



Session	A Holistic Approach to Employee Wellbeing in India
Speakers	Hrishi Sudeep, Sakshi Handa

Hrishi	<p>Hello everyone and a warm welcome to all of you on this session, which is “A Holistic Approach to Employee Wellbeing in India.” My name is Hrishi and I’m part of Accenture and I drive what we refer to as Talent Strategy internally. And in this specific role I am responsible for the employee wellbeing, what we call as an umbrella initiative, under Truly Human to promote innovative thinking and agility in mindset. And I believe as far as the topic is concerned of Employee Wellbeing, it has gained momentum in recent years. What actually started off as just about a single dimensional view of what are the physical aspects that we have to take care of, has now morphed itself and it has lent itself to a different kind of interpretation. Now in order to kickstart the proceedings, I would also like to introduce the two panelists that we have. They represent firms who do some very progressive and superlative work around emotional wellbeing, around employee wellbeing, and I would like to introduce first, Sakshi. Sakshi Handa is one of our panelists. She is the HR Head for Supply Chain South Asia for Unilever. She is responsible for leading and shaping the HR agenda for roughly around 1700 employees and she’s also a member of the Supply Chain Leadership Team and the HR Leadership Team and she provides end-to-end HR support through active business partnering and leading a team of HR professionals. Interestingly, Sakshi also leads the robust Wellbeing Agenda for Unilever South Asia. So that’s Sakshi for you.</p>
Sakshi	Thanks for the introduction, Hrishi.
Hrishi	Thanks, Sakshi, and welcome to the forum.
Sakshi	My pleasure.
Hrishi	Our other panelist this afternoon is Sudeep and Sudeep is part of GSK. He’s the Country HR Head for GSK Consumer Healthcare India. Sudeep is an HR leader with over 16 years of experience across different industries like IT, BPO, and FMCG. And in his role as HR Head, Sudeep has played a



	<p>wide variety of roles and his key role right now is to drive the Health and Wellbeing Agenda for GSK Consumer Health Employees, including both pan-India and really certain customised initiatives as well. So Sudeep, welcome to the forum.</p>
Sudeep	<p>Thank you. Good to be here.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Great. Alright, so I think what we will do is that we will have a couple of, I would say, themes, on which we will elicit responses from both Sakshi and Sudeep, and I would request all the participants to keep their questions and hold on to their questions right till the end. We have budgeted time for questions and answers as well, and once we get to the end of this session, I think we'll devote 15 minutes to ask our experts here on the topic of employee wellbeing in India. So just to get kick-started, I would like to just ask some questions, and maybe I'll just come to each one of you after that Sudeep and Sakshi.</p> <p>The question is, how does your organisation define employee wellbeing? So that's the first part of it. The second is, why would it make really, I would say, why is it really gaining importance, or why is it that over the last couple of years we see a huge amount of momentum of companies focusing on employee wellbeing? So, I think we can start with Sakshi, and then we can come to Sudeep.</p>
Sakshi	<p>Sure, thanks Hrishi. I'll answer your first question first. So how does our company define wellbeing? Unilever looks at wellbeing as a holistic approach, you know, they look at wellbeing in all possible dimensions or possible aspects. Starting with physical wellbeing, you know, your physical state of being. You should be healthy, you should be eating good, you should be feeling healthy, you should be feeling happy. That's the first part. Then, you know, looking at the second dimension, which is mental wellbeing. You should be in a stable state of mind, you should bring your 100% to work, you should be free of all sorts of mental worries and shackles at work, and therefore you should be able to give your 100% when you are in your organisation. The third aspect is emotional wellbeing, and you know, this is often underplayed</p>



