



## Section 4

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# **Mental health + well-being in the modern workplace**

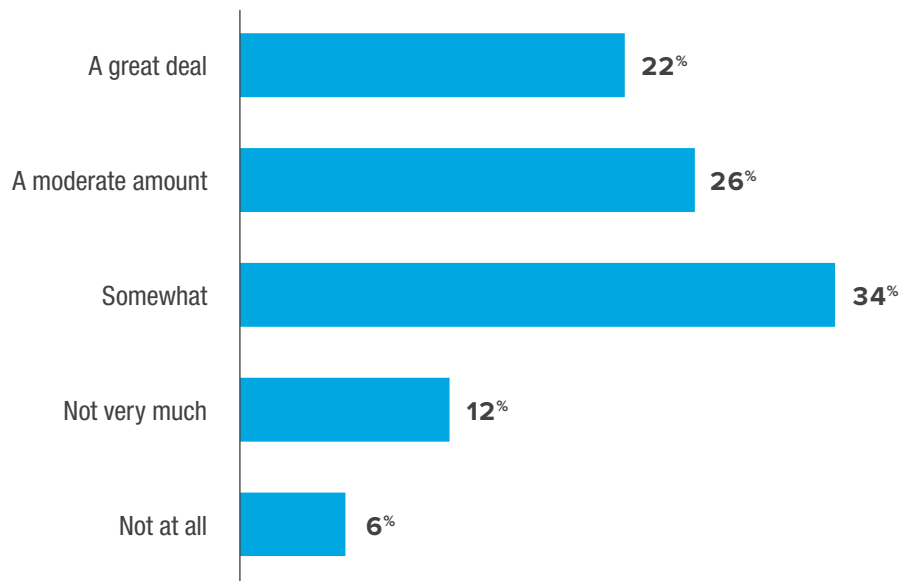
# Burned out, checked out: Why mental health deserves our attention

Mental health remains a defining issue in the modern workplace. While employers believe they are offering support, the message isn't always getting through. Fewer employees in 2025 believe their organization truly cares about their mental well-being, and those who feel unsupported are significantly less satisfied, more likely to experience burnout, and more likely to seek new employment. At the same time, the profile of burnout response is shifting: Traditional programs like EAPs are losing traction, while schedule flexibility, additional PTO and mental health/self-care resources are gaining momentum. For employers hoping to retain top talent, mental health support must go beyond a benefits brochure — it must be felt in the everyday experience of work.

## Employees aren't convinced their employers care about them, and that belief shapes everything

Employees who feel supported by their employer tend to be more satisfied with their jobs and more loyal to their organization. But today, fewer workers believe their employer truly cares about their mental health. That perception gap isn't just symbolic: It's strongly associated with key outcomes like job satisfaction and retention. Workers who don't feel supported are more likely to burn out, consider leaving or disengage. This is a powerful reminder that well-being must be visible, intentional and woven into everyday culture, not just an HR talking point.

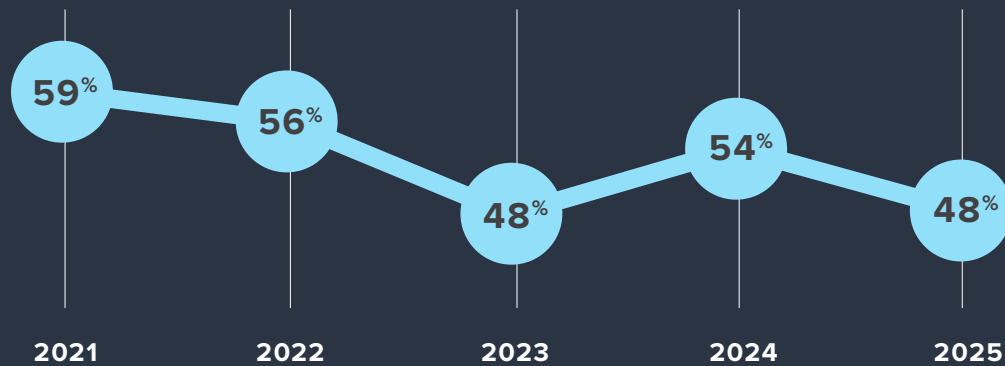
**More than half  
(52%) of employees  
feel that their  
employer only  
cares about them  
somewhat or even  
less, representing  
a significant  
opportunity for  
improvement.**



