4

ways workload affects well-being

Calm **Business**

Limited flexibility

Heightened work demands

High managerial expectations

Poor employee health
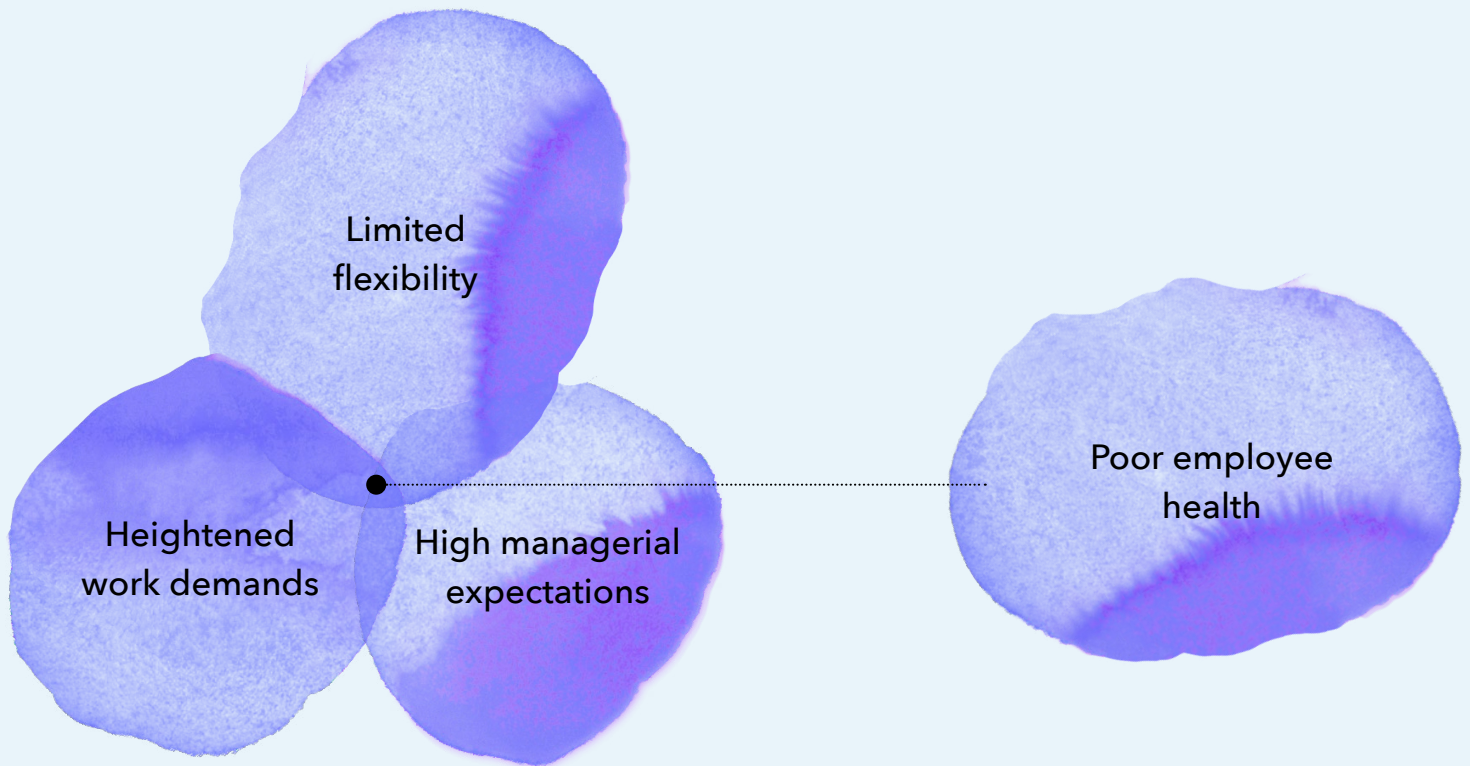
Workload and well-being are directly related. When employees are regularly overworked, their health can suffer. In fact, increased work demands is the second most common reason for employees' general decline in well-being.

An employee's workload affects four essential areas of their health

Mental health

Overworked employees are more likely to deal with mental fatigue, exhaustion, and stress. Seventy-six percent of employees agree that workplace stress affects their mental health, and can lead to depression or anxiety[2], and 46% of employees say being overworked is a key contributor to burnout.[3]

[2]Mental Health America Survey: Mental Health in the Workplace, FlexJobs, 2020.
[3]Anatomy of Work Index 2021, Asana, 2021.

Physical health

When employees work long hours, they don't have as much time to exercise, sleep, and prepare healthy meals. Compared to people who work 35 to 40 hours a week, people who work 55 or more hours a week have a 35% higher risk of stroke and a 17% higher risk of dying from ischemic heart disease.[4]

[4]Long working hours increasing deaths from heart disease and stroke: WHO, ILO, World Health Organization, May 17, 2021.

Social health

When employees have too much work on their plates, they may not have enough energy for family commitments, social activities, or alone time.

Emotional health

Overworked employees might feel less valued and more scrutinized than their peers. This could lead to decreased productivity at work, lower self-esteem, and poor job performance.

A reasonable workload is the #1 one mitigator of stress and burnout, and the #3 mitigator of depression.

Adjusting employee workloads can reduce stress and improve overall well-being.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution to managing work volume, but re-examining company-wide expectations and re-distributing workloads can create happier, healthier employees.

3

steps to modifying the employee workload

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1. Identify problems
2. Enact organizational changes
3. Enlist more support

1

Identify problem

1

Survey employees

Understanding how employees feel about their workloads is vital to correcting issues.

2

Meet with executives or managers

Hold one-on-one meetings with leadership to discuss company goals and benchmarks.

3

Analyze company data

Reviewing numbers around job performance, output, project timelines, and employee satisfaction can give you more insight into employee effectiveness and efficiency.

4

Review internal systems

Observe a handful of different projects from start to finish. Assess the various stages of the workflow to see where employees run into problems because of slow approval times, gaps in oversight, clunky software, or other obstacles.

2 Enact organizational changes

1

Train management

Teach company leaders how to prioritize projects, set accurate expectations, delegate tasks to maximize efficiency, and assign work more fairly.

2

Increase feedback and acknowledgement

Encouraging and validating employees can incentivize them to work more efficiently, while offering constructive feedback can help employees increase output.

3

Offer more flexibility

Give employees more ways to balance their workloads. Think: customizable work hours or telecommuting options.

4

Encourage check-ins

Regularly check in with employees to assess their workloads and offer help.

3   Enlist more support

1

Re-allocate resources

Consider hiring additional full-time employees
to balance employee workloads,
or look for opportunities to outsource
tasks or bring on contractors.

2

Offer practical
wellness support

Calm's mental wellness platform gives
employees tools to minimize stress, score
better sleep, and practice mindfulness.

3

Adopt new technology

Certain workplace tools can help facilitate
communication, streamline workflows,
and cut down on tedious manual tasks.

4

Bolster HR

Brainstorm ways to better support employees
who are overwhelmed or approaching burnout.
You could distribute a guide to navigating burnout
or implement an open-door policy so employees
feel comfortable turning to HR for help.

Want to learn more about employee well-being?

[Download](#) Calm's comprehensive guide to improving mental health in the workplace.

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