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2025 October

WORKPLACE OPTIONS

**MARKETING
NEWSLETTER**



Exclusive Insights

Mapping Psychosocial Risks and Their Impact on Employee Performance

PSYCHOSOCIAL RISK BY GEOGRAPHY:

REVEALING THE HIDDEN
CAUSES OF WORKPLACE STRESS



Across industries and regions, one message is clear. Safeguarding mental health at work requires the same urgency and structure as ensuring physical safety.

The Workplace Options Center for Organizational Effectiveness has released a **new data-driven global report** exploring psychosocial risks across **18 countries**. Drawing from nearly **250,000 lived experiences**, the report uncovers how cultural, regulatory, and organizational factors shape employee wellbeing — and how issues like bullying, isolation, unfair practices, and excessive workload continue to erode engagement, productivity, and trust.

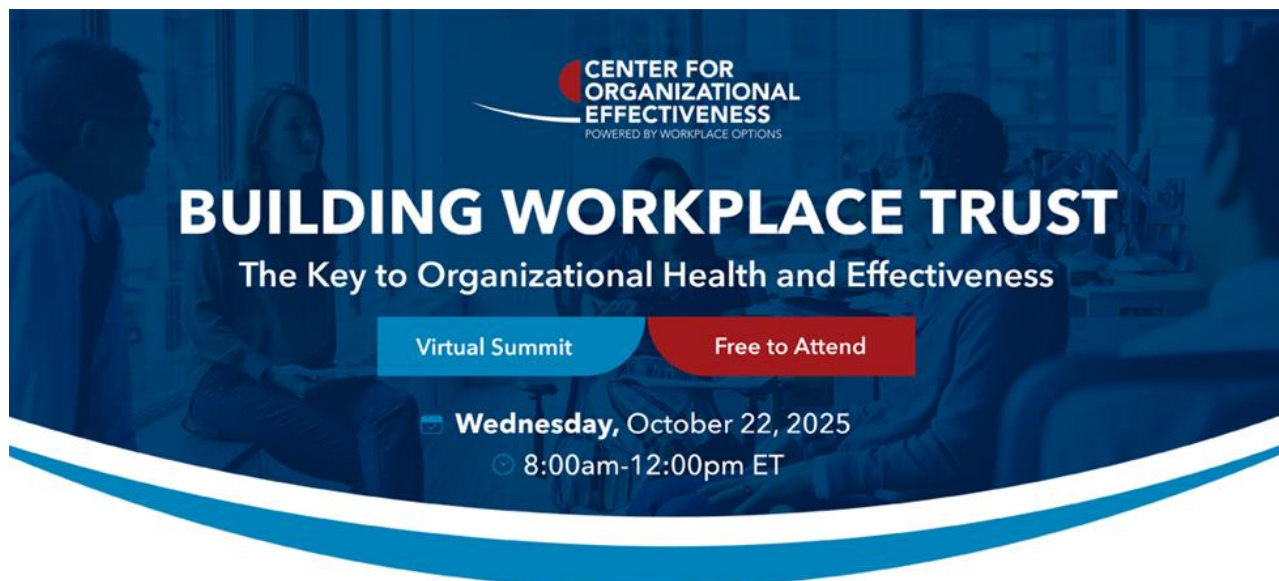
Inside the report, you'll find practical insights to help you:

- Identify and assess **psychosocial hazards** in your workplace
- Align with emerging global **mental health and safety regulations**
- Develop **evidence-based strategies** to prevent burnout and psychological injury
- Build resilient, high-performing workplaces where wellbeing comes first

Whether you're a business leader, HR professional, or compliance officer, this analysis offers **a roadmap to strengthen employee wellbeing** and organizational performance —no matter where you operate.

Download the report to uncover the hidden causes of workplace stress and take action toward a safer, healthier workforce.

When Trust Breaks, Burnout Blazes: Why People Power the Workplace in the Era of AI



Insights from Workplace Options reveal how peer-driven programs drive engagement, combat burnout, and enhance workplace performance.

