

Wellness to Well-Being, Part 1

The idea of employee wellness and its effect on business has a long history dating back to the 18th Century. But the concept of wellness didn't really take off until the 1970s. Modern wellness programs emphasize physical health by focusing on:

- Progress toward meeting health standards
- Awareness of health risks
- Promoting healthy habits
- Preventing disease

Wellness programs continue to be very popular, with more than 80 percent of employers offering some sort of wellness-related program or activities that focus on their employees' physical health.



Well-being programs focus on holistic health

Well-being is a holistic view of your employees that encompasses physical health and well-being in such areas as finances, relationships, community and career. A 2017 Staywell Trend survey found that employers are starting to include programs around resiliency, financial well-being, happiness, volunteering in the community and mindfulness.

Well-being includes perceptions of life

In wellness programs, success is measured by improved biometric scores. In well-being, success is measured by how an individual perceives their life. An OC Tanner Institute study showed people score higher on well-being tests when they feel fulfilled or satisfied with their lives, feel they're doing their best each day, and know and like where their lives are headed.

Well-being programs result in benefits to an organization

Research shows when well-being programs are implemented they can:

- Improve employee health behaviors
- Reduce health care costs
- Improve productivity with decreased absenteeism and presenteeism
- Help attract and retain employees

Sources:

wellsteps.com/blog/2018/07/04/reasons-to-have-a-wellness-program-benefits-of-wellness/*

snacknation.com/blog/benefits-of-employee-wellness-programs/*

healthandsafetyhandbook.com.au/6-benefits-of-health-and-wellbeing-programs/*

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Five elements that shape our lives

Gallup's comprehensive study of people in more than 150 countries revealed five universal, interconnected elements that shape our lives:

- Career well-being
- Social well-being
- Financial well-being
- Physical well-being
- Community well-being

For more information:

- *Well-Being: The Five Essential Elements*
- *The Blue Zones*
- The McKinsey Podcast