*Question: How much do you believe your employer cares about your overall mental health?*



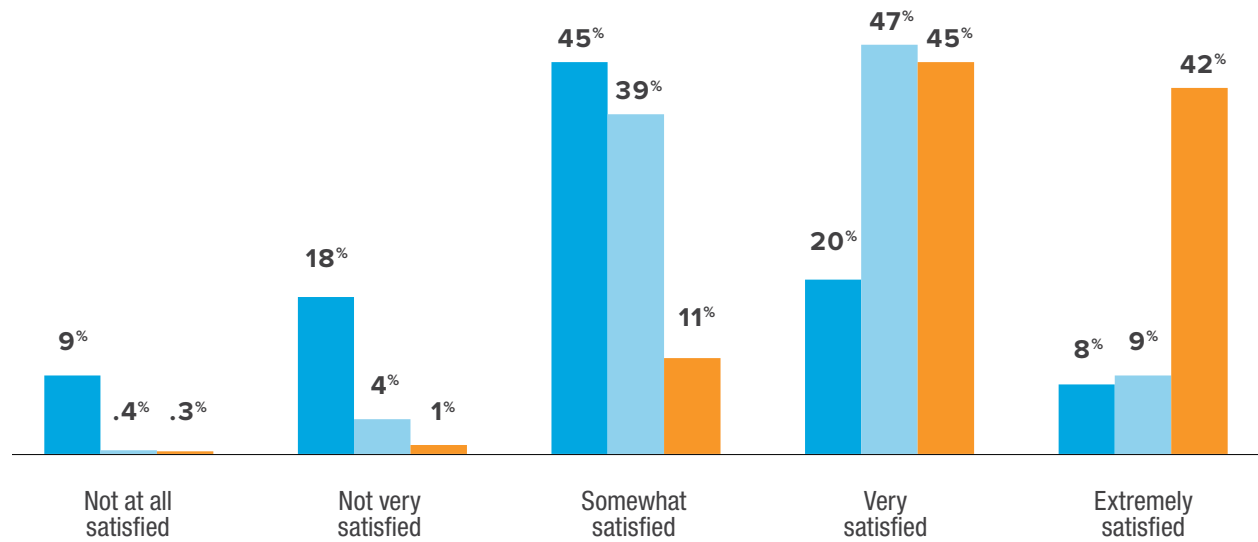
Compared to 2024, fewer employees are confident that their employers care about their overall mental health (down from 54% to 48%).



Question: How much do you believe your employer cares about your overall mental health? // % A great deal/A moderate amount



A decline in employee confidence regarding mental health is particularly concerning because this sentiment is directly correlated with overall job satisfaction...

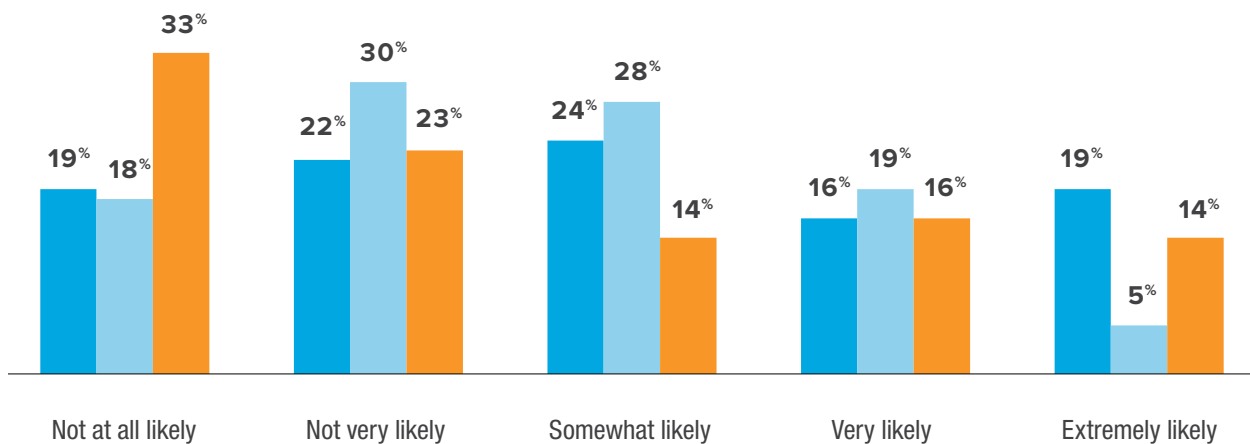


■ = Does not believe employer cares   ■ = Believes employer cares somewhat   ■ = Believes employer cares

Question: How much do you believe your employer cares about your overall mental health?

Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?

... as well as negatively associated with one's likelihood to search for a new job in the next 12 months.



■ = Does not believe employer cares   ■ = Believes employer cares somewhat   ■ = Believes employer cares

Question: How much do you believe your employer cares about your overall mental health?

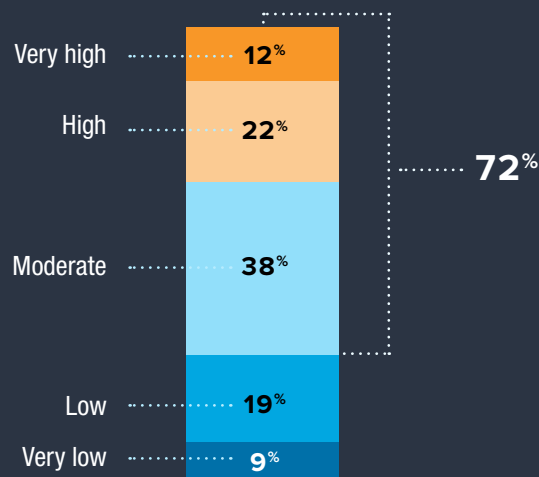
Question: How likely are you to look for a new job in the next 12 months?

## Stress and burnout are high, and it's coming from all directions with heavy workload mostly to blame

The mental load employees are carrying doesn't end when they log off at the end of the day. While nearly three-quarters of the workforce reported moderate to high workplace stress, life beyond the office also is taking a toll. Financial worries, caregiving responsibilities and a general sense of uncertainty are all contributing to burnout levels that remain alarmingly high. Mental health strain is widespread, but the sources of stress vary by life stage — from managing daily life among younger workers to political concerns and uncertainty about the future for those in midlife. For employers, addressing mental health requires a holistic approach that considers the full picture of what employees are managing, both on and off the clock.

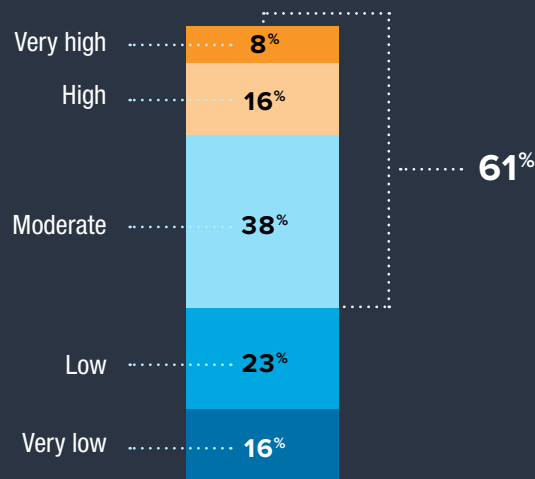


High levels of workplace stress exist among employees, with nearly 3 in 4 reporting at least a moderate level of stress.



Question: How would you quantify the amount of workplace stress you experience?

