolver's ninth annual State of Workplace Empathy study reveals how workplace stigma and toxicity perpetuate mental health issues



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Stigmas and Toxicity Persist as Mental Health Issues Climb

Empathy is lacking in today's workplaces, and it has a cascading effect on culture and mental health



I've heard other companies actually offer mental health days. I have to just say I'm sick if I'm like feeling sad or having a bad week, because taking a day off for my mental health wouldn't be a valid excuse in my field.

– Healthcare employee interview, 2024 State of Workplace Empathy

A staggering 55% of CEOs (+24 points from 2023) and 50% of employees have experienced a mental health issue in the past year, according to our ninth annual State of Workplace Empathy findings which surveyed over 3,100 employees, HR professionals, and CEOs. Gen Z self-reports the highest mental health issues at 65%.

Beyond widespread mental health issues, data also points to a pervasive mental health stigma among U.S. workers: CEOs (81%), HR (72%), and employees (67%) all agree that companies view someone with mental health issues as weak or a burden.

The decline in mental wellbeing isn't surprising—the post-COVID era has been fraught with challenges from every angle over the past four years, from financial strife to social and political tensions. But this year, our data brought forward another instigator: Workplace toxicity.

Half of all CEOs (52%) and one in three employees view their workplaces as toxic. Data likewise revealed a strong relationship between the perception of workplace toxicity and mental health issues: Employees who say their culture is toxic are 47% more likely to cite mental health issues compared to those who do not cite a toxic workplace. For CEOs, this is even higher at 64%.

While the data is bleak, it also points to a solution: Employers must be intentional about extinguishing stigmas and toxicity while putting parallel effort into promoting mental health benefits and empathy in the workplace.

In this report, we explore how barriers to empathy and deep-seated stigmas are feeding workplace toxicity and perpetuating the ongoing mental health struggles in today's workplaces.

See the top-rated behaviors that demonstrate empathy in ["A Game Plan for Putting Empathy Into Action."](#)

State of Mental Wellbeing in Today's Workplace

Mental Health Issues:

55% of CEOs, 50% of employees, and 45% of HR professionals experienced a mental health issue in the past year

Stigma at Work:

81% of CEOs, 72% of HR professionals, and 67% of employees say companies view someone with mental health issues as weak or a burden

Workplace Toxicity:

52% of CEOs, 36% of HR, and 35% of employees say their workplaces are toxic

Barriers to Empathy:

42% of employees say it's hard for them to consistently demonstrate empathy, and 72% of CEOs say they'll be challenged on decisions if they use empathy



Mental Health Issues Are Widespread in the Workplace and Benefits Just Aren't Helping Like They Should

On the heels of the pandemic, visibility of mental health issues has increased alongside investment in mental health benefits. In fact, according to Mercer, 94% of large employers have enhanced their mental health coverage, increased support, or introduced new programs over the past three years. And yet, the state of mental wellbeing among U.S. employees isn't getting better—and some benefits, such as employee assistance programs (EAPs), just don't seem to be having the desired impact.

This year's findings reveal large gaps in both awareness for mental health benefits and utilization of those benefits—despite the fact that mental health benefits are highly valued by employees. **On average, 70-point gaps exist between the benefits employees say are important and those they use.**

Jump to [“Bridging the Gap: Mental Health Benefits Are Highly Desired but Severely Underutilized”](#) to learn more about this benefits gap.

Employers play a crucial role in offering cost-effective and accessible benefits and resources to support mental wellness in the workplace. Over the nine years of our study, flexibility has consistently been recognized as a key empathetic benefit, and this year flexible working hours were likewise rated as a top mental health benefit. Even so, only 36% of employees cited access to flexible hours.

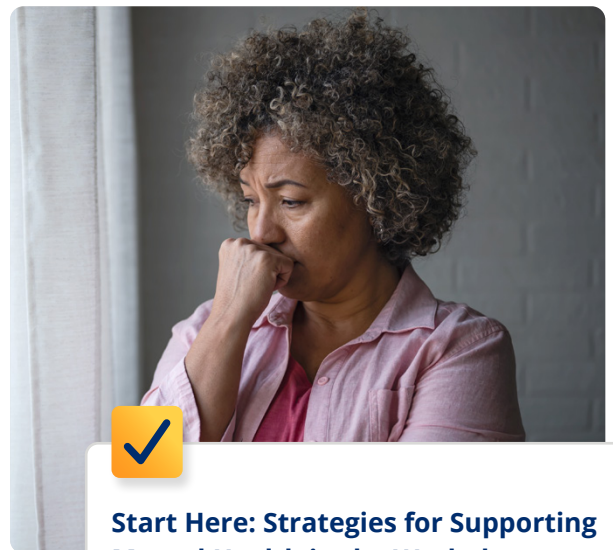
Our data points to the need for a deeper commitment from employers to mental wellbeing. Offering mental health benefits is a start, but it's not enough. The reality is many employer-sponsored benefits are not being used despite heavy investment.

One of the keys to unlocking usage lies in dismantling the stigmas associated with mental health and with demonstrating empathetic behaviors in the workplace. Employees cannot be viewed as a burden or weak because they seek mental health support or be considered a pushover for treating others with empathy. When leaders embrace some vulnerability in voicing their own stories, employees have an open door to follow suit—thus creating a culture where it's not only “ok to not be ok,” but it's encouraged to seek help and take time and space for self-care.



