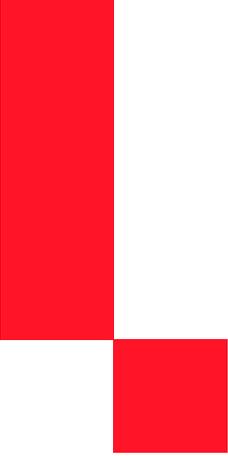




# An Employer's Guide to Preventing Burnout in the Workplace



**Great Place to Work® is the global authority on workplace culture. We are built on the belief that great employee experiences are better for people, for business and for the world.**

**Each year our comprehensive Trust Index™ survey collects data from millions of employees across the globe to uncover data and insights on what makes a workplace great.**

**We also recognise employers who create an outstanding employee experience through Great Place To Work Certification™ - a two-step process that includes surveying employees and completing a short company culture questionnaire.**

**Because employee feedback and independent analysis determine the scores, Certification helps job seekers identify which companies genuinely offer a great company culture.**

**Certification gives employers a recruiting advantage by providing a globally recognised and research-backed verification of great employee experience.**





UK workplaces  
are facing  
a burnout  
pandemic.

# 53% of UK staff experience excessive stress due to the demands of their job.

That's over half of the workforce. And as the public continue to navigate through a cost of living crisis, this statistic is **bound to get worse**.

**Now is the time** for employers to address the burnout pandemic spreading through UK workplaces. Not just for the sake of employee wellbeing, but **for the sake of their bottom line**.

## What causes burnout?

Burnout is 'a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion brought on by prolonged or intense stress'. In the workplace, the **most common culprits** of burnout are:

- **Unfair treatment**
- **Unmanageable workload**
- **Lack of role clarity**
- **Lack of communication and support from managers**
- **Unreasonable time pressure**

As burnout is a complex situation, **it cannot simply be 'fixed'** once it occurs. It can take weeks, months, or even years for employees to recover from burnout.

## Why should employers be concerned?

Stress in the workplace is directly correlated with absenteeism and presenteeism, lower productivity, financial waste, and poor customer service – **all of which can impact your bottom line**.

What's worse is, much like a fire, **job burnout can spread to other employees**. If left unmanaged, stress-related issues have the power to destroy the foundations of a once thriving workforce.



Job burnout  
is **everyone's**  
responsibility.

# "Studies show that UK employers are losing around £45 billion and 17 million working days due to employees' stress, depression and anxiety."

Sara Silvonon, Senior Consultant & Wellbeing Lead at Great Place To Work UK

It's easy to assume that responsibility for managing burnout lies with the individual, but researchers from the **University of California** suggest otherwise.

Burnout expert **Christina Maslach** uses the 'canary in a coalmine' analogy to describe what happens to employees in unhealthy workplaces. In its simplest form, the environment causes the sickness, not the individual. To prevent their employees from turning into 'canaries', **organisations have a responsibility to reduce workplace stresses** wherever possible.

## Employees that feel valued create value

Implementing strategies that foster a positive work environment has proven to be mutually beneficial. Research shows that companies who take an 'employee-first' approach **enjoy increased profits and higher levels of productivity** year on year. One study, which sampled an equal-weighted portfolio of companies ranked the 'Best' between 1984–2020, found that these organisations earned an excess return of **2%-2.7% per year**.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, workplaces that prioritise their employees may also **experience lower turnover rates**. Our data reveals that **85% of employees** at Great Place To Work Certified companies **want to work there for a long time**, compared to the **UK average of 61%**.



Preventing  
burnout is easier  
than fighting it.

# The problem? It can be hard to know where to start.

Luckily, we're here to help.

As the global authority on workplace culture, we have surveyed more than 100 million employees around the world and used those deep insights to define what makes a great workplace.

Here are 3 ways Great Place To Work® Certified™ companies across the globe tackle the threat of burnout in their workplaces:



## 1. Communicate with employees regularly

Lack of communication and support from management is a key cause of employee burnout.

In our 2023 population study, **55% of UK employees** agreed that 'management involves people in decisions that affect their jobs or work environment'. This leaves **almost half of the workforce** feeling out of loop.

One way to measure how your employees are feeling and open up a two-way flow of communication is through **pulse surveys**. These surveys provide invaluable data on what's going well and not so well, giving leadership the opportunity to nip problems in the bud before they become a major cause for concern.

US-Certified BioPharma company, **Merck**, uses Great Place To Work pulse surveys to understand employees' feelings, challenges, and needs. The company is able to identify key issues from the results and provide targeted support. This care and consideration can make the world of difference to the employee experience - it's no wonder that **88% of Merck employees** agree it's a great place to work!



## 2. Prioritise employee wellbeing

In the UK, **45% of UK employees** don't think their organisation genuinely prioritises employee wellbeing, and **40% wouldn't feel comfortable** speaking up about personal wellbeing issues affecting them at work.

