Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a popular term at the moment. To some its meaning is obvious, whilst to others it is less clear. So what is wellbeing and is it relevant to companies and their employees? ***Express Medicals'*** *DAN HEGARTY examines these questions*

When thinking about the wellbeing of children the majority of adults have an in-built understanding of what needs to be done to ensure that a child has a feeling of wellbeing. I asked some of our own staff about children and wellbeing. Here are a selection of responses:

- "Children need nourishment. Good wholesome food"
- "They must get lots of stimulation – play, learning, sports and exercise"
- "You must challenge their minds through puzzles, quizzes and learning"
- "Kids must get regular sleep"
- "Children need lots of affection"
- "Kids need loads of praise. They need to feel special"
- "They must have friends and play-mates. Then they can have fun and learn how to mix, share and give-and-take"
- "Kids need constant encouragement and reassurance"
- "Children need to feel physically and emotionally safe. They should not be frightened to express themselves so that they grow up confidently"
- "Children need boundaries, discipline, routines and good habits".

It is not difficult to see how some of the above comments have relevance to us as adult workers. Here are a couple of dictionary definitions of wellbeing:

- ***Wellbeing*** is a contented state of being happy, healthy and prosperous.
- ***Wellbeing*** is a satisfactory state that someone or something should be in that involves such things as being happy, healthy, safe and having enough money to gain peace.

I asked some of the staff at Express Medicals what wellbeing meant to them? Whilst there were a variety of ideas, there was a common theme. Wellbeing seems to be about the individual person. "It's about **me**!" Here are some of the suggestions:

- "Wellbeing is about a good body / mind connection. The mind and body working well"
- "Wellbeing means to me looking after the physical and mental health of individual people"
- "Wellbeing means the general health of somebody. It is their physical and mental health"
- "Wellbeing signifies that you feel good about yourself. It is about being contented with the quality of your own life"
- "Wellbeing means thinking about the things that affect an individual in his or her life. People need to be happy at home and work. They need happy social lives"
- "It's about me. It's about feeling valued, safe and cared for. If I have wellbeing then I feel good about myself".

It is my own view that all adult workers require to be 'nurtured'. Whilst we may need to work under contracts and within various boundaries, according to our sectors of work and job roles, we all share core human needs. It is surely not surprising that the most productive employees are likely to have a sense of wellbeing in their lives. If I look at myself, then I believe that I need the same things as all others in our company. In order to function at my very best I need to feel good about myself. And so I need the following:

A) To feel emotionally contented

B) To be physically fit

C) To enjoy good relationships with work colleagues and also with family & friends outside the workplace. Some fun and laughter are essential

D) To gain some satisfaction, stimulation and fulfilment from my work

E) To feel 'valued' by colleagues and others that I meet. A sensation that my work is worthwhile and contributes to my personal success and the progress of Express Medicals

F) To earn a salary so that I can pay bills, put something aside for 'rainy days' and do some fun things, too

G) I like to feel safe at work.

One aspect of a 'good' employer is that the company understands the significance of this concept of wellbeing. Although we are adults we do, nonetheless, require some 'nurturing'. All employees wish to feel safe, secure and valued. If the workforce has a 'feelgood' factor about it, so the energy of the company will be boosted to positively affect its bottom line success. By implementing a programme of wellbeing services the senior management sends a clear message that the workforce is valued by the bosses.

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