I've been open about my own mental health experience and can empathize with those who face their own struggles today. As a leader, my thinking immediately goes to how do we fix this? But mental health isn't something you fix for someone. Employers, however, do play a vital role in providing empathetic pathways to support employees who are struggling with their mental health.

– Rae Shanahan, Businessolver
Chief Strategy Officer



Start Here: Strategies for Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace

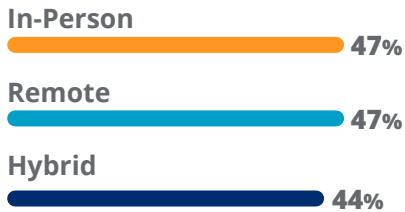
This year's findings reveal that dismantling stigmas and removing barriers to empathetic behavior in the workplace are critical to both supporting employees' mental wellbeing and creating empathetic cultures. Equally important though is ensuring greater awareness for and access to mental health benefits which are significantly underutilized.



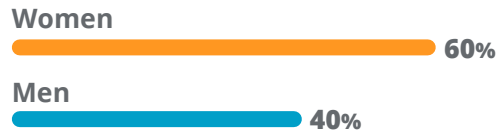
Mental Health Issues Are Widespread in the Workplace

No two people are the same, and that includes their mental health experience. Mental health issues transcend roles and titles, impacting employees across industries, ethnicities, generations, and abilities.

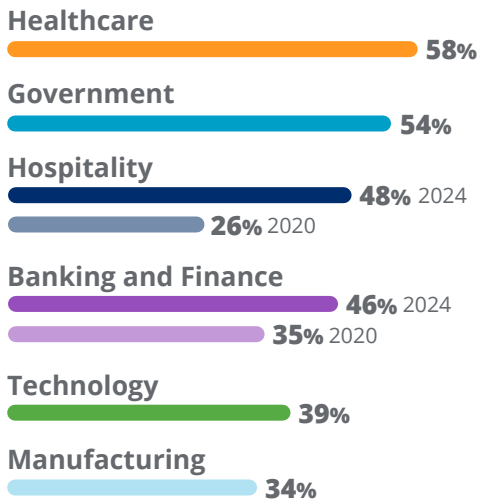
Where people work is not a driver of mental health issues



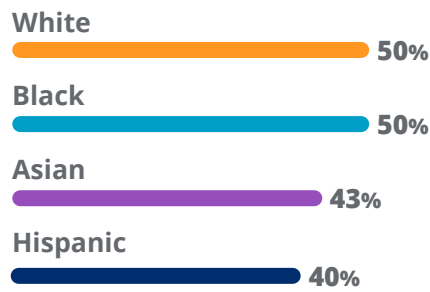
Women are much more likely to cite mental health issues than men



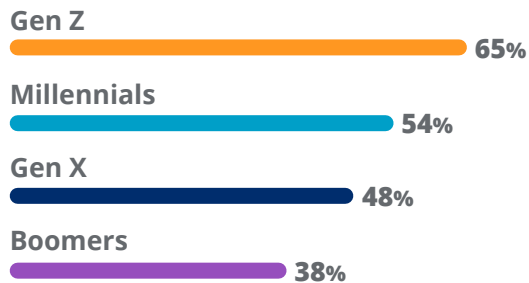
Healthcare and government respondents cite the highest incidents of mental health issues, but banking and hospitality saw significant increases since 2020



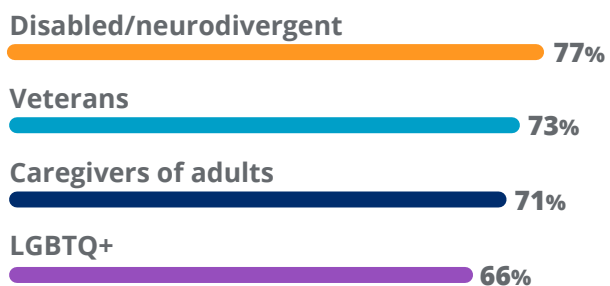
Ethnicity matters: Black and White employees are more likely to cite mental health issues



Gen Z is almost twice as likely to report a mental health issue compared to Boomers



Disabled, veteran, and caregiver respondents are significantly more likely to report a mental health issue compared to the average employee



Workplace Toxicity Perpetuates Mental Health Issues

Data from this year’s study reveals a strong association between workplace toxicity and mental health: **Employees who view their workplace as toxic are 47% more likely to cite a mental health issue.**

This association is only fueled by an ongoing stigma that those with mental health issues are viewed as weak or a burden in today’s workplaces. CEOs aren’t exempt from this stigma—in fact, they’re the most likely to feel that it’s true, giving further testament to the 24-point spike in CEO-reported mental health issues.



How to Dismantle the Mental Health Stigma:

Visibility matters. By making space for people to have safe and authentic conversations about mental health, be that sharing an experience or peer-to-peer support, it creates a culture of care where empathy can eradicate fear.

My Workplace is Toxic

Toxicity impacts some groups more than others. While 42% of total respondents say their company culture is toxic, CEOs, Gen Z, Veterans, Disabled/Neurodiverse, and Hispanic populations are the most likely to cite toxicity.



