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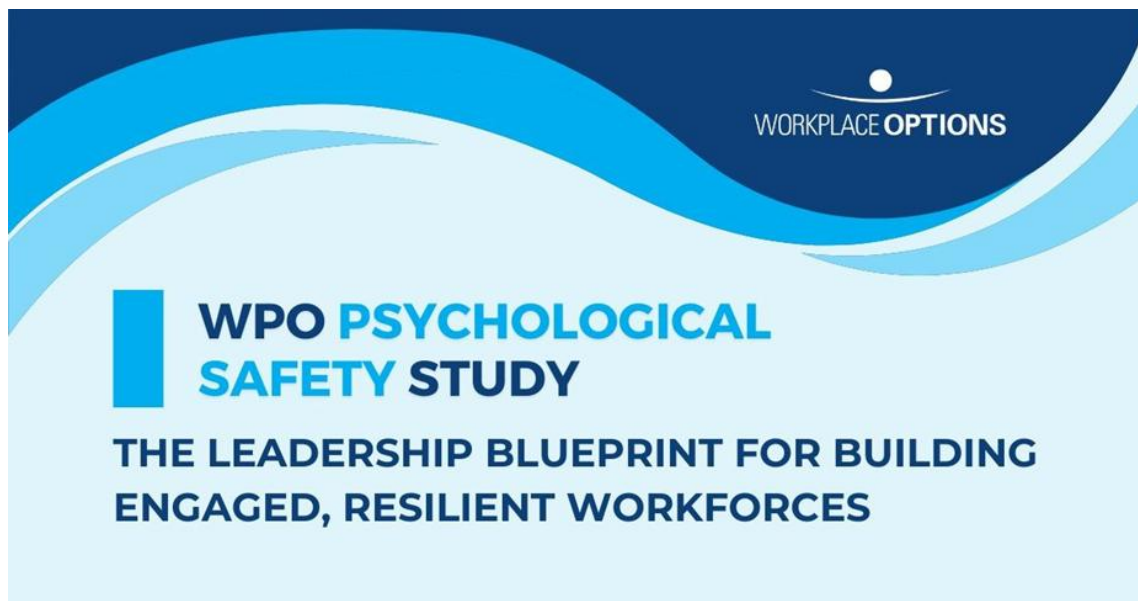
2025 February

WORKPLACE OPTIONS

**MARKETING
NEWSLETTER**



Why Organizations Must Prioritize Psychological Safety



New research shows that **over half of employees worldwide fear the consequences of speaking up at work**—whether it's challenging an idea, admitting a mistake, or asking for help. This silence comes at a **steep cost**. When employees do not feel psychologically safe, engagement plummets, innovation stalls, and turnover spikes.

Yet, organizations that cultivate psychological safety experience up to **50% higher engagement, stronger retention, and better business outcomes**.

To empower leaders in providing employees with the **stability, direction, and support needed to build a workplace culture defined by trust, respect, and collaboration**, Workplace Options' Centre for Organizational Effectiveness released its annual Psychological Safety Study on February 27, 2025. The study's results reveal how employees are struggling in ways that, if left unaddressed, could define the future of work for generations to come.

The Centre for Organizational Effectiveness **Workplace Options Psychological Safety Study** offers an **unfiltered, data-driven perspective** on what is really happening inside organizations. Based on **clinical insights from workplace well-being professionals across 18 countries**, the study provides a **unique global lens on workforce challenges**—from leadership blind spots to cultural barriers that hinder engagement.

For **Chief People Officers (CPOs), Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs)**, and other senior business leaders, this report serves as both a **wake-up call and a roadmap for action**.

The findings confirm that psychological safety is the bedrock of high-performing teams, inclusive leadership is the key to unlocking it, and psychosocial risk will soon be the next major workplace challenge that leaders must prepare for.

A recent global research study from Workplace Options' Centre for Organizational Effectiveness and the **International Institute of Risk & Safety Management (IIRSM)** reveals a critical disconnect in corporate wellbeing efforts: while 93% of business leaders around the world agree that psychological safety directly impacts business performance, many organizations lack clear strategies to address psychosocial risks.

The study, **The Impact of Psychological Safety on Employee Engagement and Risk Management**, along with the **Workplace Options Psychological Safety Study**, underscore the urgent need for companies to evolve beyond traditional risk management and integrate psychological wellbeing as a core business priority.

Unlock Your Organization's Full Potential by Building Thriving Workplaces and Resilient Teams for Sustainable Success

The Centre for Organizational Effectiveness is a global thought leadership and consulting hub dedicated to helping organizations build thriving workplaces and resilient teams. By focusing on cutting-edge strategies in employee engagement, psychological safety, psychosocial risk management, stress prevention, change management, and inclusive leadership, the Centre empowers organizations to navigate complexity and foster environments where people and businesses succeed together.

With a people-first approach, the Centre partners with organizations worldwide to address the challenges of today's rapidly evolving workplace. Through actionable insights, data-driven solutions, and tailored interventions, we help leaders cultivate cultures of trust, collaboration, and innovation.