	<p>in organisations, but the way we look at it, we think it's a very very important part of a person's personality. You know, whether the person is at work or at home, they need to be emotionally stable, and you know, it's a big big contributor in actually, you know, the success of a person if well taken care of. And the fourth dimension, which is very dear to my heart personally, is purposeful wellbeing which is really about seeking bigger meaning, you know, going above your job, going above your daily responsibilities, being a more holistic person who reaches out and gives out to the society at large, who does things beyond themselves, and you know, brings their true purpose to work. That's the way we define wellbeing. So very clearly there are 4 pillars, there's physical, there's mental, there's emotional, and there's purposeful. There's also a fifth leg which has recently gotten added and that is about financial wellbeing, and we are very consciously looking at financial wellbeing as another important aspect of a holistic wellbeing approach, and maybe we can talk about that a little later. But yes, so we do look at a 360-degree approach to wellbeing in that sense. To answer your second question on why this is gaining importance now, you know, my answer would be there was never a good or a bad time to look at wellbeing. Actually, it should be looked at right from the beginning, right from the time the employee joins the organisation. You know, it's like a full employee life cycle in that sense, and Unilever as an organisation as always looked at wellbeing. Maybe they didn't spell it out so clearly a decade ago or something, but currently, you know, the philosophy is very clearly that if you want employees to give their 100% to work, if you want to become the big audacious, you know if you want to achieve your big audacious goals, your growth goals, you need to have committed employees, healthy employees, happy employees. And if you're employees are not healthy and happy, they will definitely not be productive, so that's the thought process.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Excellent. I think that's really music to ears about how Unilever is approaching the entire concept of employee wellbeing. So, thanks a lot, Sakshi. We'll really go on to Sudeep now and maybe take his point of view on how does GSK really conceptualises and looks at employee wellbeing</p>



	and obviously about how does really the concept gains its momentum in the last couple of years in India.
Sudeep	<p>Sure. So, I think for GSK, it's kind of inherent in our mission. Our mission is about helping people do more, feel better, and live longer, right? And that's what we describe as our mission as we reach out to millions of consumers and patients all over the world. So very simply put, we apply the same mission internally as well, and that's why for GSK, employee health and wellbeing has been pretty much been an integral part of our business and our people strategy for quite a while, so it's not something new. But I think what we have seen, definitely, is from an employee point of view, a lot more interest in this area than there has been at any time before, and obviously there are plenty of factors that contribute to that. You know, the workplace is changing, the world is changing. There's obviously increased stress upon employees in many ways, right, and across all our people everywhere. Also, if you think about it, the work-life integration is at an all-time high. The earlier compartmentalisation that people used to have between work and life has gone away. And therefore, from a workplace, employees pretty much expect the same fulfilment of needs that they would expect from life overall, which would include not just basic hygiene needs of living, but whether it be social, emotional, or health needs. So, I think, even from an HR point of view, we used to focus a lot more on the social aspect a little while ago and traditional "engagement programmes," but I think as you address the changing demographic, as you address the changing needs of our workforce, the health and wellbeing agenda is becoming quite central to HR strategy. I think not just in GSK, where like I said it's been embedded for a long time, but I think I see it across industries, across companies everywhere.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Great. I think that makes perfect sense, and maybe I think while both of you have answered this question in some bit, and in some part, but I'm just trying to relate because most of the initiatives that we try and drive in an enterprise are always aligned to the kind of business goals that we want to achieve.</p>



	<p>In your view, and I am maybe coming to you first Sudeep, because you just answered this question and then maybe I'll move on to Sakshi, how do you think it makes a good business case for really investing in employee wellbeing? And how do you really create or craft a, see because what the intent of asking this question is that while there are certain progressive organisations out there who would have had definitely employee wellbeing, the employee wellbeing agenda is fairly well defined, but I'm also mindful of the fact that there could be some of our viewers today on this panel, who are watching this, and if they want to really start off something, how do they actually go about making a business case out of it, because it is important that the business understands that employee wellbeing is crucial for the enterprise's success.</p>
<p>Sudeep</p>	<p>Yeah, I think there's a couple of things. One, from a purely GSK point of view, like I said, it's embedded in our business purpose. As a healthcare organisation, if our mission is to make people, like I said, you know help people do more, feel better, live longer, it just makes sense to the imply it in the key aspect. But I think that would hold true across industries and across organisations, too, because the expectations from the workforce are changing and therein lies your business case. I mean I'll give you an example, you know at GSK, we roll out these surveys like most other organisations do, and we roll them annually or 6-monthly on a regular basis, right? And one of the questions that has assumed a lot more importance now, as opposed to earlier, is a question specifically on health and wellbeing, and it is an important part of our engagement strategy. And thankfully, that's a question which we have constantly got rated high on and our employees believe that GSK does a lot to kind of do that, but if there are pockets, and there are, where the scores are not that high, it's important that we listen to them and do something about it, because like I said, employees are no longer looking at their workplace to just satisfy one specific pocket of their needs. They are looking at organisations to satisfy a multitude of needs, and I think if the other parts of those needs are not met, whether it be emotional needs or needs around health and wellbeing, then we will see the impact on engagement, and to Sakshi's point earlier, on productivity and attrition as well. So, I mean to</p>