CEOs Agree
24% Strongly Agree



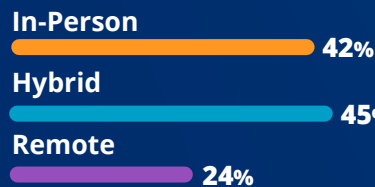
HR Professionals Agree
14% Strongly Agree



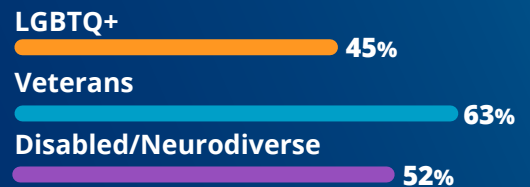
Employees Agree
14% Strongly Agree

Respondents who say their workplace is toxic

By work arrangement



By demographic



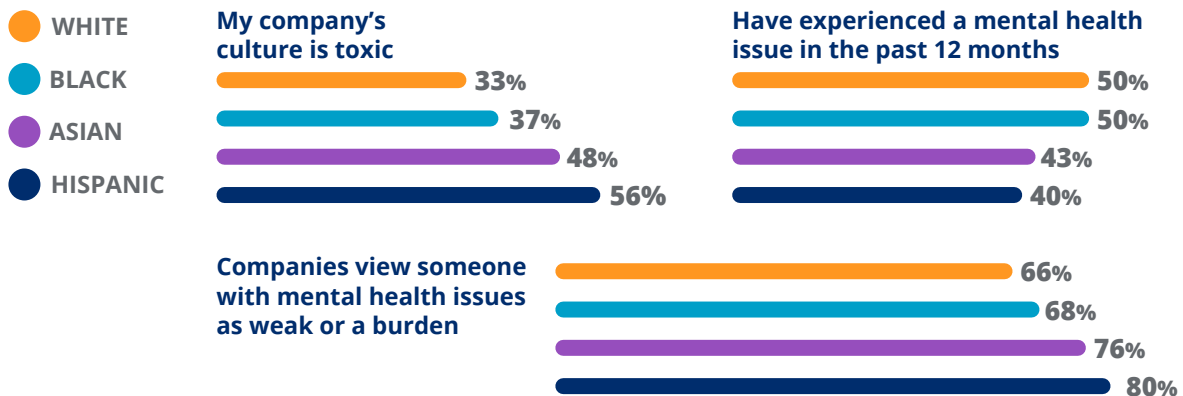
Increase in Mental Health Incidents Among Those Who Work in a Toxic Environment

This year's findings suggest a strong association between toxicity in the workplace and mental health issues: Overall, employees who say that their workplace is toxic are 47% more likely to cite mental health issues compared to those who do not cite a toxic workplace. For CEOs, this is even higher at 64%.

	CEOs	Employees
Percent who say their workplace is toxic	52%	35%
Those who experienced a mental health issue and said their workplace <i>is toxic</i>	69%	63%
Those who experienced a mental health issue and said their workplace is <i>not toxic</i>	42%	43%
Increase in likelihood of mental health issues for those who say they work in a toxic workplace	64%	47%

Workplace Toxicity and Mental Health Stigma by Ethnicity

Hispanic and Asian respondents are more likely to work in toxic environments and are also more likely to agree that companies think that those with mental health issues are weak. However, they are less likely than White and Black respondents to report experiencing mental health issues.



What's Fueling Workplace Toxicity?

While workplace toxicity is an ambiguous term, according to Mindy Schoss, PhD and industrial organizational psychologist, the concept of a toxic workplace can be summed up in a single word: Fear. Here's how barriers to empathy and feelings of fear intersect:

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
I feel intimidated by my coworkers	65% (+17 points from 2023)	38%	31% (+9 points from 2023)
I will not be respected as much if I demonstrate empathy at work	54%	41%	32%
Organizations view someone with mental health issues as weak or a burden	81%	72%	67%



A Lack of Empathy Plays a Role in Everyone’s Mental Health Issues, Driving a Wedge Between People and Their Benefits

Mental health isn’t an issue that can be “solved;” instead it’s a critical aspect of supporting people as their whole authentic selves. Today’s workplaces need to adopt measures, policies, and resources to support their workers—both professionally and personally—in the good days and the bad. But beyond adoption comes activation—and the data shows that many critical mental health benefits are severely underutilized due to lack of awareness, stigma, or accessibility.

This presents a paradox: Employees say mental health benefits are highly important, yet they aren’t taking advantage of these well intended resources.



Here’s How To Take Action

- 1. Lead with empathy:** Encourage C-suite and leaders to share their mental health stories and create a culture where “it’s ok to not be ok” through open dialogue.
- 2. Think like a marketer:** Adopt marketing tactics and technologies that make benefits more accessible, such as mobile apps and email to increase benefits usage and return on investment.
- 3. Boost your benefits offerings:** Expand current offerings and communicate to employees what they do have access to. Include and highlight key benefits like flexibility and open-door policies, which score high with employees but don’t require heavy investment.
- 4. Make space for mental health check-ins:** Encourage your leaders to use 1:1 time to check in on their people beyond workload and career goals. How’s their mental health? Where can leaders support employees or peers with resources or a listening ear?