Trust is the foundation of every workplace: crucial and challenging to build or repair, and impossible to fake. Yet, in a world evolving faster than ever, trust is eroding in the places it matters most.

"Trust is never built through policies: it is built through people," said Alan King, President and CEO of Workplace Options. *"When employees are empowered to help and respect one another, it creates a ripple effect across the organization. Peer-driven initiatives succeed because they prevent burnout, and they build resilience, belonging, and performance in ways traditional programs simply cannot achieve."*

New insights from Workplace Options Center for Organizational Effectiveness reveal how **peer-powered programs** are becoming the antidote to burnout, doubt, and distress proving that while technology can transform and improve how we work, people will always define why we work. Both are critical and connected to the future of workplace wellbeing.

To examine the deliberate balance between progress and purpose, WPO Center for Organizational Effectiveness hosted a **virtual, global summit on October 22, 2025**, titled **"Building Workplace Trust: The Key to Organizational Health and Effectiveness."** The half-day event brought together CHROs, senior leaders, and people managers from around the world to explore data-driven insights and human-powered solutions that improve inclusion, strengthen psychological safety, and remind us that the future of work will always have a heartbeat.

The Trust Gap in a Digital World

As technology accelerates, human connection may become the rarest resource. Recent studies reported by Fast Company show that nearly **a third of Gen Z employees now turn to AI chatbots for emotional support**: a signal that digital tools are beginning to replace the relationships they were meant to enhance.

"Technology can, and should, advance how we provide access to mental health services, but humanity ensures we care in the right way," said Dr. Kennette Harris, Chief Clinical Officer at WPO. "AI will increase access and efficiency, but it cannot replicate empathy. Peer-to-peer programs create what technology cannot deliver: sense of belonging, psychological safety, and the confidence that someone real is there to help."

The Power of Peer Programs

Hosted by **Mary Ellen Gornick, Founding Partner of the WPO Consulting Group**, and **Bianca Buie, M.A., Ambassador Program Manager** with the WPO Center for Organizational Effectiveness, the summit shared data-driven practices for designing initiatives that achieve measurable results and a culture of trust and respect.

"Workplace trust creates the foundation for people to perform at their best," said Gornick. "In a time when burnout and uncertainty are top of mind, employees need to feel valued at work, and they need to feel safe to be their authentic self. Peer-focused programs are one of the most effective ways to build that trust and drive engagement."

Key takeaways for leaders:

- **Develop and deliver peer-driven initiatives** that strengthen resilience, inclusion, and wellbeing.
- Understand how to proactively **address burnout** and enhance belonging through authentic connection.
- Future-proof teams by creating sustainable, **trust-based networks**.

The Hidden Cost of Eroding Trust:

According to Gallup and Workhuman, employee **burnout costs the global economy** \$322 billion annually in lost productivity and turnover. In the U.S. alone, the impact ranges from \$4,000 to \$21,000 per employee per year, driven largely by absenteeism and healthcare costs (American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2025). Incivility carries its own price: SHRM's latest Civility Index reports \$2.1 billion per day in reduced productivity due to disrespectful behavior at work.

The Legal Imperative

Beyond the need to prevent toxic workplace culture, the responsibility to protect employee wellbeing is now a global requirement. Nearly 100 countries have regulations mandating that employers identify and mitigate psychosocial risks such as bullying, isolation, and excessive workload: including Mexico, Chile, the UK, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and all EU member nations.

Failure to act can destroy psychological safety, leading to toxic relationships, low productivity, and high turnover. The organizations that succeed will be those that treat trust as both a moral and a legal mandate.

To learn more about how workplace stress varies across the globe, and what organizations can do, read the Psychosocial Risk by Geography Report [Here](#).

Summit Highlights

Featured sessions included:

- The Global State of Trust: Edelman Canada Interim CEO Scott Evans shared **findings from the Edelman Trust Barometer** and WPO data on where and why trust is breaking down and how to rebuild it.
- **The Hidden Risks of AI Adoption:** Insights on psychosocial risks tied to rapid digital transformation and how to implement AI responsibly.
- **How Incivility Undermines Trust:** The link between disrespect, burnout, and culture erosion.
- Peer Relationships as a Cornerstone of Engagement: How **Ambassador Programs scale trust** and strengthen psychological safety.

