

PURPOSE

This guide provides a summary of the benefits of Wellbeing Support Plans in the context of the workplace, shares a template plan provided by [Beyond Blue](#), and outlines how businesses can encourage employee take-up. This guide is aimed at supporting the business' approach to workplace mental health, rather than a direct tool for employees.

WHY ARE WELLBEING SUPPORT PLANS USEFUL?

Wellbeing is a combination of an individual's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors. Wellbeing is affected by numerous interrelated personal and professional factors such as a sense of belonging and purpose, career, income, nutrition, sleep, and self-esteem etc. Developing plans are useful because they encourage employees to consider their wellbeing and establish plans to support their wellbeing goals personally and professionally.

Research shows that our wellbeing, performance, and productivity can be influenced by our mental health. This is referred to as the [mental health continuum](#). Our mental health is not fixed or static, but instead we shift along a continuum based on our day-to-day experiences. At one end of the continuum, we create balance in our lives, building healthy relationships and keeping our wellbeing front of mind as we manage stresses. At the other end of the continuum, we experience poor mental health symptoms and find it difficult to cope. Naturally, our position on the mental health continuum has an enormous impact on our wellbeing and our ability to be productive, with the positive end referred to as 'thriving'¹.

Encouraging employees to develop a Wellbeing Support Plan is a proactive way for individuals to set measures and goals to support their wellbeing. This encourages employees to work on their wellbeing performance and productivity goals whilst providing guidance on how to respond to challenges along the way. Plans can be used in different ways, for example, they can be used for personal reflections or shared with others to assist with conversations about their plans.

HOW BUSINESS CAN SUPPORT THE USE OF WELLBEING SUPPORT PLANS?

We recommend that Wellbeing Support Plans be one of many resources promoted and made available to employees, it should not be the only resource. It should be viewed as one tool in the organisation's broader [workplace mental health strategy](#), which in turn feeds into the culture of your business. Businesses can support the uptake of Wellbeing Support Plans by raising awareness of the benefits of positively managing one's own mental health. This could be through activities that normalise the topic and tackle common stigmas.

The [Heads Up website](#) was created by the Mentally Healthy Workplaces Alliance supported by Beyond Blue. This is an ideal starting point for workplace resources on mental health. One example includes their guide for employees titled, [taking care of your mental health](#). Businesses can improve the usefulness of Wellbeing Support Plans by tailoring the template to your organisation and by adding them to existing work processes. For example, your performance management framework, internal training and professional development, internal best practice guides, EAP, and other support tools.

¹ University of WA and PwC, [The opportunity to thrive](#)

A TEMPLATE WELLBEING SUPPORT PLAN

Beyond Blue has shared a personal wellbeing support plan template with Consult Australia. Beyond Blue recommends this as a useful tool for individuals to reflect on practical strategies to stay well and to use in their workplace and working context. Beyond Blue has confirmed that businesses can tailor this template to suit your working environment, for example, content can be altered to include examples framed around your existing support tools, such as Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider or other information about internal initiatives. Further information on this template can be found at [Beyond Blue](#).

Step	Description	List	Plan
One My reasons for being at work	<i>Remind yourself why you work in your current job. If you're going to do a good job, it's important to look after your mental health and wellbeing.</i>	<i>List as many of your personal reasons for being at work as you can below.</i> <i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For career development • To put food on the table and pay the bills • Because the organisation aligns with my personal values 	<i>This year, I will focus on:</i> <i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking time out for myself and not feeling guilty for it. • Doing one small act of kindness for a stranger or loved one every week. • Nourish my body: go to the dentist, visit the GP for regular health check-ups and incorporate more fruits and vegetables into my diet.
Two My triggers	<i>It's likely certain things raise your stress levels and make distressing or challenging situations more difficult to manage. If you know what your triggers are, then you can anticipate them and put strategies in place to manage them effectively.</i>	<i>List as many things that could cause you stress below.</i> <i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not asking for support when I need it • Not taking enough breaks • Hunger 	

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<p>Three My warning signs</p>	<p><i>Warning signs are changes in thoughts, moods or behaviours that suggest you may be experiencing stress or burnout. Knowing your warning signs can help you take action early.</i></p>	<p><i>List as many of your own personal warning signs as you can below.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Struggling to keep up with usual workload</i>• <i>Having trouble sleeping</i>• <i>Negative 'self-talk'</i>	
<p>Four Engage in positive work habits</p>	<p><i>Small actions that improve your personal work environment can help you feel more at ease in times of stress, and in the long term, prevent burnout.</i></p>	<p><i>List the things you believe you can do by and for yourself to maintain your wellbeing.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Go for a walk outside</i>• <i>Clean your desk space</i>• <i>Listen to music</i>	
<p>Five Create a positive and engaging environment for others</p>	<p><i>Doing things for others is sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves. Even if it's just honest gratitude, small acts of kindness quickly add up.</i></p>	<p><i>List the things you believe you can do with and for others to maintain your wellbeing.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Offer to assist another workmate with their workload</i>• <i>Compliment or congratulate a workmate</i>• <i>Go for a walk or grab a coffee to check-in with a workmate</i>	

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<p>Six Friends, family and workmates I can talk to</p>	<p><i>Trusted friends, family and workmates can help you feel better by providing practical support, or just being there to listen.</i></p>	<p><i>Write down the names and contact details of your main supports. Try to include at least one person in your workplace.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Workmate/coffee buddy</i>• <i>Best friend</i>• <i>Mum/Dad</i> <p><i>If you don't feel as though you can talk to friends, family or a workmate, below are some options for support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Your workplace Employee Assistance Program</i>• <i><u>The Beyond Blue online forums</u></i>• <i><u>Online and phone mental health resources</u></i>• <i>Lifeline 13 11 14</i>	
<p>Seven Professional support</p>	<p><i>Professional support is always available when you need it.</i></p> <p><i>List the names, numbers and/or locations of mental health professionals, crisis teams, hospitals and support services you can contact.</i></p> <p><i>In an emergency, always call 000.</i></p>	<p><i>My contacts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>My GP or mental health professional</i>• <i>Beyond Blue Support Service 1300 22 46 36</i>• <i>MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78</i>	

WHERE IS HELP AVAILABLE?

In addition to any support that may be available within your organisation, employees can be referred to the following external services:

- Arranging an appointment with their General Practitioner (doctor)
- Australian Government's Head to Health website – available [here](#)
- Beyond Blue – by phone at 1300 224 636 or through their website [here](#)
- The Black Dog Institute's website – available [here](#)
- Lifeline – by phone at 131 114 or through their website [here](#)

This business guide provides a summary only of the subject matter covered, without the assumption of duty of care by Consult Australia. The summary should not be relied on as a substitute for legal or other professional advice