Burnout and Barriers to Empathy Fuel Mental Health Issues and Workplace Toxicity

Empathy is lacking in today's workplaces, and it has a cascading effect on culture and mental health

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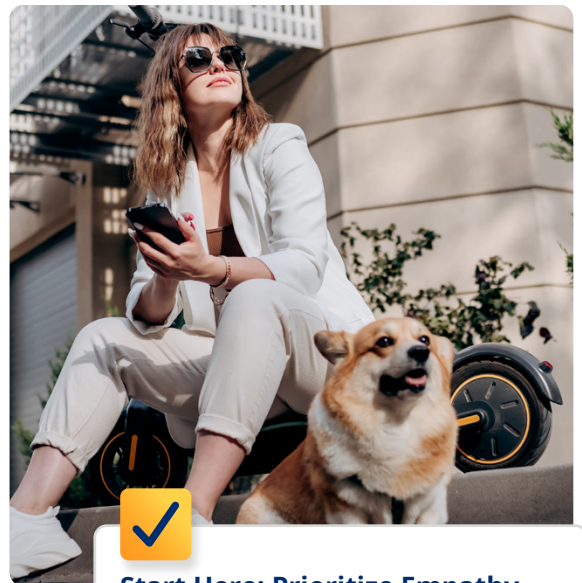
Barriers persist, especially for CEOs who feel they'll be challenged or viewed as weak if they use empathy. This 'empathy stigma' gets in the way of showing empathy in their day to day, which in turn can have a negative ripple effect on company culture.

– Jon Shanahan, Businessolver President and CEO

A [2022 report](#) by U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy found that workplace toxicity has a direct link to workplace mental health and wellbeing: 84% of respondents who said they experienced a mental health issue reported at least one workplace factor that had a negative impact on their mental health. These factors include emotionally draining work, work-life balance challenges, and lack of recognition.

Emotional distress and burnout rise to the top of our findings as well this year, particularly for CEOs. Like so many of their employees, CEOs are struggling with their mental health and they likewise express significant barriers to demonstrating empathetic behaviors at work, which can have a cascading negative impact on workplace culture. **63% of CEOs agree it's hard to consistently demonstrate empathy in their day to day.**

Employees are feeling especially challenged alongside CEOs with 47% of employees and 42% of HR professionals saying it's hard to demonstrate empathy in their day to day. Gen Z employees lead the way at 61% followed by Millennials at 46%.



Start Here: Prioritize Empathy at Work for Better Mental Health

Empathetic behaviors can take many forms, but our data shows that workplace flexibility, open door policies, and breaks away from work are all highly important to employee mental health. In fact, 63% of employees, 77% of HR, and 88% of CEOs say they sometimes take a mental health day off from work to prevent burnout.



Top Barriers to Empathy Among Employees, HR, and CEOs

The barriers that CEOs more acutely face in demonstrating empathy in the workplace may negatively influence employees and HR, creating a cascading effect that directly ties to workplace culture, even impacting psychological safety at work.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
It is hard for me to consistently demonstrate empathy in my day-to-day working life	63% <1K employees: 58% 1K+ employees: 68%	47%	42% Gen Z: 61%, Millennials: 46% Gen X: 41% Boomers: 31%
I will be challenged on my decisions if I use empathy	72%	55%	45%
I will not be respected as much if I demonstrate empathy	54%	41%	32%
Being empathetic will make me a pushover	69%	39%	31%

You indicated it's hard to consistently demonstrate empathy at work. Which of the following are the biggest causes of that?

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
My manager or leadership doesn't support being empathetic at work	46%	31%	37%
My colleagues aren't supportive when I try to be empathetic	41%	32%	31%
I'll be viewed as weak	38%	18%	31%
I'm too busy with work	37%	32%	33%

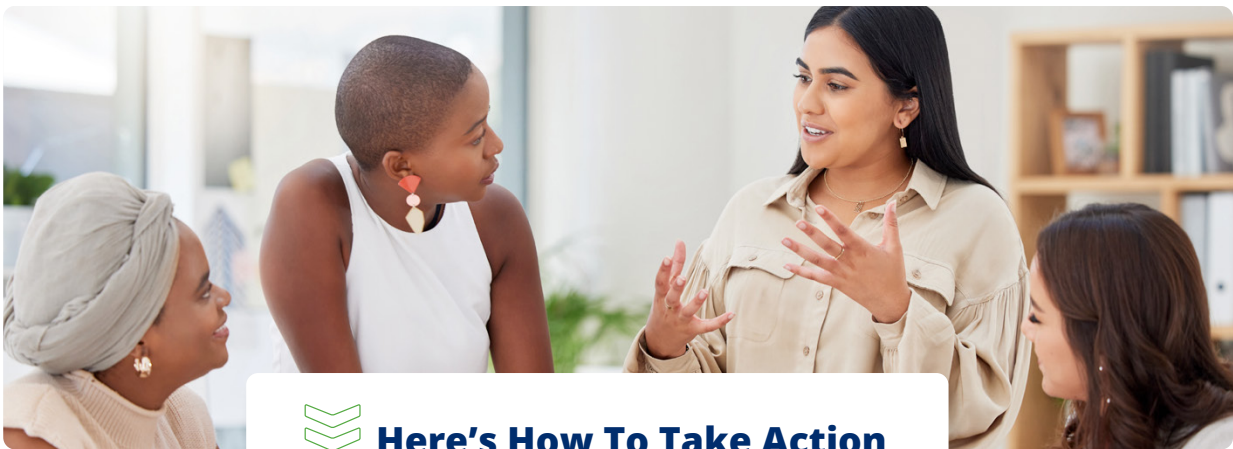


See a full list of the top barriers by audience in our [“Empathy Under Pressure”](#) report.