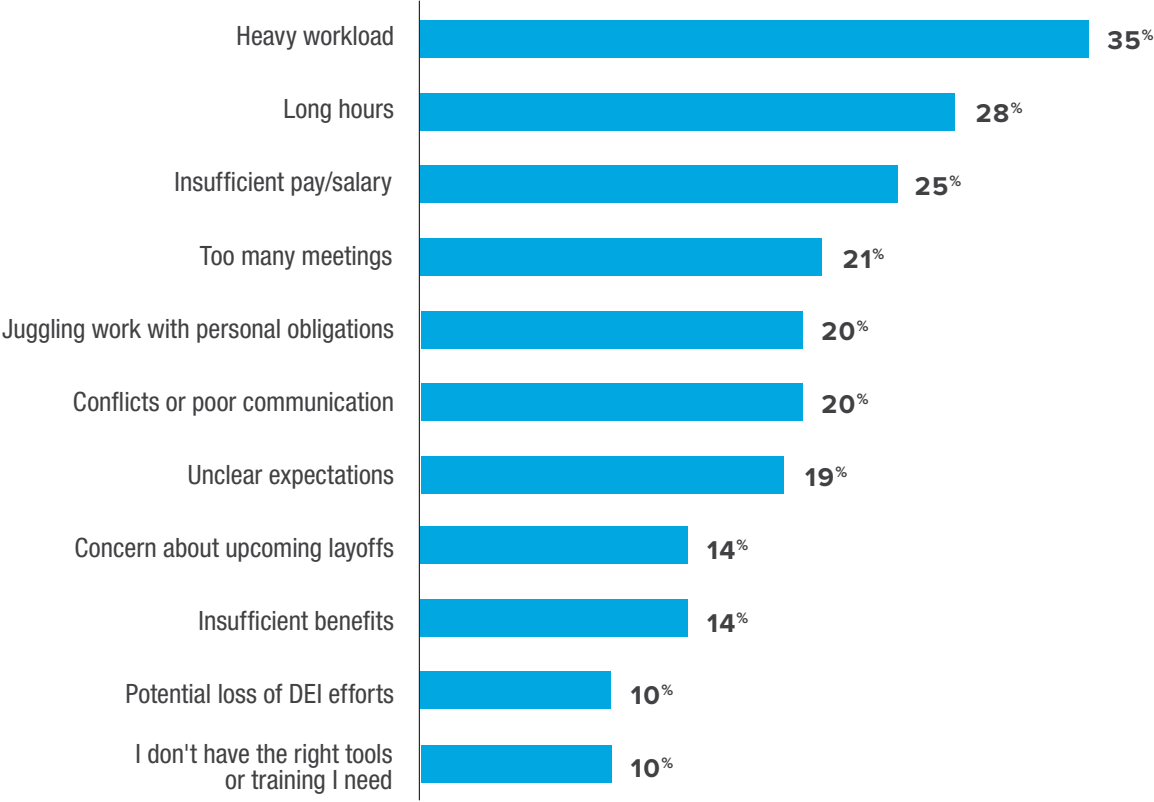
More than 3 in 5 (61%) employees report currently experiencing at least a moderate level of burnout.



Question: How would you rate your current level of burnout?



