

The development and longitudinal evaluation of a well-being programme: a case study of the BGL Group



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Introduction

The World Health Organisation (2005) has called on organisations to promote employee well-being as part of good corporate practice and research demonstrates that encouraging well-being at work can have important positive outcomes for the organisation, contributing to engagement and performance (Robertson et al., 2012). Engagement is defined as a 'positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind' which characterises employees who are active, take initiative and seek out new challenges (Schaufeli et al., 2002), all of which can have substantial impacts on organisational performance. Well-being programmes are therefore seen by many organisations as key to improving engagement and performance.

But the practicalities of how organisations can or should promote well-being remains relatively unexplored. This study reports on the development and refinement of a well-being programme at a large multi-site European organisation. We consider the elements most appreciated and used by the employees as well as the programme's longitudinal impact on employee engagement.

Research Aims

1. Evaluate the individual elements of a well-being programme in a large multi-site organisation.
2. Assess the impact of the well-being programme on employee engagement
3. Make recommendations for tailoring well-being initiatives to target employees with differing levels of well-being

Method

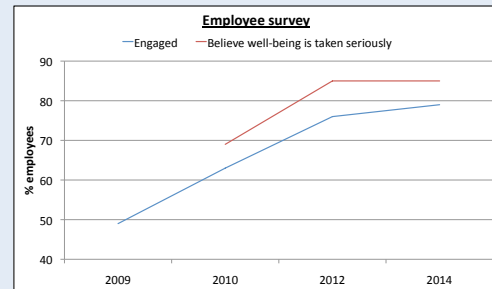
Employee engagement was assessed in an internal survey at intervals over a five year period. In later surveys, employees were also asked how seriously they thought their employer took their well-being.

In a separate survey, 1330 employees from 11 sites rated their personal well-being, the current well-being initiatives and their preferences for future initiatives.

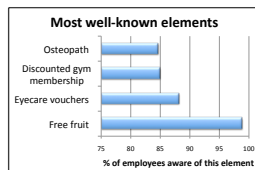
- Employees rated their well-being on a scale of one to five stars in the following different areas: Health, Fitness, Emotional well-being, Energy and Sleep.
 - An overall well-being measure was created from the mean of these five items. ($\alpha = 0.82$)
- The current offerings in the well-being programme were evaluated by respondents on three criteria:
 - awareness of the offering
 - how much the respondent had made use of this element
 - how positively the respondent viewed the element
- Finally, respondents were asked to indicate which of several suggested new elements should be included as the well-being programme developed in the future.



The BGL Group is a major financial services company employing over 3,000 people on 11 sites (9 in the UK, 1 in the Netherlands and 1 in France). Their well-being programme is promoted as part of the organisation's overall strategy for improving employee engagement and meeting its corporate social responsibility targets. The well-being programme consists of a suite of different offerings that employees can choose from, including access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), free fruit in the offices, discounted or on-site gyms and at-desk massage.



Well-being programme elements



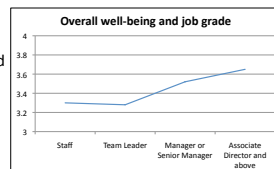
Most Useful elements
Discounted gym membership
Eyecare vouchers
Free fruit
At-desk massage
Health screening

Impact of demographics on well-being

One-way ANOVA demonstrated that employee well-being was affected by country, with Dutch employees scoring significantly higher than British ($F(2, 1326) = 4.07, p < .05$).

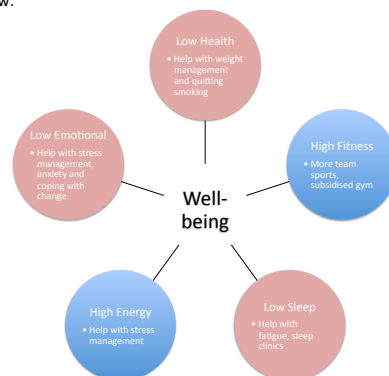
Employees on small sites had higher well-being than those both medium and large sites ($F(2, 1327) = 9.62, p < .001$).

Well-being was also significantly higher for those with greater job seniority ($F(3, 1326) = 9.7, p < .001$).



Future developments

Regression analyses were conducted to identify the impact of employees' current levels of well-being on their preference for future initiatives to be included in the programme. The significant results are summarised in the figure below:



Conclusions

The study presents a rare insight into the planning, implementation and development of a complete well-being programme in a private, multi-site European organisation, with longitudinal measures demonstrating its impact over a five year period. It provides evidence for the positive impact of a well-being programme on employee engagement. Results can help organisations to develop a well-being programme which incorporates elements designed to appeal to employees with different levels of well-being.

Limitations

Evaluation of the well-being programme currently lacks links to HR measures such as absence or turnover. The centrality of employee well-being to this organisation's culture could limit applicability to organisations where well-being is not prioritised.