Whether designing frameworks to reduce stress and promote wellbeing or implementing inclusive leadership models, the Centre equips organizations with the tools to achieve sustainable success.

At the heart of the Centre's work is the belief that organizational effectiveness begins with investing in people at every level. By bridging the gap between leadership strategy and employee experience, the Centre drives measurable outcomes that enhance performance, strengthen connections, and future-proof organizations in an ever-changing world.

Explore our research and insights for thriving workplaces and resilient teams

Reach out to our team today to discover how we can help you build a thriving workplace and resilient teams for the future

Most leaders say psychological safety boosts business, but gaps persist in addressing psychosocial risks



THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The global study from Workplace Options' Centre for Organizational Effectiveness and the International Institute of Risk & Safety Management (IIRSM), was recently featured in **OHS Canada Magazine**. The article emphasizes how the research results from **The Impact of Psychological Safety on Employee Engagement and Risk Management**, spotlights why companies must address psychosocial risks when developing employee engagement and productivity strategies.

Despite recognizing the significance of psychological safety, leadership execution remains inconsistent, with only 29% of organizations describing their wellbeing programs as very comprehensive.

"The research results of the study present a roadmap for business leaders to understand their risk profile and implement solutions that dive deep into the root causes of workplace issues, said Alan King, President and CEO of WPO. "By addressing these challenges directly, organizations can target their resources effectively, ensuring meaningful, long-lasting change."

The study highlights the need for:

- **Stronger Coordination Across Functions:** Risk management, HR, and wellbeing teams must collaborate with clear accountability, supported by executive leadership.
- **Regular Psychosocial Risk Assessments:** Businesses should conduct frequent assessments tailored to different locations, job functions, and teams.
- **Manager Training and Support:** Front-line supervisors play a key role in fostering team wellbeing and should receive training to identify risks and connect employees with support services.
- **Comprehensive Wellbeing Strategies:** Digital wellbeing apps are useful but should be one element of a broader, tailored wellbeing approach.
- **Crisis Preparedness:** Organizations must have proactive response systems in place for crises and traumatic events, including post-trauma support.

“Organizations need a clear health and wellbeing strategy,” said Sabreena Roberts, Director Professional Services at IIRSM, “One that focuses on both physical and psychological wellbeing and is at the center of the organizational strategy. But that alone is not enough. Leadership must drive the adoption of the strategy across all levels of the organization, and it needs to be effectively integrated within day-to-day operations for risks to be managed, performance to improve, and the business to excel.”

[Read the full article](#)

Supporting Cancer Survivors in the Workplace: A Better Path Forward

February is **National Cancer Prevention Month** in the U.S., highlighting the role employers can play in supporting survivors returning to work. While cancer isn’t always preventable, organizations can take meaningful steps to ease the transition and reduce its impact on employees’ wellbeing and careers.

Many survivors face challenges such as loss of identity, confidence, and direction. “By offering comprehensive support for recovery and return to work, employers can empower survivors to reclaim their lives with confidence and purpose,” says Dina El Helou, MBA, VP of Clinical Service Delivery, Americas, at Workplace Options.

Cancer Care Compass is the first global, inclusive program designed to assist survivors and their managers through this transition. With the right resources, employers can create a workplace where survivors feel supported and equipped for success.

Learn how to build a supportive workplace: [Read the article](#)

Explore Cancer Care Compass: [Learn more](#)



LATEST RESOURCES

Podcast: Breaking Barriers to Employee Support: The Power of Real-Time EAP

In today's fast-paced work environment, getting timely support can make all the difference. Workplace Options' latest podcast episode, A Real-Time EAP: Removing Time as a Barrier to Accessing Support, dives into how real-time Employee Assistance Programs are revolutionizing workplace wellbeing.

Join the conversation as experts explore how instant access to professional support helps employees manage stress, improve mental health, and stay engaged. No more long waits, help is available when it's needed most.

[Tune in](#)

White Paper: 2025 Employee Engagement Trends Report

The Diversity Movement, a Workplace Options company, has released its 2025 Employee Engagement Trends Report. This research highlights key insights from their work linking business outcomes to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

Some of the trends featured include:

- Forward-thinking organizations are embedding diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives into their business strategies.
- Despite the high-profile in-office mandates, hybrid work is here to stay.
- As the global workforce becomes increasingly interconnected, teams require the skills to communicate and collaborate across cultural divides.

[Download the report](#)

WPO in the News

Report: Leaders Need New Tools to Manage Politics and Work Life

Political transitions—whether in the U.S. or around the world—often spark uncertainty that ripples through workplaces, leaving employees anxious and organizations seeking stability. To address these challenges, WPO's **Centre for Organizational Effectiveness**, the leading global consultants of psychological safety and employee engagement solutions, released the white paper: **From Uncertainty to Resilience: A Leader's Well-being Guide for Navigating Political Transition**.

Associations Now, the publication of the American Society of Association Executives, featured the white paper in a recent article and interviewed its author Oliver Brecht, WPO's VP and General Manager, Enterprise Solutions. Oliver oversees WPO's global consulting group and is heading the formation of the [Centre for Organizational Effectiveness](#).