	<p>me, that's a very logical business to include it. And the second thing that I think would help any organisation that is starting out on its journey is that unlike a lot of other things, honestly health and wellbeing does not require that much of initial monetary investment all the time, right? There are a lot of low hanging fruits that you can take up. What it requires, though, is intent. If the intent is right, and if people are committed, the leadership and the HR teams are committed, then there's a lot that can be done. You don't necessarily need to scale up your monetary investment, at least not initially, as you're trying to start on this agenda, so that would be my advice in that point as well.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Well, thanks a lot. I think that's wonderful to hear. And Sakshi to you, I think you've already articulated, but just to reiterate the business case, I think that'll be helpful.</p>
<p>Sakshi</p>	<p>Right. Thanks, Hrishi. I think it's a really relevant question and I think Sudeep also answered it very very to the point. You know, the business case is actually very simple and very direct. Unilever is changing. It's growing rapidly. So, the jobs are actually getting bigger and bigger by the day. And the teams, contrary to the jobs, are actually getting smaller and smaller, you know, because we are looking at optimising our efficiencies. So, we are in a scenario where the company is growing rapidly, the KPI's are extremely ambitious, the team sizes are getting smaller, there is a matrix organisation, you have multiple bosses that you report to, you have your direct line boss, your indirect line boss, you know, a gentleman sitting in England looking at you, all sorts of things. You have a matrix organisation that you need to manage. There are, you know, workplace pressures. There are all sorts of pressures that come with high growth organisation. And in such a scenario, you know you have your set of people, your set of employees, who are very much at the centre of your business. They are grappling with their own set of issues and, you know, these issues are actually common to everybody, to the entire workforce across industries, you know? Lifestyle diseases are increasing rapidly. You do have chronic ailments, you know, blood pressure, you have heart diseases, all sorts of ailments which are actually creeping into our workforce because of the lifestyle that we're leading. So, in</p>



	<p>the middle of, you know, high growth agenda, you have these challenges of lifestyle diseases, of an aging population, of the actual work span, or the work life, the retirement age is something, hardly anybody at this day and age retires at 60. You see people actually leaving the workforce much much earlier. So, you do have those sort of external pressures and challenges as well. And the result of this entire concoction that I just spoke about is a perfect recipe for employee burnout. Now you can't be a high growth organisation with an employee burnout staring at you in the face, you know? It's just completely opposite to where you want to be, and therefore the business is very clear. You need to have employees who are energetic, who are physically, mentally, emotionally stable, and are out there to give their best. And, of course, you know, wellbeing, again I agree with Sudeep, that it's not a very, you know, it's a low hanging fruit in that sense. You don't need too much of monetary investment in doing something like this. What you definitely need is leadership commitment, and we have that on board. We absolutely measure it. So, we also have an engagement survey in which we actually call this out as one of the engagement dimensions, and we track our progress on it year on year. You know, this is absolutely a non-negotiable for us, you know, our employees must feel that they're taken care of; they must feel that their wellbeing is important; and the movement on that particular dimension of engagement must only go up. So that's the way we look at it.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Great, thanks a lot Sakshi. Thanks for the response, and I think we'll shift tracks here a little bit and we will now look at how exactly has the evolution of employee wellbeing happened in the last couple of years. I remember a couple of, maybe about a decade or so, we had heard, and maybe Sudeep and Sakshi, you'll remember the earlier days, when we heard about things like work-life balance and that seemed like a great idea, that you know somewhere, you have work, and you have life, and you have to balance it out and you had lot of imageries in our mind going around work-life balance. And then we also talked about flexible working, but I think now the approach has again moved quite a bit to an employee's physical, emotional wellbeing as well, and I would really want</p>



