

WELLBEING 101: ASSESSING YOUR TEAM'S WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Is your team suffering from a work-life imbalance? Use this questionnaire to assess work-life balance needs and identify areas for improvement in your area of responsibility. Included at the end are some top tips for improving work-life balance.

Using this questionnaire

Answer the questions below by circling the most appropriate statement.

When you have finished, add up your score and read the 'Interpretation' section to find out if your team has work-life balance issues.

1. Do your team members consistently arrive at work early?

A = Yes, always

B = Sometimes

C = No, never – in fact they are often late

2. Do your team members consistently work late?

A = Yes, people put in a lot of extra hours

B = Sometimes, when the pressure is on

C = Never

3. Do your team members often eat lunch at their desks?

A = Yes

B = Sometimes

C = No

4. Do your team members often miss lunch altogether?

A = Yes, it happens a lot

B = Occasionally

C = No, they never miss lunch

5. Is productivity down over the last few months?

A = Yes, significantly

B = A little

C = Not at all

6. Is the working environment disorganised and untidy?

A = Yes, desks are always covered in paper and files

B = A little untidy but it is usually easy to find what you need

C = No, it is very neat and well organised

7. Has employee absence increased over the last few months?

A = Yes, significantly

B = A little

C = Not at all

8. Has the number of employees suffering from stress-related illnesses risen over the last few months?

A = Yes

B = A little

C = No

9. Do team members struggle to meet deadlines?

A = Yes, we often have to extend timescales

B = Sometimes, it depends on what other work is going on at the time

C = Never

10. Is the quality of work suffering?

A = Yes, work seems rushed and small details are often missed

B = A little

C = No

11. Has the turnover of team members increased over the last few months?

A = Significantly

B = A little

C = Not at all

12. Are fewer new parents returning to work after maternity or paternity leave than over the last three years?

A = Yes, it is very noticeable

B = Maybe, but not significantly

C = No

13. Do you have difficulty recruiting new team members internally?

A = Yes, it is very hard to attract new recruits

B = Sometimes, it depends on the post

C = No, good candidates are easy to find

14. Do members of your team work weekends?

A = Regularly (once or twice a month)

B = Occasionally (when there is an important deadline to be met)

C = Never

15. Do members of your team work ...

A = Over 50 hours per week

B = Between 40 to 50 hours per week

C = Up to 40 hours per w

Scoring

- For every A you have circled, award yourself one point.
- For every B you have circled, award yourself two points.
- For every C you have circled, award yourself three points.

Interpretation

13-21: Work-life balance in your team is not good and something needs to be done urgently to redress the balance. Look at the tips below for some useful advice on how you can do this.

21-32: Not too bad but some preventative measures could be put in place to ensure pressures do not get too much and that there is a proper work-life balance.

33 or over: There does not appear to be any significant problems with work-life balance in your team, but you should monitor this regularly in order to pre-empt any problems in the future.

Tips for improving work-life balance

- Highlight current problems and needs, such as stress, workload, time pressure etc. and consider what you could do to improve the situation. For example, if team members have too much work, consider which of their duties could be delegated. If team members have trouble prioritising, consider a time management course. If team members are suffering from stress, offer support such as counselling or allow them to take unpaid leave.
- Promote good communication – ask team members to tell you before work gets too much and to inform you of any changing circumstances in their family life so that you can accommodate requests e.g. for flexible working. Also welcome any suggestions they have for improving work-life balance.
- If a genuine business case exists, push to introduce flexible working practices.
- Monitor and review progress regularly to pre-empt any potential problems in your team.