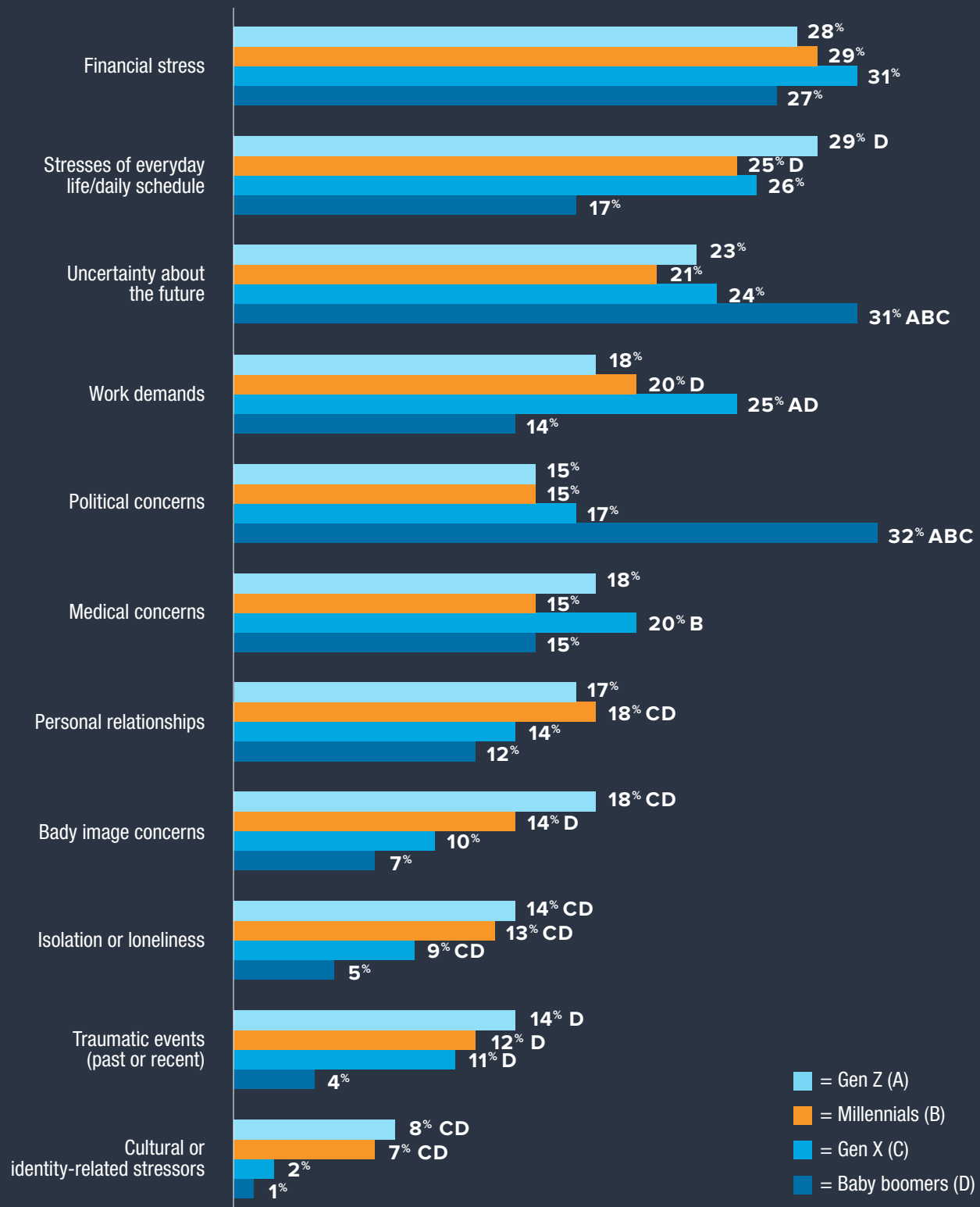
Heavy workloads are the primary culprit of workplace stress (35%), though there are myriad contributing factors.