Empathy is an Antidote to Workplace Toxicity

When employees feel unsupported in expressing empathy in the workplace, stigmas can take hold, alongside mental health issues. Toxicity leads to stress, anxiety, burnout, disengagement, and even depression.

Our data draws a clear connection between toxicity and mental health issues. On the flip side, it also shows that employees recognize empathy as the antidote to unhealthy work environments. In fact, respondents who said their company culture is toxic are more likely to call for an empathy evolution at their organization: When asked if the current state of empathy at their organization is sufficient or needs to evolve, 63% of employees who cite workplace toxicity also said empathy at their organization needs to evolve versus 48% of average employees.



Here's How To Take Action

Five ways to prevent and diffuse workplace toxicity:

- 1. Employee Feedback:** Create communication channels for employees to voice concerns and feedback without fear of retaliation, including anonymous or pulse surveys and suggestion boxes.
- 2. Diversity and Inclusion Programs:** Implement diversity and inclusion initiatives to ensure all employees feel valued and respected.
- 3. Leadership Accountability and Transparency:** Ensure leaders and managers exemplify the behavior expected from all employees while maintaining a high-level of transparency to promote trust.
- 4. Anti-Harassment Policies:** Develop and enforce consistent anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies. Make it clear that toxic behavior will not be tolerated and applies to all employees regardless of their position.
- 5. Positive Reinforcement:** Recognize and reward employees who contribute positively to the workplace culture. Implement programs that acknowledge teamwork, respect, and collaboration.

Bridging the Gap: Mental Health Benefits Are Highly Desired but Severely Underutilized

Employees are calling for holistic benefits packages to support them across all facets of their lifestyles, from financial stability to physical health and family support. In fact, the call for mental wellbeing support spans far beyond options employees can simply enroll in. Data shows a need for a cultural evolution, where mental wellbeing is equally as important as physical wellness: **9 out of 10 employees, HR professionals, and CEOs agree that mental health is just as important as physical health.**

But while many organizations have responded to the demand for greater mental health support by boosting and expanding their benefits since the pandemic, our data shows that employees are not using the mental health benefits they rate as highly important.

Cost is a primary barrier to usage along with access to qualified mental health professionals. According to a 2023 study by Mental Health America, over half of U.S. adults with a mental illness (55%) do not receive treatment, leaving more than 28 million adults without mental health care. The primary barrier is cost, with 42% of individuals stating they cannot afford mental health care, and 17% report that their health insurance does not adequately cover treatment costs.

Our findings also reveal awareness and usage are top barriers to mental health benefits. On average, 60-point gaps exist between the benefits employees want versus what they're aware of—and worse, 70-point gaps on average between what employees want versus what they're using.

These gaps illustrate a troubling trend: It's not enough to simply offer benefits—employers must do more to help employees connect the dots by driving awareness and accessibility while dismantling the stigmas that perpetuate mental health issues and workplace toxicity.



Start Here: Technology is Key to Improving Access to Care

According to Mercer, 72% of large companies have implemented telehealth options or virtual behavioral healthcare networks. Additionally, 68% have enhanced support through EAPs, classes, or mental health apps, while 28% have expanded mental health coverage in their existing health plans.

1. Make benefits easy to access via mobile app or email
2. Build a year-round benefits communication strategy
3. Use plain language to help employees understand the value of the benefits



Mental Health Benefits Are Rising in Importance but Utilization Falls Short

Does Your Company Currently Offer Any Mental Health Programs or Benefits?

CEOs are the most likely to know if their organization offers mental health benefits, but only 1 in 2 employees say the same, though their awareness is up 8 points over 2023.

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
Yes	70%	65%	58%
No, not currently	24%	24%	27%
I don't know	1%	3%	10%

Top 6 Most Valuable Benefits and Resources Employees Say Help Them Care for Their Mental Health

While 58% of employees are aware of mental health support in their benefits packages, 20% rate these resources as “basic”

Top Benefits Employees Want	Importance to Employees	What Employees Know are Offered	What Employees are Using
Open-door policies	91%	36%	14%
Mental health benefits offered at enrollment	90%	35%	10%
Employee assistance programs (EAPs)	89%	37%	12%
Flexible working hours	89%	36%	23%
Access to online mental health resources or clinics	89%	33%	9%
Encouraged to take breaks away from work	88%	26%	13%

The Role of Flexibility in Mental Health Benefits

Flexibility is paramount to mental health: Flexible work hours (89%) along with remote work (84%) options are perceived as primary mental health benefits, supporting employees by giving them the space and autonomy to work where, when, or how they choose.



Get more insights: See the benefits employees rated as most empathetic in our earlier report, “Empathy Under Pressure.”

Instead of Mental Health Benefits, Employees Are Turning to Family and Friends First

Whether due to cost, accessibility, stigma, or otherwise, employees are less likely to use employer-sponsored programs and benefits that explicitly address mental health, such as EAPs, even though they are rated as highly important.

Instead, employees cite family (40%) and friends (33%) as their primary sources of mental health support. Only 11% of employees, 8% of HR, and 15% of CEOs say they have used a mental health professional or employee-sponsored benefit or resource.