	<p>to pick your thoughts on, Sakshi first you, and then Sudeep. As far as flexible work arrangements are concerned, there seem to be a stereotype that it is mostly for women employees and for returning mothers, so that there could be some kind of a flexibility that can be provided and maybe that can also assimilate them back into the workforce, you know, some kind of a notion around it. But now are seeing an increasingly, a trend, a complete shift where, you know, one is looking at flexible working arrangements.</p> <p>Now I understand that Unilever has got a fantastic policy around it, which is very progressive and industry-leading. Would you really want to share some insights on that, Sakshi? That would be very helpful for us here.</p>
<p>Sakshi</p>	<p>Sure. So Hrishi, actually, you know, to answer what you said, you started by saying that off-late this has become of importance or whatever. I just want to bring the fact there, the concept of holistic wellbeing and you know, agility and flexibility, actually taking care of all dimensions, is not new to India, ok. As a culture and as a society, we have always believed, you know if you go back to our scriptures, they talk about holistic wellbeing, they talk about physical mental equilibrium. You know, yoga is something that started from India and it's not about physical strength only, it's about a state of equilibrium between mind and body. So, you know, it's actually very deeply ingrained in our culture, I would say. And Unilever has taken cognisance of this very early on. We do have very very employee centric policies, whether it's around flexi working, agile working, everything is absolutely open to men as well as women. So, there are no women-only policies. All our policies are open for all our employees, because again, we feel that wellbeing is for everyone, and not just a section of our population. Absolutely, so even things like our day-care facility, we were one of the first organisations which actually opened an in-house day-care centre for all employees. And trust me, the men are actually, the statistics are out there to prove it, came in Times of India front page as well, that nowadays you actually have more male employees availing these services like day-care and all more than female employees, and that's absolutely the case here as well. So,</p>



	<p>we do have, we've opened it to all our employees, agile working, working from home, flexi working, you know, sitting out of another country. So, we've had a couple of female managers who were really really good performers and we were at a risk of losing them, you know, they would have left the organisation if we wouldn't have come up with solutions like this. So, it actually makes a lot of business sense as well, because, you know, we all know that at some point in time, we need to trail our families. So, if my husband is posted, you know, for 6 months in another country, or for a year in another country, you know, why can't I give my female manager the option of operating from that country as long as she manages her work? So that is the thought process that, you know, is really at the centre of this. Everything that we do, all our wellbeing initiatives, you know, in the space of, I spoke about financial wellbeing you know, we've actually looked at not just male or female population, we've also looked at demographically, which is the population which needs support. So, while there are these young mothers and young parents who need support in terms of policies, like maternity benefits 6 months or paternity leave of, you know, 15 days, or whatever, we also have an aging population that we need to take care of, which needs to plan for its retirement before it's too late. So, for that population, we have, you know, a lot of counselling around financial wellbeing – when to invest, how to invest, where to invest, and things like that. So, I would say that you need to basically take care of your population in every segment, whether it's male or female, whether it's young population or demographically the older population, but that is the way Unilever looks at it.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Great, and I think there could be certain level, and I'm sure that the study would have also shown a lot of, I would say, it would have given us lot of pointers on what those primary drivers could be. Like for example, for instance, I just called out those two categories because I think that's where traditionally more companies have focused on, but what are the other things that you see as a pattern, because of which that becomes a driver for having a flexible work arrangement?</p>
Sakshi	<p>Yeah. So, as I mentioned, the demographic, the employee demographic is an important factor, and you need to take care</p>



	<p>of it because, you know, you have a workforce which is a mix of Gen X and Gen Y and the future Millennials and all of that, so the concerns of Gen X, or rather the Millennials, is all about flexibility, you know. As an employee group, that is what they seek, they seek flexibility, they seek variety and options, and that's what we provide in a lot of dimensions. For example, as we talk, we are running a MasterChef competition with healthy ingredients, you know, and we are a foods company as well so we do have brands like Knorr, etc, and you know we promote these sort of competition and young employees to actually participate in such things, to build awareness about, say, healthy food practices. At the same time, you have a bunch of employees sitting in a factory who may be much older and may need a traditional more means of communication, so you reach out to them in a different way. So, I think demographics do play a very important role in determining what you offer to whom. And you know, one very relevant example is that we just introduced, very recently, an elder care policy. So, for populations, your middle and high-level managers, their stress factors or their triggers are very different from the younger population. Stress for them comes from the fact that they need to take care of aging parents, for example, ok, so how do you provide them support on that. We've actually, you know, had a tie up with a couple of organisations which provide professional elder care support. So, our parents are taken care of, you know. For the younger lot, they're more concerned about how their kids are taken care of, which is why we have day-care and school tie-ups and, you know, those sorts of facilities.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Great. I think, Sakshi, that was very insightful. Thank you so much. Sudeep, over to you on these two parts. I would, if you want, I can repeat those questions?</p>
<p>Sudeep</p>	<p>Yeah, that would be helpful. Thank you. Yeah.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Right. So, what I really want to understand in terms of flexible work arrangements and how does really GSK promote for its entire employee population? And the other one was obviously, what are some of the drivers for making sure that you have, that you are actually required to have a flexible approach towards working?</p>



