

# What it takes to create a culture of belonging



The concept of what makes a thriving workplace culture has evolved dramatically, but one thing has remained consistent – employees want to feel they belong at their company regardless of level or work location. **Is your current wellbeing program positioned to meet their expectations?**

At [Thrive Summit 2022](#), we asked successful organizations to share how they created a culture of belonging – here are the five key elements they shared.

## 1 Wellbeing starts on day one

Employees who feel welcomed and see others whose behaviors align with organizational values help new team members experience an initial sense of belonging.



**Tips:**

- Add an on-site wellness coordinator or champion to the list of people to meet during onboarding – don't leave it to chance!
- Encourage new employees to begin a healthy habit challenge (fresh air, what did you learn, staying safe, etc.) to build community and support positive behaviors.
- And more, see all tips and a full checklist in the [Guide to Inclusive Remote Onboarding](#)

## 2 Employees must feel included

At an early age, we learn inclusion is an experience of being valued and accepted without reservation. When employees feel included, they are not only more likely to stay but also experience higher levels of productivity, all of which are organizationally beneficial.

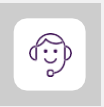


**Tips:**

- Every organization shared its commitment to employee-led communities to help shape future experiences. From employee resource groups (ERGs) to communities of practice, these organizations focused on supporting groups that allow employees from a variety of backgrounds to find a community of like-minded individuals within the organization, fostering feelings of acceptance, and providing a voice for change. ERGs are particularly helpful for global or dispersed organizations.
- Move fast from wellness to wellbeing – you really can't wait. Many organizations have the first part, biometrics or HRA, but lack the ongoing touchpoints and engagement needed to help employees feel cared for – **is it time to make the change to wellbeing?**

## 3 People need people to help guide or show what's possible

Digital tools are an essential part of a modernized offering, but people crave, prefer, and need the ability to interact with a human too. Managers are an important piece of the puzzle in ensuring employees feel a deep, personal sense of support. Wellbeing coordinators, champions, health coaches, and benefits guides complete the whole-person experience.



**Tips:**

- Normalize asking 'how are you?' & engaging in conversation.
- Focusing only on diversity and inclusion isn't enough to keep your employees engaged. Employees of all backgrounds need personalized support to develop inclusive behaviors, build healthy habits, and help employees work through what is holding them back.

## 4 Make it personal

Creating a culture of belonging can not be sustained in a transactional relationship – that's why single-focused employee engagement, health, wellbeing, and benefits navigation solutions fail. Organizations building inclusive cultures of care know the power of personalization to move from comfort to connection to contribution.

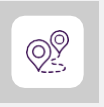


**Tips:**

- Share personal stories to model inclusive behavior.
- Choose a whole-person wellbeing program that reflects your workforce, built on sustained engagement – being invited in, over and over again – language matters, diverse images matter, and evidence-based content matters.

## 5 Establish a sense of psychological safety

Now that work and life are fully integrated, its critical employees have a sense of connection and community to remain engaged. Fostering relationships helps establish and maintain a sense of psychological safety and wellbeing.



**Tips:**

- Encourage social groups and promote events through your wellbeing program to reinforce a place of belonging that isn't tied to a laptop.
- Host monthly lunch & learns across diverse topics.
- Make your HR tech stack accessible – benefits and programs hidden in SharePoint aren't likely accessible to your entire population

## We're here to help!

You don't have to do all of this alone. Wellbeing needs have changed significantly. Your offering needs to evolve in order to create an experience that your employees will love and use daily.

At Virgin Pulse, we believe the time is now to improve health, wellbeing, and culture, gain a competitive edge and inspire hope with an innovative and strategic partnership. [Connect with a Virgin Pulse expert to learn more.](#)

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