Question: Which of the following cause you the most stress at work?



And it's not just work that's causing stress. Four in 5 workers are feeling stressed due to external factors. The top sources of stress vary by generation and are closely tied to life stage. Finances, the stress of juggling it all and uncertainty about the future are in the top three for all generations.

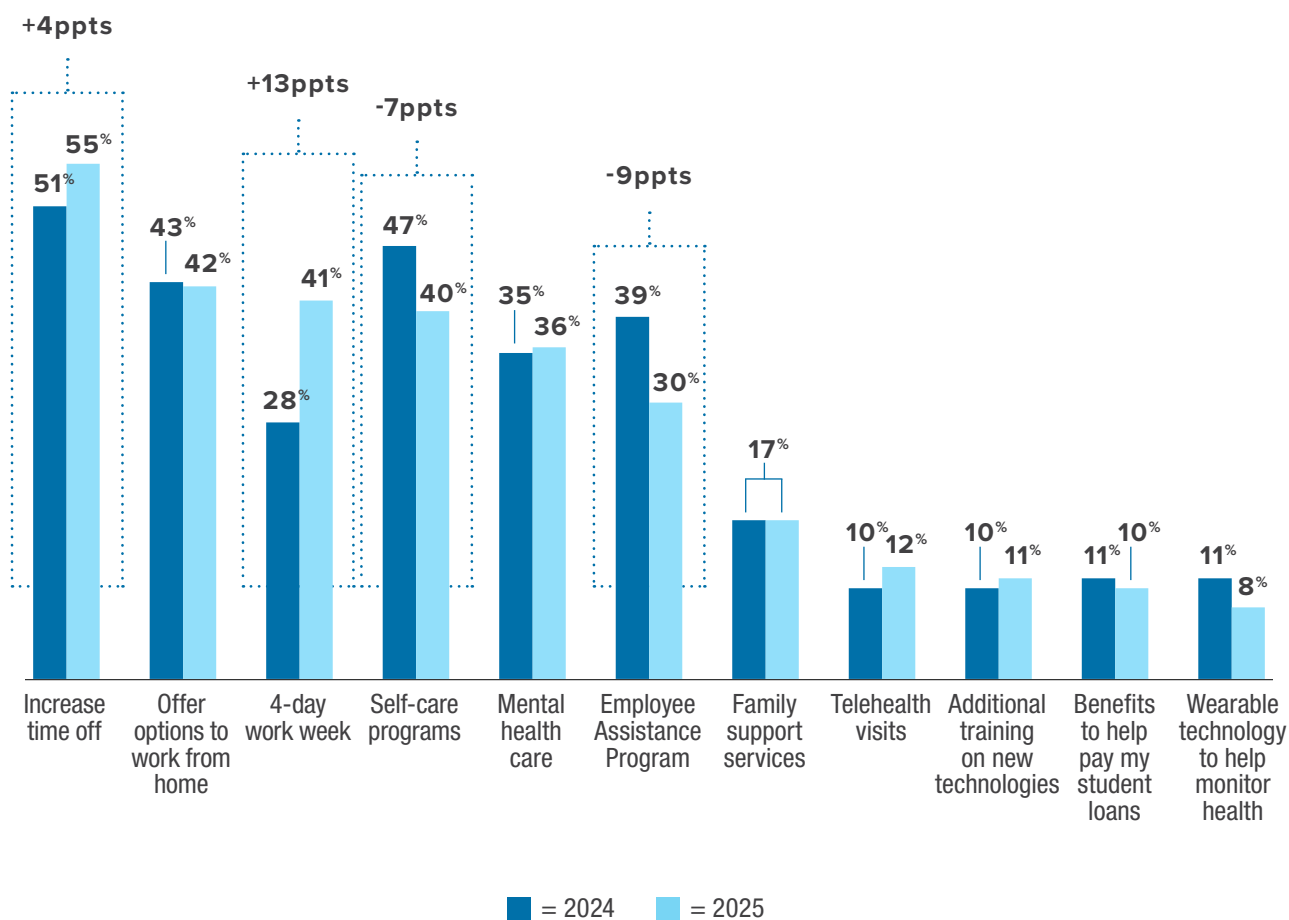


Question: Which, if any, of the following are causing you the most stress currently? // Letters indicate which groups are significantly different from each other.

# Workers are looking for more creative workplace structure options to ease burnout

Burnout isn't a mindset but a systemic issue. And workers are increasingly clear about what would help: more time off and greater flexibility, not just wellness webinars or EAP brochures. While traditional support resources still have a role to play, employees are shifting their priorities toward structural change. Compared to last year, interest has grown to expanded PTO and mental health/self-care resources — tangible shifts that allow employees to actually recharge. Organizations looking to reduce burnout should focus on rethinking how work is structured, not just how it's supported.

For employees, the desired strategy to address burnout is shifting from traditional support programs in favor of schedule changes. Interest in increased time off has grown over the past year, paired with declining interest in more traditional self-care and Employee Assistance Programs.



Question: Which of the following would be most useful with helping you deal with burnout or personal mental health concerns?

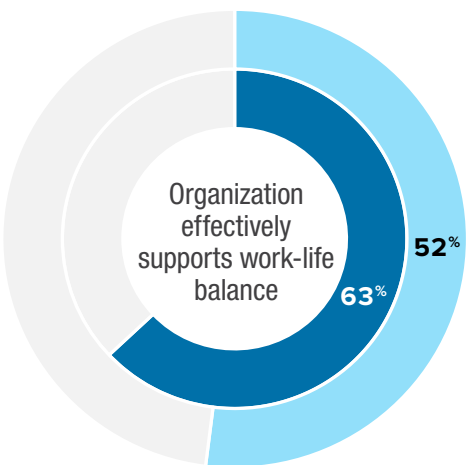
**Pro tip: If your burnout strategy starts and ends with an app, it's time to recalibrate. Employees are asking for structural change in the workplace, not just yoga classes and stress management tips. Rethink the pace of work, evaluate time expectations and reconsider how to increase flexibility in workstreams.**



# Work-life balance matters — but employees and employers are not aligned

Work-life balance has become a core expectation, but employers and employees are not on the same page. While almost two-thirds (63%) of employers believe they support balance, just over half (52%) of employees agree. The disconnect lies not in policies, but in practice. Employees define support by whether their PTO is respected, whether they have location and schedule flexibility, and whether they're evaluated on output rather than hours. These cultural signals, especially how leaders model time off, shape how supported employees truly feel. To build trust and reduce burnout, organizations should consider doing more than offer flexibility. They should strive to normalize it.

About half (52%) of all employees feel that their employers effectively support work-life balance; compared to 63% of employers who think they are doing a good job.