Sudeep	<p>Yeah, I'll get to the second part first. Because to me I think, like you said, it's no longer about, you know it's no longer about approaching flexible work arrangements as a standalone agenda anymore. You know, to what Sakshi was saying, the entire landscape internally and externally has changed so much that you can't avoid having a flexible working arrangement in most organisations today, right? I've worked with, I've worked with Accenture, and I've worked with previous IT and BPO firms, and now I'm working with an FMCG and I see the scenarios stay the same. You've got matrixed organisations, you've got organisations which are virtually linked, you've got sessions that sometimes last till evening, you've got early morning meetings sometimes, it's kind of all over the place and it's just, I think it's just become very inherent. So, till about 10 years ago, this was a buzz word in HR, flexible work policy, and you know all of that stuff, and like you said it was earlier targeted more at women employees, and so on. But I think now, over a period of time, the way we are, the way we are a lot more global, well-networked, virtually connected organisation, I think flexible working has just become part of daily working and you don't necessarily, while I think all organisations do have policies around it, but you don't necessarily need a standalone initiative around it anymore. I mean it really is just part of day to day working, and I think that's what GSK does. I mean some of the examples that Sakshi shared, just resonates a lot with me, because that's kind of the arrangements we've made for people and so on. And other policies then start sort of feeding into it, right? So, like last year in April we said, how do we re-look at our, you know, leave policy for new parents and make it a lot more inclusive and make it a lot more flexible for people? And said, you know, much earlier than what the government or anyone else was dictating, we said make it 6 months, but at the same time we thought about different parts of our population and different demographics. So, we said, for example, if a single man wants to adopt and has a baby, then are we not going to give him that same accommodation and privilege? Well, we are, right? So, it's going to be 6 months for that individual as well. So, to my mind, that's really what the right mindset is about. I think flexible work arrangements was a highly misused term for quite a while, and it was being</p>
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	<p>approached more like a policy, but today I see it being practices in spirit in a lot of organisations today than just in letter, so that's my take on that.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Well thank you, both of you. I think that was wonderful about getting at least the flexible work arrangement and the construct around it. I'll just shift drives a little bit just to get a sense of what's happening around the physical wellbeing bit, because as Sakshi called out earlier, that it is physical, emotional, mental, and possibility financial as well. I think that's pretty much the holistic approach that she spoke about. But I'm quite curious, and maybe the first question therefore, this question Sudeep, I will obviously want you to take up first, is on – What is the approach that we have, as far as GSK is concerned, on the physically wellbeing, given that it's a healthcare company? So how do you really create that impact, that positive impact of talking about the physical wellbeing, and instilling that sense of value in your employees?</p>
Sudeep	<p>Sorry, I'm coughing a little bit, but this is clearly my Gurgaon roots, and everyone knows what's happening here. That's clearly coming to the fore. So, you are absolutely right, I mean physical wellbeing is obviously the crux, and like Sakshi said, one normally starts there. I think from a GSK point of view, there are some basics, right? So, for example, having the right kind of well-designed facilities that encourage movement, signage that encourage movement, making sure that, you know you're making sure that most of our facilities, in fact all of our facilities, would be smoke free. Because we have the products available, a lot of our facilities offer smoking cessation services and products as well. Most of our large sites and large offices have healthy nutrition labels on food being offered and so on. Constant reminder to employees around nutrition, too. So, I think these are some of the basic hygiene factors, and like I said, that's why I said a lot of investment in this is not necessarily monetary, to start with at least, but a lot of this is really low hanging fruit and it's the kind of stuff that we have done across GSK globally, not just in India, which is some of the basics. And I think over the last few years, we've also seen some more initiatives coming through. We've got a very very positive response. So, for example, we offer a programme called Partnership for</p>