Where Respondents Seek Mental Health Support

Friends and family are the primary sources of support for employees and HR professionals while CEOs are the most likely to use professional support or employee-sponsored resources. Overall, everyone is more likely to seek support from someone they know and trust, but employees and HR professionals are twice as likely as CEOs to work through their issues without any support at all.

Mental health support outside of work

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
Family members	34%	41%	40%
A personal friend outside of work	31%	30%	33%
Mental health professional outside of my work	31%	30%	25%
Mental health support organizations outside of my work	37%	16%	15%

Mental health support provided by employer

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
My manager / supervisor at work	38%	18%	20%
A peer / colleague at work	26%	12%	20%
An HR representative	33%	18%	12%
Mental health professional / organization provided by my company	15%	8%	11%

No mental health support

	CEOs	HR Professionals	Employees
I worked through it myself with no support	10%	18%	22%



Despite a silver lining where 20% of employees have sought mental health support from a manager and another 20% from a peer, benefits remain largely underutilized. For employers, opportunities to boost benefits engagement go beyond building awareness—benefits strategies should focus on mental health benefits offerings, namely creating more meaningful, authentic support. In fact, 89% of employees agree companies that have programs in place to address mental health issues are more empathetic.

But the efforts organizations are putting forward to support mental health may be misaligned with employees' needs and expectations. For example, while 58% of employees are aware of mental health support in their benefits packages, 20% rate these resources as "basic."

However, in contrast to these feelings, more employees than ever are saying that their organization offers a space where mental health can thrive. Despite a persistent mental health stigma, 73% of employees believe their manager emphasizes the importance of mental health along with 83% of HR and 92% of CEOs. There's a likewise positive trend in workplace connections, with 87% of employees feeling comfortable providing emotional support to coworkers and 86% feeling comfortable offering guidance and advice.



Start Here: Embrace Employee Feedback

Employee feedback is a critical component to closing the gaps between expectations and execution. But companies must be willing to capture and then use it to address gaps in their benefits offerings.

1. Survey employees to understand how they prioritize the importance of benefits and where there are gaps in your offering
2. Promote the benefits you have using digital-first tactics like text and email
3. Continuously audit and review your mental health offerings to understand usage

Employees Want and Need Meaningful Mental Health Support, but Don't Feel Their Workplaces Are Delivering

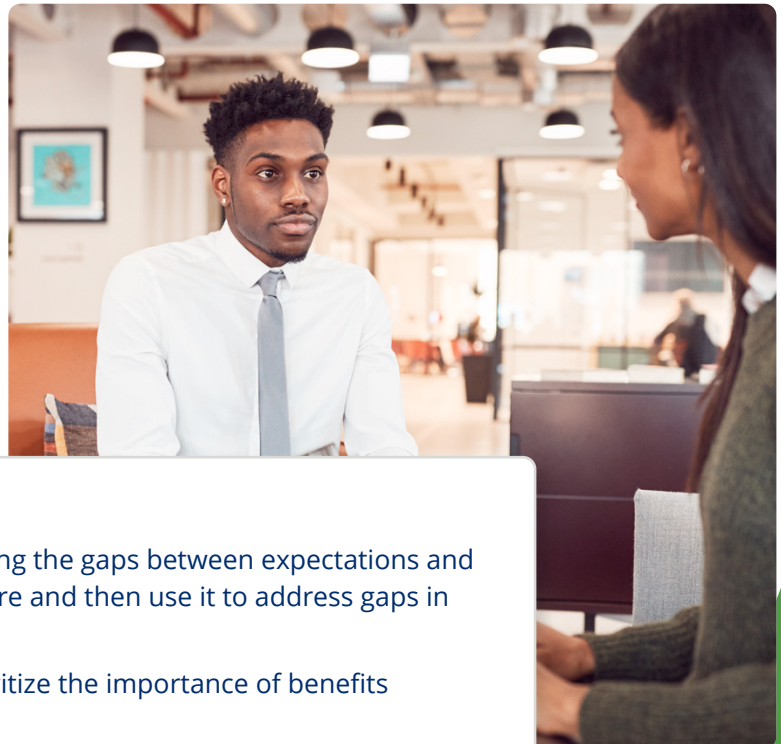
While many organizations have boosted their mental health benefits, employees across all roles feel there's room for improvement.

● CEOs ● HR PROFESSIONALS ● EMPLOYEES

My company spends more time talking about mental health initiatives than implementing them



