



Health is cool!

Health is Cool! Volume 3: 2008 Survey
on Canadian Attitudes Towards
Physical and Mental Health






Highlights

Part 1



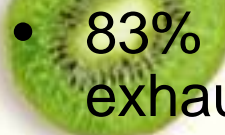

A cluster of fresh kiwi slices in the top-left corner, showing the green flesh and black seeds. One slice is cut into a ring shape.

Stress

- While two out of five (38%) Canadians say their level of stress has remained constant over the past year, one-third (33%) say it has increased.
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Presenteeism and Mental Health Trade-offs

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- 83% of workers report having shown up for work though exhausted or sick.
 - The main reasons for presenteeism include:
 - looming deadlines (61%);
 - preventing workload pile-up (55%);
 - not wanting their colleagues to be overloaded (49%);
 - concern about missing work being frowned upon (41%);and
 - simply not being able to afford the missed income (40%).
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Presenteeism and Mental Health Trade-offs

- Most workers believe that people should not be working when physically (93%) or psychologically (91%) unwell.
 - Nine out of ten workers (89%) also believe that the incidence of stress-related mental health problems such as burn-out, depression and anxiety has been increasing over the years.
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Presenteeism and Mental Health Trade-offs

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- 85% of workers agree that the work environment is increasingly stressful.
 - Three-quarters of workers agree with the statements that workers today do not receive adequate recognition from their employers (75%) and that workers today are overworked (74%).
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Presenteeism and Mental Health Trade-offs

- 65% of workers say they participate less and less in decisions that involve their work.
 - Three out of five workers agree that workers today do too much for their employers (61%) and that workers today have difficult relationships with their bosses (60%).
 - Over half of workers (55%) say workers have less and less human contact with co-workers and supervisors.
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Presenteeism and Mental Health Trade-offs

- When asked about the compromises they would be willing to make for the sake of mental health:
 - 86% say they would take several weeks or months off work to help a family member with a mental health problem;
 - 72% say they would insist that the employer respect their limits, even at the risk of losing their jobs;
 - 67% say they would decline a promotion or refuse additional responsibilities if more hours were involved;
 - 53% say they would be willing to earn less money in order to work fewer hours.
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Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions of Management Attitudes

- 65% of workers say that their employer's senior management takes care of employee wellness.
 - The two main reasons for employees feeling their management takes care of employee wellness are access to attractive benefits packages (41%) and management being ready to listen or open to discussion (39%).
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A cluster of fresh kiwi slices in the top-left corner, showing the green flesh and black seeds. One slice is cut into a ring, showing the hollow center.

Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions of Management Attitudes

- Over two-thirds (68%) of today's employees say they would feel comfortable talking to their supervisors if they were to have a major mental health problem.
 - Confidentiality (23%) and fear of being judged (21%) are the main reasons why some employees say they would not be comfortable talking to their immediate supervisors.
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Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions of Management Attitudes

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- 67% of employees feel that, in their workplace, each employee is personally responsible for preserving his or her mental health.
 - 21% see this as a collective worker responsibility while 7% say the responsibility is shared by management and employees.
 - Only 5% attribute this responsibility to the employer alone.
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Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions among Peers

- 84% disagree with the statement that workers who miss work due to mental health problems are just trying to get a paid vacation.
 - 55% of the Canadian workforce has been in the situation of having a co-worker miss work for a period of time because of a mental health problem.
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Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions among Peers

- Among workers who have had a co-worker take a leave from work for mental health reasons:
 - 82% say this has made them more sensitive to acting in a way that promotes mental health in the workplace
 - 81% say this has made them more sensitive to the mental health of those around them
 - 68% say they have, as a result, become more sensitive to their own mental health
 - 35% admit that they've sometimes wondered whether these people are really ill;
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Mental Health Problems and the Workplace: Perceptions among Peers

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- 34% say they feel uncomfortable talking about mental health issues to colleagues who have taken a mental health leave;
 - 30% admit to having doubts about these workers' abilities when they return to work;
 - 21% say they have sometimes felt guilty for doubting that colleagues who have taken mental health leaves were truly ill; and
 - 5% admit to feeling anger towards their colleagues who have taken mental health leaves.
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