When employees feel unable to express themselves at work, **small anxieties and frustrations can easily snowball** into larger wellbeing issues. These problems can negatively impact employee satisfaction, productivity, and ultimately, business performance. Perhaps unsurprisingly, research into the correlation between employee satisfaction and long-term stock returns noted that **top-performing companies had extremely high levels of trust.**

Examples of how organisations can show employees their wellbeing is a priority include:

- **Providing ungated access to wellbeing resources**
- **Ensuring balanced and fair workloads**
- **Trusting employees to do their jobs without micromanaging**
- **Involving staff in decisions that affect them**
- **Celebrating special events and milestones**
- **Offering flexible working arrangements**

### 3. Build a sense of purpose in the workplace

There are 31.8 million employees in the UK. But how many are fulfilled by their role?

We'll let you in on a secret: **it's not that many.**

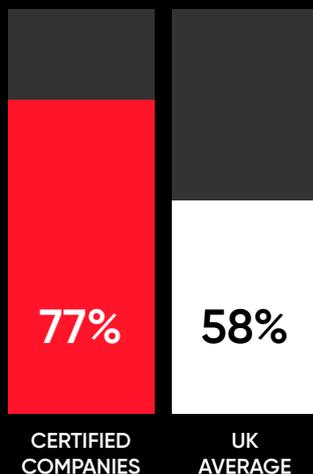
**Almost half (42%) of UK employees** feel their work has 'no special meaning'. This translates into around 13.4 million people - enough to fill Wembley Stadium 150 times over. When employees lack fulfilment, they are **more likely to experience stress-related illnesses** such as anxiety, depression, and burnout. They also tend to be less engaged and less motivated.

**Creating a strong sense of purpose** in the workplace can pave the way for employee fulfilment. Studies show that employees who feel fulfilled in their roles have **better wellbeing levels**, are **more productive**, and **stay at their companies longer**.

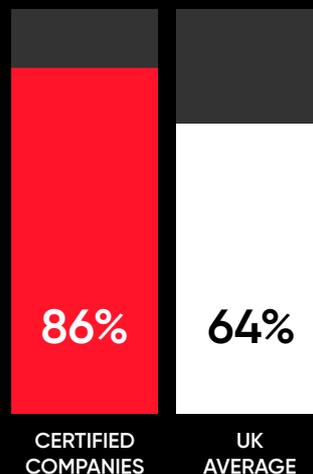
The way companies build their sense of purpose is largely dependent on the organisation. For **Steve Murphy**, Senior Vice President EMEA at Best Workplace **Tanium**, it's about truly living your values. *"A value such as 'doing the right thing' means much more than how we work with each other. It permeates through the technology we deliver and how we support customers... our values help ensure that employees feel safe, supported, respected and, ultimately, inspired by what they are doing at work."*

### How do **Certified companies** measure up against the average UK workplace?

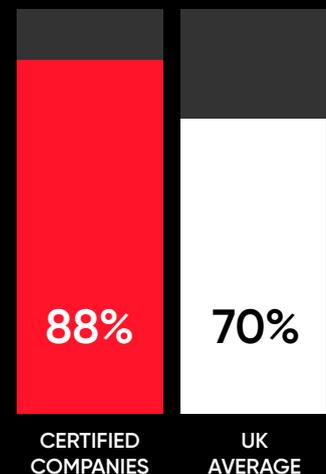
*My work has special meaning: this is not "just a job"*



*I get empathy and support from my manager/supervisor when needed*



*Management trusts people to do a good job without watching over their shoulders.*





**“If employers wish to improve their talent attraction and retention, they must recognise the importance of employee wellbeing, and put in place measures that help individuals safeguard against chronic stress, so that they (and the company they work for) can thrive.”**

Sara Silvonon, Senior Consultant & Wellbeing Lead at Great Place To Work UK

# Predict and prevent burnout with Great Place To Work.

Employee feedback is what **forms the heart of Great Place To Work**. It is this feedback that helps companies understand what elements of the workplace experience they excel in and where they could improve.

If you are not yet a Great Place To Work customer and would like to understand whether your staff are at risk of burnout, **we invite you to gather employee feedback** via our Trust Index™ Survey.

This is your opportunity to **gain crucial insights about your workplace** and set the foundation for becoming a Great Place To Work Certified company. Discover how our **proprietary tools, comprehensive data, and supportive community** can transform your workplace.

**You never know, you could even become a UK's Best Workplace.**

## Sources

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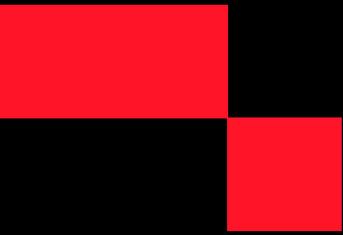
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*Wigert and Agrawal (2018) Employee Burnout, Part 1: The 5 Main Causes*



# Outshine the competition as a **Best Workplace™** in your sector

A magnetic employer brand attracts exceptional talent. Enhance your recruitment and retention efforts by prominently showcasing your status as a UK's Best Workplace in your respective field.

## Are you eligible?

Survey your workforce and become Great Place To Work® Certified by **July 19th** to ensure your organisation is eligible for the 2024 UK's Best Workplaces sector lists.