Missed the summit? [Click here to access the full recording](#)

To learn more about WPO's **peer-driven programs** and the Center for Organizational Effectiveness, **visit** consulting.workplaceoptions.com or contact WPOGlobalConsulting@workplaceoptions.com

Celebrating Authentic Leadership: Alan King Honored for Corporate Excellence

Workplace Options is proud to share that Alan King, President and CEO, has been recognized by the **Triangle Business Journal as part of the 2025 Corporate Leadership Awards**, an honor that celebrates leadership rooted in integrity, innovation, and a deep commitment to people.



Alan's leadership journey reflects both strategic vision and human connection.

Over the course of his career, he has led transformative milestones that continue to define WPO's global growth and purpose:

- **Redefined the company's business model**, aligning innovation with sustainable, people-centred growth.
- **Expanded internationally**, opening WPO's first office outside the U.S. and laying the foundation for a strong global presence.
- Built a **culture of trust and transparency**, where employees feel empowered, valued, and supported to achieve their best.

Alan's recognition underscores the power of authentic, **people-first leadership**, a hallmark of **WPO's mission to improve the well-being of individuals** and organizations around the world.

Discover how empathy and innovation continue to shape the future of leadership at Workplace Options. [Read more!](#)

LATEST RESOURCES:

Coming Soon! Supporting the Whole Person: Rethinking Cancer Care in the Workplace

In the **next Wellbeing at Work episode**, Sarah Wood, Vice President and General Manager of Emerging Solutions at Workplace Options, explores how organizations can better support employees navigating the cancer journey.

Traditional care often focuses on treatment, but true recovery goes far beyond the clinic. **Cancer Care Compass, Workplace Options' new holistic program**, offers a human-centred, clinically guided approach that supports employees from diagnosis to work-life reintegration.

Key highlights:

- **Dedicated Cancer Care Coordinator** – one clinically trained professional guiding each individual's journey.
- **Expert-led training** by renowned specialists Dr. Veronica Carey and Dr. Deborah Mukherji.
- **Whole-person support**, addressing emotional, vocational, and identity-based needs.

As Dr. Carey and Dr. Mukherji share their insights, one message stands out—recovery doesn't always mean the absence of illness; it's about **helping people live and work well with it**. Watch out for this inspiring podcast episode, **a must-listen for leaders shaping the future of employee wellbeing**. Follow the [Wellbeing at Work podcast](#) to be the first to hear the new episode.

Also, learn more about **WPO's Cancer Care Compass** today.

Investing in Prevention: A Smarter Way to Manage Rising Benefits Costs

As global benefits costs continue to climb, organisations are rethinking how to balance financial sustainability with employee well-being. A recent [Zurich Insurance article](#) highlights a growing trend: reinvesting **Employee Benefits (EB)** dividends into preventive health and well-being programmes to manage long-term costs more effectively.

Christian Mainguy, Senior Global Consultant at Workplace Options, underscores this shift, noting that prevention-based investment creates measurable value for both employees and employers.



Key insights include:

- Redirecting EB dividends toward **early interventions** can reduce overall claim costs.
- **Preventive programmes** strengthen workforce resilience and retention.
- Data from Zurich's research shows that well-being investment correlates with **long-term cost** control and **improved engagement**.

As Mainguy explains, organisations that prioritise prevention not only curb expenses but also build stronger, more **sustainable workforces**.

Explore Zurich's **full article** to understand how prevention-focused strategies are **reshaping employee benefits and driving measurable ROI**. [Read the full article](#).