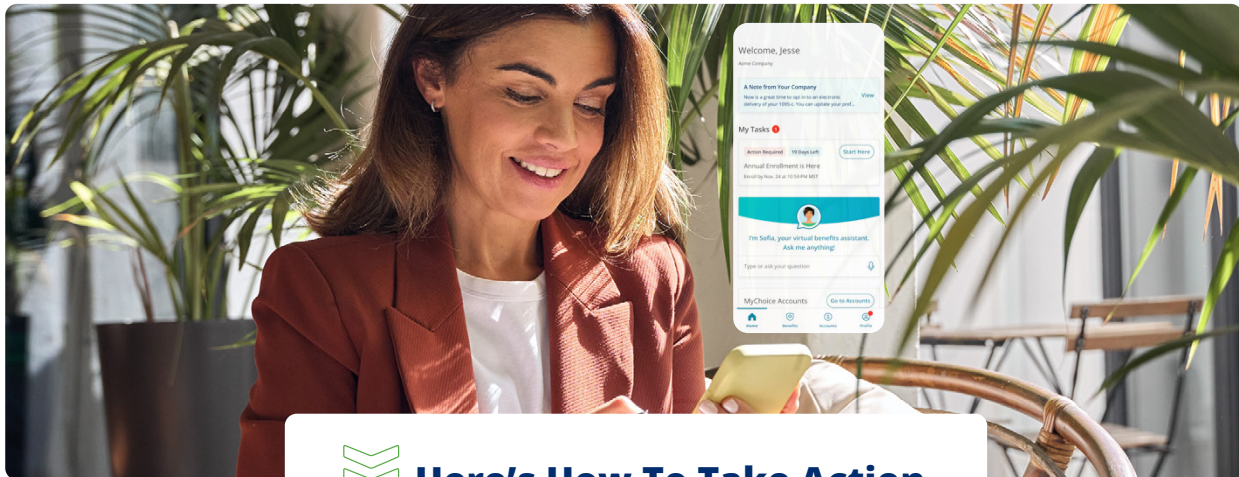
That's over 6 in 10 employees and HR professionals and a whopping 8 in 10 CEOs



From Awareness to Utilization: How to Bridge the Benefits Gap

There's a significant lack of awareness and understanding about the value of mental health benefits and a parallel reluctance to engage with them due to accessibility issues or stigma. A crucial part of the solution rests in helping employees better understand and navigate their benefits. According to Businessolver's annual [Benefits Insights study](#), 84% of employees find their benefits confusing, a statistic unchanged since 2017. This confusion likely contributes to low awareness and utilization of benefits.

However, the study also found that employer communications and personalized benefits experiences have a positive impact on connecting employees with key benefits: **Benefits-related emails see a 46% open rate and personalized benefits reminders drive a 19% lift in benefits usage.**



Here's How To Take Action

Here are a few ways technology in the form of personalized decision support and AI can help fuel benefits awareness and utilization:

- Employees receive personalized care options when they ask about their deductible in the platform, such as telehealth or a nurse line care.
- Personalized reminders direct employees to point solutions, mental health resources, or an EAP based on the employee's interactions, behaviors, and claims data.
- AI-powered searches summarize plan documents, thereby reducing the burden between finding the right information and understanding what it means.



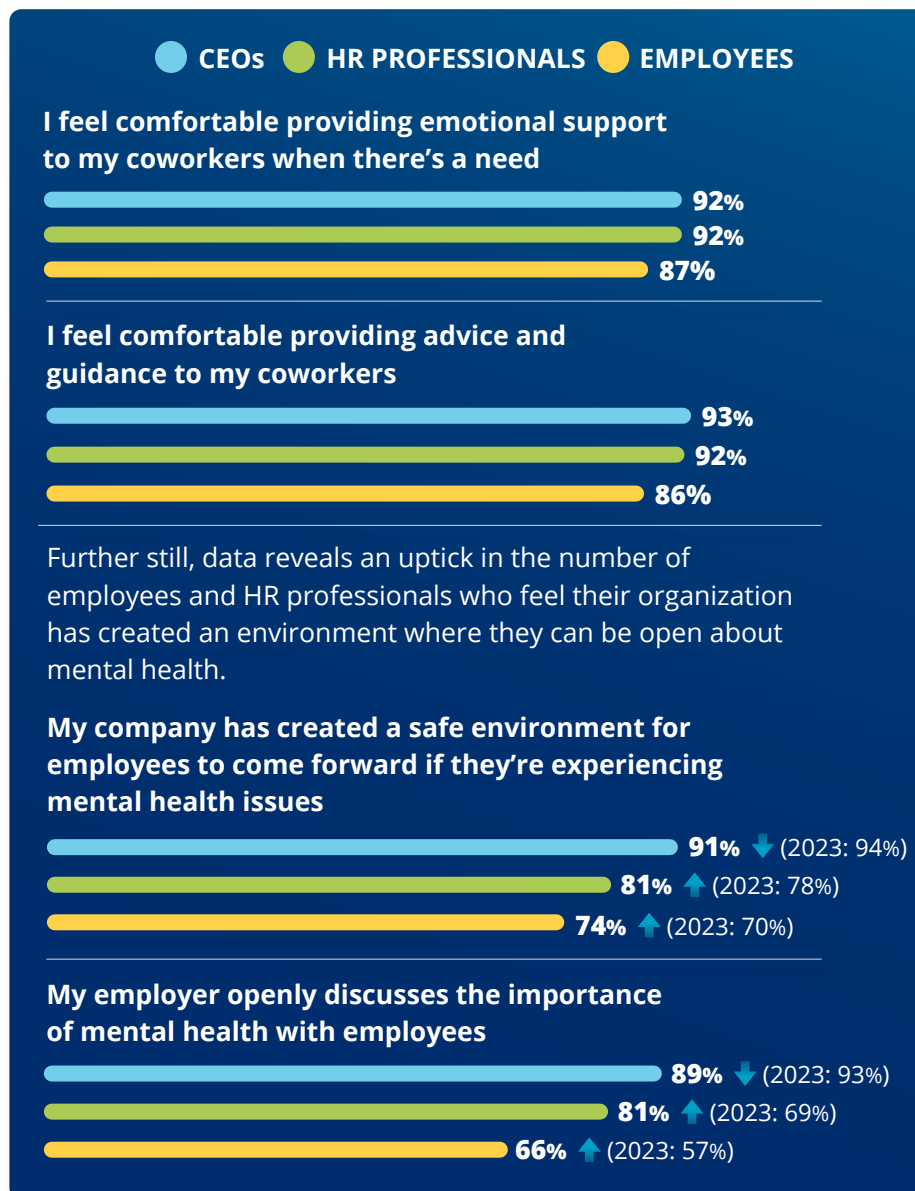
Learn more in our [2024 Benefits Insights Report](#).

