

## The wellbeing virtuous cycle

The business case for supporting employees' wellbeing beyond the workplace.

HRM Asia Newsroom May 2, 2025

Topics: [Employee Experience](#), [Features](#), [Flexible Work](#), [Health and Wellness](#), [Home Page - Features](#), [Leadership](#)



Every thoughtful leader agrees with what Craig Smith, then President of Marriott International and now CEO of Aimbridge Hospitality, shared during our book interview: “Develop caring friendships with your employees. During stressful times, they will do things for you that they would not do for the company.”

Smith captured a lasting truth. When employees feel genuinely cared for by their leaders and supported in their personal lives, they tend to bring more energy, loyalty, and contribution to the workplace.

Now, a groundbreaking meta-research involving over 161,000 employees has quantified profound findings: Organisations that genuinely care about employees' wellbeing at home gain substantial business advantages.

The [2025 study](#) by researchers at Georgia Institute of Technology, University of South Australia, and other institutions found that life satisfaction influences job satisfaction 32% more strongly than the reverse, transforming authentic employee care from a soft ideal into a hard business strategy.

This research validates what wise leaders have always understood: Caring about the whole person, not just the employee, creates reciprocal benefits that flow back to the organisation.

The researchers recommend that organisations adopt a “people-first” approach, investing in employees' broader wellbeing

through mental health support, work-life balance initiatives, and personal development programmes. This approach fosters a positive cycle where happiness in personal life enhances workplace engagement and satisfaction.

## **Supportive leadership strategies**

Leaders can transform their organisations by nurturing a reciprocal relationship with their teams. As Richard Branson wisely noted, “Take care of your employees, and they’ll take care of your business.” This philosophy anchors our small company’s culture through one simple principle: Health and Family First, no guilt, no anxiety, no explanations needed.

When team members or their loved ones face health challenges, we actively encourage time off. No one worries about operational gaps: openings, deliveries, or other responsibilities are seamlessly handled by colleagues who step in without hesitation. This collective commitment to personal wellbeing transcends hierarchy, with everyone demonstrating genuine concern through action.

The results are remarkable. Team members return refreshed and grateful, with renewed commitment. With personal priorities respected, they are primed to perform at their best and embrace learning opportunities. They catch up unprompted and become natural ambassadors for our culture. Our biggest challenge is often gently restraining their eagerness to return too quickly, a testament to their dedication.

## **Building a work-life balance culture**

### **1. Cultivate Emotional Intelligence**

Practice genuine empathy by mentally stepping into your team’s experiences. Listen attentively to ensure they feel truly heard and understood.

### **2. Embrace Family Commitments**

Create an environment that acknowledges and accommodates caregiving responsibilities and personal needs.

### **3. Implement Flexible Scheduling**

Offer adaptable hours and remote options to minimise stress and prevent burnout. Our approach includes brief daily check-ins: morning alignment on priorities and evening progress updates. This structure empowers everyone to manage their time like owners while meeting commitments.

### **4. Recognise Achievements Meaningfully**

Consistently acknowledge effort, mindset, and contributions. Celebrate incremental wins to build confidence, boost morale, and nurture intrinsic motivation that fuels further achievements and calculated risk-taking.

### **5. Prioritise Professional Growth**

Foster development through targeted mentorship and skill-building opportunities that invest in your team’s future capabilities.

## **The intertwined nature of work and life wellbeing**

Multiple research streams demonstrate how work and life domains profoundly influence each other. When properly managed, this interconnection creates an upward spiral of wellbeing that benefits both individuals and organisations.

### **1. The Spillover Effect**

Emotions and behaviours from one domain frequently transfer to the other (Bakker & Demerouti, 2013). Employees experiencing supportive relationships, autonomy, and purpose at work carry this positivity into their personal lives, enhancing overall happiness and reducing stress levels.

### **2. Resource Transfer**

Skills developed in one area become valuable assets in another (Hobfoll, 2001). The competencies we build professionally often strengthen our personal interactions, while life experiences enrich our workplace contributions.

### **3. Rejuvenation**

Proper recovery and recharging during personal time enables superior workplace performance (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Quality downtime is not just pleasant but essential for sustained professional excellence.

### **4. Caution About Negative Interactions**

Be aware that negative experiences can trigger psychological distress, anxiety disorders, and decreased satisfaction across all life domains. Excessive work demands or conflicts can infiltrate home life, creating emotional strain that diminishes both job performance and family satisfaction.

### **In closing**

When leaders care for the human, the professional flourishes. This is not a soft message wrapped in lavender. This is a business case written on loyalty, retention, innovation, and reputation. Support their lives. Watch what happens to your business.

---

#### **About the Author:**



*Avi Liran is an economist, author, humourist, writer, C-level mentor, and one of Asia's top motivational and inspirational keynote speakers. Avi is a thought leader and expert in creating delightful customer and employee experiences, positive cultures, fostering appreciation, and building authentic resilience.*

---