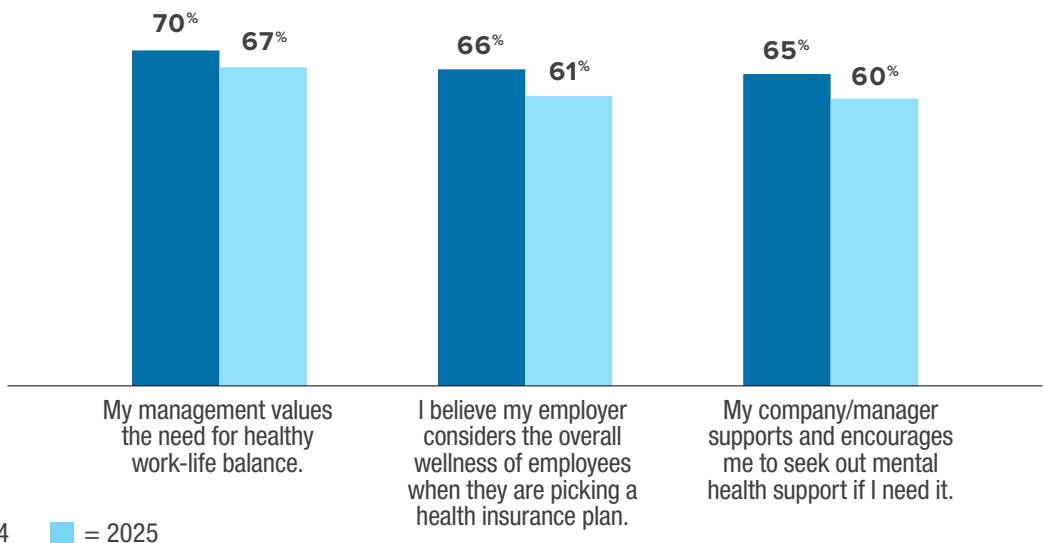


■ = Employees   ■ = Employers

Employer Question: In your view, how effectively does your organization support employees' work-life balance?  
// % Very/Extremely effectively

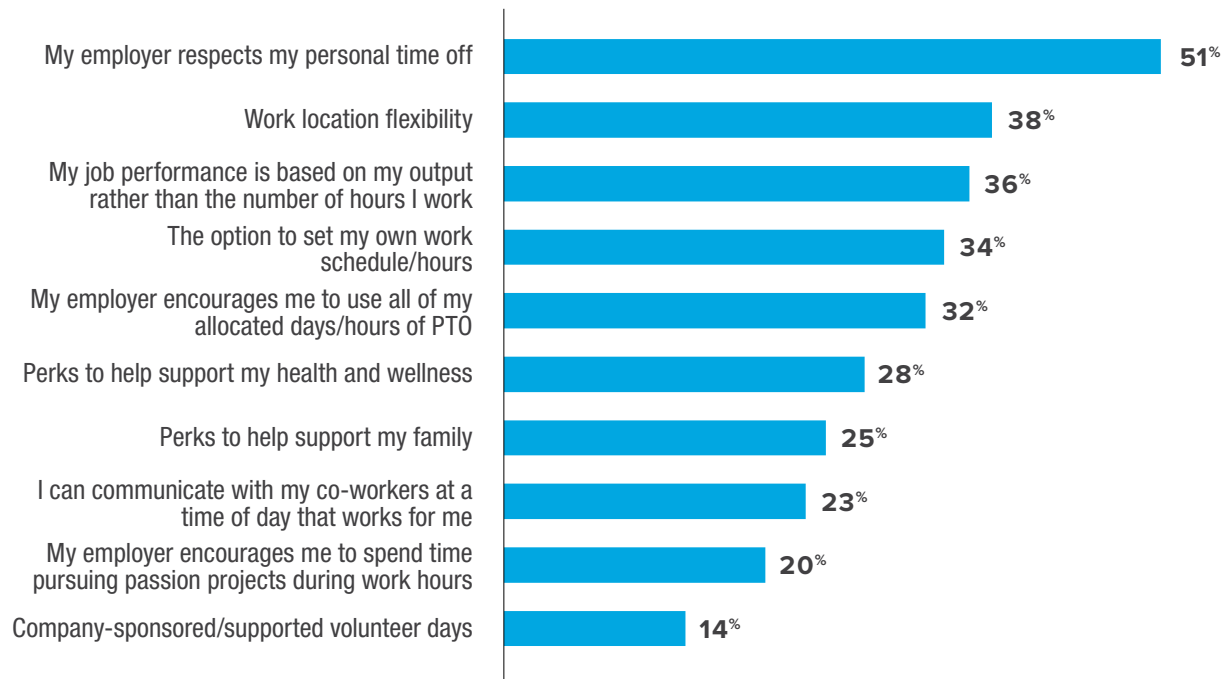
Employee Question: In your view, how effectively does your organization support your work-life balance?  
// % Very/Extremely effectively