Putting Empathy Into Action to Support Mental Wellbeing

Your game plan for supporting mental health in the workplace

Mental wellbeing isn't just a workplace issue. It's a whole-person issue. When the majority of our lives are spent in a work environment—regardless of if it's at a desk, a retail shop, a manufacturing line, or working hands-on with patients—employers have a responsibility to support their workforce as a human-force.

That is the reality of modern work and one that employers must awaken to: our personal and professional lives are inherently intertwined. Despite toxicity and mental health issues, however, a majority of respondents express a willingness to lean in and support their coworkers:



Start Here: Lead by Example with Open Dialogue

There's about 90% agreement across employees, HR, and CEOs that it's important for senior leadership to openly discuss mental health issues to create a safe environment for others to follow suit. Beyond creating space to discuss mental health, there's a pressing need to address psychological safety and the value of empathetic behaviors at work.

10 Strategies to Improve Mental Wellbeing in Your Workplace

Mental health issues are often unspoken or unsupported. It's time to break the stigmas that act as barriers to help. Beyond that, employees need awareness, understanding, and improved access to benefits. Empathetic behavior also plays a crucial role in employees' mental wellbeing with data showing that **employees are most likely to use mental health resources that give them the space to think and work on their own terms**. As such, autonomy and workplace flexibility are highly important to promoting work-life balance and employee wellbeing.

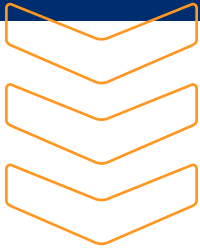


Here are 10 strategies you can adopt today to support mental wellbeing in your organization:

- 1. Communicate Like a Marketer:** Actively communicate the availability of mental health benefits and resources through an omni-channel approach, including text, newsletters, emails, and intranet sites. Use storytelling and testimonials to highlight positive experiences and outcomes.
- 2. Dismantle Stigmas:** Create a culture that normalizes mental health discussions. Encourage leaders and managers to share their own experiences and endorse the use of mental health benefits. Offer training sessions to help employees understand mental health issues and the importance of seeking help.
- 3. Promote Psychological Safety:** Encourage open communication where employees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns without fear of negative consequences.
- 4. Commit to Respectful and Inclusive Language:** For instance, adopting person-first language which highlights an individual's humanity can help reduce stereotypes. Instead of labeling someone an "addict," referring to them as a "person with a substance-use disorder" diminishes negative connotations.
- 5. Offer Workplace Flexibility:** Provide flexibility to reduce stress and improve work-life balance. Not all employers can offer the same level of flexibility, but the data underscores the importance of being deliberate and innovative in finding pathways to it.
- 6. Provide Regular Training and Education:** Conduct regular training on mental health topics. Educate employees on recognizing the signs of mental health issues and knowing when and how to seek help.
- 7. Ensure Confidentiality:** Emphasize the confidentiality of the services provided. Assure employees that their use of mental health benefits will remain private and not affect their job security or career progression.
- 8. Measure and Assess:** Regularly assess the utilization of mental health benefits and seek feedback from employees to identify barriers and improve benefits offerings.
- 9. Lead by Example:** Encourage leadership to talk openly about mental health and advocate for mental health benefits. When employees see their leaders prioritizing mental health—and using those benefits—they are more likely to follow suit.
- 10. Mitigate Confusion with Technology:** Leverage decision support technology, personalization, and AI to reduce confusion about benefits and how to access them.



Get more strategies to promote empathy and support mental wellbeing in the workplace with our [2024 State of Workplace Empathy studies](#).



About the 2024 State of Workplace Empathy Study

Over the past nine years, Businessolver has studied the evolution of empathy in the workplace, hearing from collectively more than 20,000 employees, HR professionals, and CEOs about their views on a variety of workplace issues.

Our study examines the behaviors and benefits that make a workplace empathetic. In this study, empathy is defined as “the ability to understand and/or experience the feelings or perspectives of another.”

In March of 2024, a third-party firm fielded the online survey of more than 3,000 participants across six industries: financial services, government, healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, and government. To qualify for the survey, respondents needed to be 18 years or older, a U.S. resident, and be employed full-time or part-time within their respective organization with 100 or more employees.

Our survey included subgroups for gender, ethnicity, parent/non-parent status, veteran status, self-identified LGBTQ+, managers, work location status (remote, hybrid, in-person), and generations.

Small employers are defined as organizations that employ 100-999 employees. Large employers are defined as organizations that employ 1,000+ employees.

Unless otherwise noted, findings are cited throughout in “Top 2 Box” on 4- and 5-point scales (e.g. agree/strongly agree, important/extremely important).

Learn more about our findings, trends, and recommendations across nine years of data at Businessolver.com/empathy



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