To develop a strategy around employee wellbeing, it's important to first understand what it is—and what it is not. In the past, companies viewed employee wellbeing as just physical health, but David Schweppe, national vice president of customer analytics and reporting at Kaiser Permanente, points out that it's much more than that. Though physical health is important, there are emotional, financial and social dimensions as well. Employee well-being is not just a set of wellness programs, but a comprehensive approach where employees' overall quality of life is prioritized and supported by a company's culture. "It's interesting that we moved from the term wellness to well-being," notes Schweppe. "Wellness is centered around physical or mental health, so it was very much defined around the person as an individual, not around the person as part of a collective." The Gallup Organization, based on extensive research, has defined the five elements crucial to well-being. According to Jim Harter, chief scientist of workplace management and wellbeing for Gallup's workplace management practice, the five elements are: SOCIAL CAREER ( 💼 **FINANCIAL** ഭ്യി Ѿ COMMUNITY "All five elements of well-being are interrelated," says Harter, "so working on them simultaneously will get the best benefits. Employee engagement drives well-being, and well-being drives engagement. If you have career well-being and high engagement, you're more likely to connect with co-workers and form strong social bonds at work, so there's a kind of social contagion where it rubs off on other people. So engage them, have the right kinds of conversations with each employee and map your offerings to the five elements. Employees with higher well-being produce substantially higher business results." To achieve these high business results, employee well-being should be treated as a business imperative rather than a benefit or perk. "Thinking about this as part of a business strategy is the only way this is going to get executed properly," says Tom Carter, national vice president, Workforce Health Consulting Group at Kaiser Permanente. "This is not an HR benefit play, this is a business strategy. You have to engineer well-being back into the work environment." "A business has many parts, but it's people who make it work," adds Kim Horn, regional president of Kaiser Permanente. "A business will go as far as its people will take it. The more healthy and engaged your people are, the farther your business will go." **ADVERTISEMENT** Only one health partner helps you break away to better. kp.org/LeadBoldly KAISER PERMANENTE **Understand What** Your Employees Want — And Most Need The process of creating an employee well-being strategy also has to, by definition, include an evaluation of what employees need and want. "If you ask your employees, they will tell you," says Amy Arnold, East Coast director, workforce health at Kaiser Permanente. "You don't have to tackle it all at one time, just focus on the basics first." So, what do employees want? When asked what's most important in their life today, people are most likely to say emotional and mental well-being (80%) followed by physical and financial well-being (both at 79%). Work-related issues are among the top stressors for employees, who cite triggers such as heavy workload or company restructuring, which can lead to anxiety, depression and heart disease. This is why investing in employee resilience programs to help them reduce stress benefits employees and employers alike. In one study, 94% of employees said that having access to resilience training improved their loyalty and commitment to their current employer, which in turn leads to less turnover. Employees also appreciate companies that respond to their needs. According to research from Alight Solutions, 78% say well-being programs make them feel better about working for their employer, 75% say they help them be as productive as possible, and 70% say wellbeing programs are one of the reasons they stay at their job (up from 50% in 2014). **ADVERTISEMENT** Is your health care a business expense Offer **Coverage That Puts Employees** In Control

The final element of your well-being strategy is

healthcare dollars while also empowering your

Look for plans that combine care and coverage.

In integrated healthcare delivery, employees can

see their doctor, fill their prescriptions and get

a lab test all in one facility. This not only saves

employees are no longer shouldering as much

Arnold points out the advantages of such a

system that she has personally experienced.

my medical record popped up. The therapist

sent me over to get it right away."

noted that I was late on the tetanus shot and

When looking at your health coverage options,

also prioritize plans that provide flexibility and

give employees care options that fit their needs

and lifestyles. Plans with telehealth options, for

much-needed care through telephone and video

visits (when medically appropriate, of course).

According to Accenture, the technology has the

potential to save U.S. companies approximately

\$10 billion a year, and 93% of consumers who've

used telehealth say it lowered their healthcare

"It's really about meeting people where they

are. They want to interact online, and they want

to see their physician face to face," Horn says.

"At Kaiser Permanente, we designed our health

healthcare less complicated. For nearly 75

system around our members. We strive to make

years, we have provided high-quality healthcare

that enables people and businesses to thrive."

Employee well-being isn't a nice-to-have;

it's a must-have if you're to move your

business forward. Do you have a well-

Kaiser Permanente Contributor

affordable health care services and improved the

health of our members and the communities we

Kaiser Permanente has provided high-quality,

serve for more than 70 years.... Read More

AdChoices | Privacy Statement | Terms and Conditions | Contact Us |

Jobs At Forbes | Reprints & Permissions | Forbes Press Room | Advertise

X

🕍 Kaiser Permanente.

SEE HOW »

Choose a health partner who leads the way you do.

© 2019 Forbes Media LLC. All Rights Reserved.

-and your business-to thrive?

being strategy that allows your employees

example, allow employees to keep up with

"This morning I went in for physical therapy, and

of a burden when it comes to coordinating their

them time, but also reduces stress since

employees to take a more active role in their

your health coverage options. With the right

coverage, you can better manage your

own well-being.

own healthcare.

costs.

**■ Forbes** 

Winning With

IMPROVE EMPLOYEE HEALTH TO

IMPROVE YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Kaiser Permanente Contributor Brand Contributor

Your company won't thrive unless your

Today, we demand a lot from employees, from

workers to meet those demands, business

leaders must create a culture of well-being.

health and benefits practice at Aon.

critical for companies.

Source: Gallup

that puts them in control.

Rethink

Your Approach

To Well-Being

"A healthier worker brings a better self to work

every day," says Robin Bouvier, vice president of

With unemployment at historically low levels

and turnover skyrocketing—41 million people

voluntarily quit their jobs in 2018, and by 2020,

that number is expected to jump to 47 million,

according to the Society for Human Resource

Management—the well-being of employees is

**Employees with strong** 

overall well-being are

**6**X

**MORE LIKELY** 

to be engaged in their jobs

To achieve these bottom-line benefits, you need

your workforce thrive. To build this, rethink how

you approach employee well-being, understand

**ADVERTISEMENT** 

what your employees want and offer coverage

an employee well-being strategy that helps

innovation to engagement to teamwork. But for

Kaiser Permanente BRANDVOICE | Paid Program

Healthcare

employees do.

Well-Being