There are signs of backslide in employee confidence in how much their organizations support them, which aligns with the year-over-year decline observed in employee perceptions that their organizations care about their overall mental health. This should serve as a warning sign to employers regarding work-life balance.



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? // % Somewhat/Strongly agree

About half (51%) of all employees said respect for time off is the most critical contributor to work-life balance. Flexibility (location, time) and output-based performance also are highly important.



Question: There are many factors that could contribute to a positive work-life balance. In your opinion, what are the most important factors in achieving a positive work-life balance? // % Ranked in Top 3

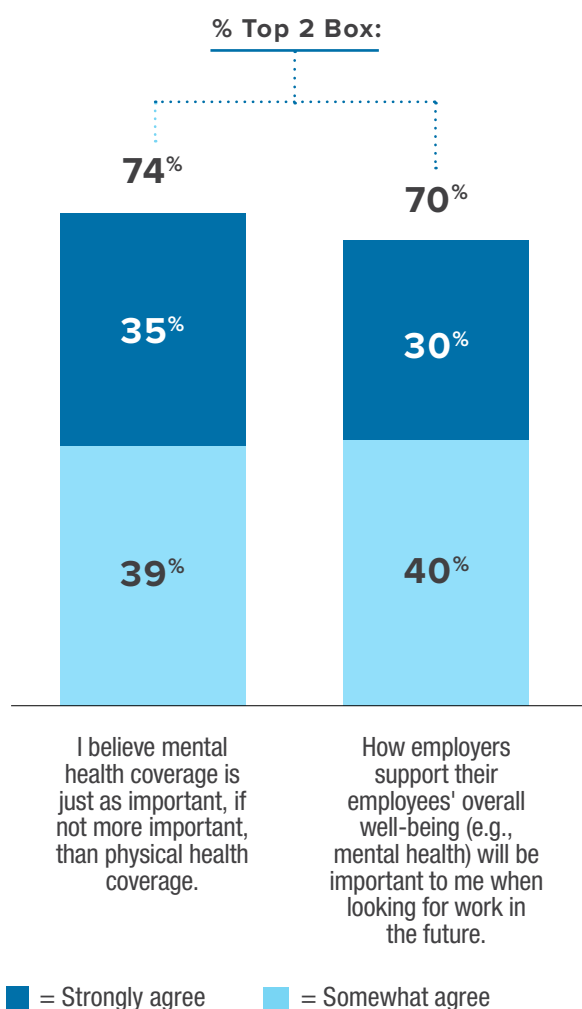
**Pro tip:** Don't assume your intentions are obvious. Many employers believe they're supporting mental health, but perception matters more than policy. Employees need to feel that support in how managers lead, how PTO is respected and how flexibility is encouraged.



## Employees say mental health benefits are non-negotiable

Mental health support is no longer a nice-to-have but a key factor in job decisions. Nearly three-quarters of employees said mental health coverage is as important as physical health coverage, and more than two-thirds said it will influence whether they stay or accept a job offer. As employees increasingly view benefits as an expression of company values, mental health coverage becomes a litmus test for how much an employer really supports its people. Organizations that treat these benefits as a strategic priority and communicate them as such will be far better positioned to attract and retain top talent.

**About 3 in 4 (74%) employees agree that mental health coverage is as important as major medical and over two-thirds (70%) say an employer's support of mental health will factor into future job decisions.**



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

// Top 2 Box = Somewhat/Strongly agree

This sentiment is even more common among younger generations, meaning it will only grow in importance as baby boomers retire and Gen Z and millennials represent a larger proportion of the workforce.

*“How employers support their employees’ overall well-being will be important to me when looking for work in the future”*

78% Of Gen Z

73% Of Millennials

68% Of Gen X

56% Of Baby boomers

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

// % Somewhat/Strongly agree