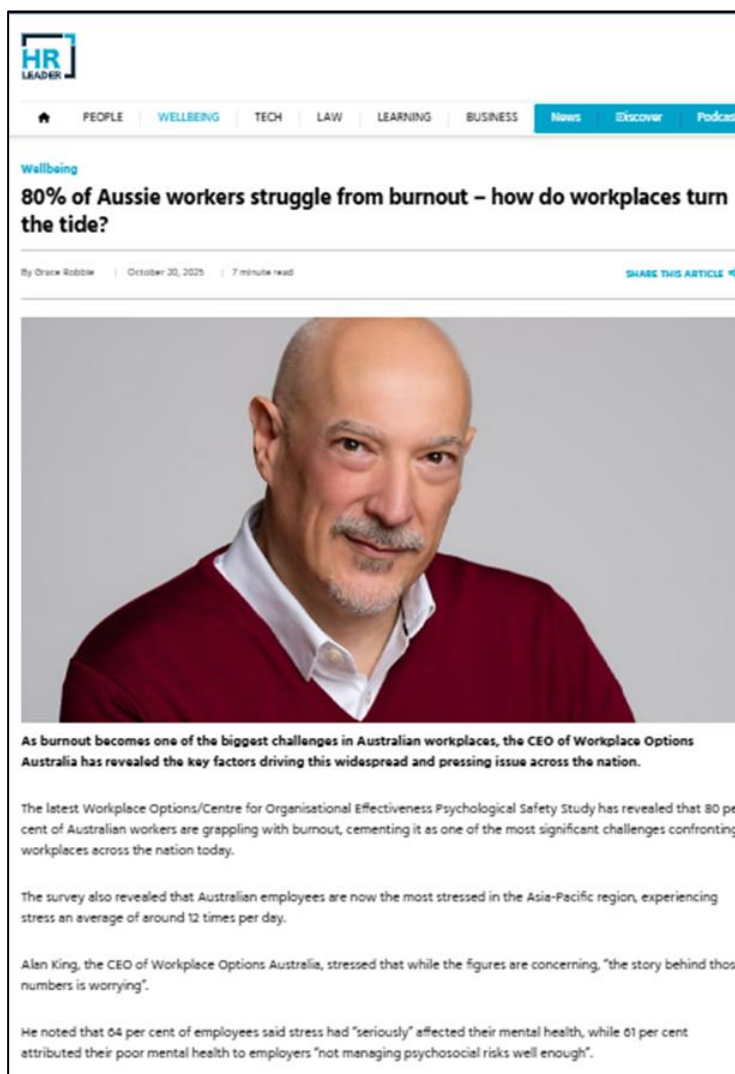
80% of Aussie workers struggle from burnout – how do workplaces turn the tide?

Burnout is emerging as one of the biggest challenges shaping today's workplaces. In fact, recent studies show that **80% of Australian employees are experiencing burnout**.

In a new **HR leader interview**, Workplace Options CEO Alan King unpacks the root causes of this crisis, in both Australia and globally, and shares **strategies to help organizations restore workplace wellbeing**.

He cautions that unmanaged psychosocial risks can quietly undermine both employee health and organisational culture:

"If organisations don't take psychosocial risks seriously, burnout will define workplace culture."



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Wellbeing

80% of Aussie workers struggle from burnout – how do workplaces turn the tide?

By Grace Robble | October 30, 2023 | 7 minute read

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As burnout becomes one of the biggest challenges in Australian workplaces, the CEO of Workplace Options Australia has revealed the key factors driving this widespread and pressing issue across the nation.

The latest Workplace Options/Centre for Organisational Effectiveness Psychological Safety Study has revealed that 80 per cent of Australian workers are grappling with burnout, cementing it as one of the most significant challenges confronting workplaces across the nation today.

The survey also revealed that Australian employees are now the most stressed in the Asia-Pacific region, experiencing stress an average of around 12 times per day.

Alan King, the CEO of Workplace Options Australia, stressed that while the figures are concerning, "the story behind those numbers is worrying".

He noted that 64 per cent of employees said stress had "seriously" affected their mental health, while 61 per cent attributed their poor mental health to employers "not managing psychosocial risks well enough".

Read the full HR Leader article to learn how leaders can address burnout at its source.

Thanks for reading.

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Have a topic suggestion or feedback? [**Email**](#) us today !