"Organizations that are able to put that level of foundation into the DNA always tend to have a higher level of wellbeing and a higher level of employee engagement," he said.

"Without having the foundation of the policies and procedures or job design that is focused to be implementable and impactful for your industry and organization, you're never going to be able to have a sustainable level of employee engagement and wellbeing. But it is also critical that you then trickle that down through the organization by your senior leaders, your people leaders, and then your frontline staff."

[Read the full article](#)

Workplace Options and MentalCare partner to provide employee wellbeing 24/7

The Uruguayan company MentalCare, with the support of Workplace Options, provides various services for organizations that seek to take care of workers and their families. The partnership is focused on people-centered wellness solutions, ensuring the creation of healthy organizations and raising the quality of life of the people who work there. Nicolás Bava, a psychologist, who already worked in the field of business mental health, founded MentalCare. He was later joined by Andrés Montes, a therapeutic operator in addictions.

EL PAÍS reported on the partnership: MentalCare incorporates the services of Workplace Options, to which it adds others of its own such as workshops and courses tailored to each organization, offering added value to companies.

Andrés Montes joined this year to contribute his experience in the field, after having experienced first-hand the difficulties that the deterioration of mental health entails: *"I was losing my mental health. He was a person incapable of reasoning."* Now, dedicated to helping others in processes similar to the one he went through; he highlights that creating mental health care spaces not only means offering a safe environment for workers but also promoting an optimal and productive work environment.

[Read the article](#)

WPO's Centre for Organizational Effectiveness Psychological Safety Study Reveals Global Trends in Workplace Stress and Conflict

The modern workplace is at a crossroads. Rising employee stress, escalating political tensions, and increasing performance pressure are reshaping organizations worldwide. The global industry leader in employee engagement and empowerment, Workplace Options and its

Centre for Organizational Effectiveness, released the annual **Workplace Options Psychological Safety Study**. The study's results reveal how employees, across 18 countries, are struggling in ways that, if left unaddressed, could define the future of work for generations to come.

“Company leaders and people managers face an urgent question: Will they create a psychologically safe and engaged workforce, or will they perpetuate a culture of stress and instability,” said Alan King, President and CEO, Workplace Options (WPO). *“Psychological safety—the belief that employees can express themselves without fear of negative consequences—is no longer just a workplace perk. It is a business necessity.”*

Psychological Safety: A Global Imperative

The Workplace Options' Centre for Organizational Effectiveness Psychological Safety Study shows that stress, conflict, and performance struggles dominate workplace concerns worldwide.

Key findings include:

- **Workplace stress ranks as the top** concern in nearly every country studied.
- **Conflict at work is a widespread issue**, particularly in China, France, and Japan.
- **Performance pressure is rising globally**, with employees citing struggles to meet expectations.
- **Young adults are experiencing burnout**—raising alarms about the future of workforce wellbeing.

“Our study is a wake-up call. If organizations do not prioritize psychological safety now, the next generation will enter a workforce defined by stress, conflict, and disengagement,” said Dr. Kennette Thigpen Harris, LCSW. *“Millennials have entered decision-making roles, the opportunity to build a workplace culture defined by trust, respect, collaboration, and wellbeing has never been more urgent.”*

What Makes This Study Different?

Unlike surveys, WPO's Centre for Organizational Effectiveness Psychological Safety Study is based on real, anonymized conversations between employees and clinicians. This **human-centered approach** uncovers the raw emotions, fears, and challenges employees are feeling—providing business leaders with **real insights to drive meaningful change**.

Why This Matters for Businesses

Organizations that fail to address psychological safety often experience:

- **Higher turnover rates** as employees seek workplaces that prioritize their mental health and wellbeing.
- **Declining productivity** due to unresolved workplace conflicts and stress.
- **A disengaged workforce**, where employees feel silent and unsupported.

About The WPO Centre for Organizational Effectiveness

The **WPO Centre for Organizational Effectiveness** provides data-driven consultation, leadership training, and global benchmarking on psychological safety and psychosocial risk management. Our experts work with companies worldwide to integrate workforce well-being, inclusive leadership, and organizational resilience strategies into actionable business plans.

Video: Hear from our Experts

Oliver Brecht, Vice President & General Manager of Enterprise Solutions at Workplace Options, shares insights on the global challenge employees face in navigating change.



He explains, "*For many, work plays a critical role in shaping their sense of self-worth and impact, not only for themselves but also for their community and family. When significant changes happen, it affects them both personally and professionally. Employers need to be ready for this as we move into the new year, with employees bringing these challenges into the workplace.*"

A key source of change has been political shifts and the uncertainty they bring, which affect policies, economies, and workplace cultures. So, how can leaders respond? Oliver's new white paper, "*From Uncertainty to Resilience: A Leader's Wellbeing Guide for Navigating Political Transition*", offers actionable strategies to help leaders support their teams during these times of change.

[Watch the video](#)

[Download Oliver Brecht's white paper](#)

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