	<p>Prevention, which is really 40 preventive healthcare services offered free to all our employees and their dependents, you know, across the world, across GSK, and we roll it in India as well, pretty much ahead of the world. I mean huge, extremely positive response just to that. I mean just in the last 1 year alone we had about 9,300 services being utilised, right, really really positive. So that's the kind of impact, that's the kind of preventative healthcare which really goes back to the way GSK thinks and while, like I said, it's embedded in our mission, and how we want to do things, and then of course there are things that you constantly do to bring attention on the wellbeing and physical health agenda as much as you can. We are running, for example, a global challenge in collaboration with the Virgin Group around Pulse and about keeping healthy and about walking about stuff like that and making it a, making it pretty exciting and so on. And we have more than 1,000 employees from India participating and it's really great to know that out of the top 10 spots held worldwide, nearly half of them are from India. So clearly India's becoming a lot more health conscious and to your earlier point, that's what's really front and centre of not just an organisation's agenda, but an employees' agenda as well. The fact that such as issue, which I think, if we were to be rolling them out 10-15 years earlier, they wouldn't get this kind of response they're getting now. I think that's really, in my mind, the consolidated view on physical wellbeing and health that we are driving.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Great, thanks a lot Sudeep. Very insightful. Sakshi, do you want to just do a quick 30 second round-up on that? I know you've spoken about it earlier, but if you could just summarise the approach specific to physical wellbeing, that would be helpful.</p>
<p>Sakshi</p>	<p>Sure, Hrishi. So, physical wellbeing, of course, is the starting point. Unless you are physically healthy, you cannot be at your workplace, and Unilever enables it in 2 ways, looking at the hardware side of it and the software side of it. The hardware side of it is really around our Lamplighter Medical Health Programme. We have a programme in which all employees undergo a complete medical examination once in 2-3 years, and above 35 years of age, it's once a year. So,</p>



you know, this helps us in early detection of any sort of big chronic ailments that are creeping in and we can start treating them early on. That's the whole importance and significance of the Lamplighter. And we actually do mark out, you know, on the basis of the results of the medical examination, we do actually mark out the red and the amber cases – people who are very very susceptible to ailments, you know, blood pressure and all, and we actually make customised health plans for all those employees, irrespective of what the number is. Typically, this is about 20% of your population, so you know, it's good to catch them early, it's good to put them on a health improvement plan, a physical health improvement plan, and follow it up, you know. So, the doctors actually monitor the progress against the KPIs for each of these red and amber people that we identify. And this is only for their own benefit, so you do see a lot of traction and a lot of reciprocation from the employee's side as well. So that is around the hardware part of it. The software part of it is around communication and awareness. So, we do run a lot of workshops across our branches, sales branches, factories, locations, you know 30-35 locations that we have across South Asia about healthy cooking, healthy eating, you know, there's a lot of emphasis and a conscious shift towards making the source healthy. You know, if you eat healthy, all the other outputs and your parameters, and your, you know know health metrics will be an outcome of that. So, if you improve the input then the output will be taken care of. That is the philosophy. There are also challenges that we run, so I could relate to what Sudeep was saying. You know, we are, a lot of our brands actually stand for health, you know, so we have Brooke Bond, we have Lipton, we have green tea, so a lot of our competitions, actually, challenges that we run for our employees are actually sponsored by our own brands, you know, because that's what the brands stands for, and this is the best way of bringing the brand to life, by you know, putting out a competition for what it stands for. So, we did have a very interesting weight loss challenge, you know. We had a very interesting habit change challenge that we had run recently for teams, not just for individuals. So, a team of, for example, my HR team, participated and they said that they're going to bring healthy potluck, you know, healthy food from home, for this entire



	<p>month instead of eating in the canteen, or whatever. So that's the software part of it, but we do look at it in totality in the hardware and the software side of it.</p>
<p>Hrishi</p>	<p>Well thank you very much, Sakshi. I think that's very, pretty holistic in nature. I guess this is, this is one part which has not been dealt where in as much of detail as possibly some of the companies are attempting to do it now, and I can reflect from my experience of running Truly Human, what we call Truly Human, as an approach to employee wellbeing, which is around the emotional wellbeing. So, we do see a lot of stress these days. The stress is on the rise and I think Sudeep did allude to that in the initial part of the conversation. The mental stress, the kind of blurring of boundaries between work and life, right, the kind of travel, the kind of other stress, the stress of itself of being somewhere in a structure which you don't understand very readily, right, those kinds of factors could induce that.</p> <p>So Sudeep coming to you, specifically, what does GSK do in terms of focusing on the emotional wellbeing of employees?</p>
<p>Sudeep</p>	<p>I think before I get into initiatives, etc, I think first of all its first an acknowledgement that emotional wellbeing is important. Like I said, whether it be measurement through survey, whether it be reiteration through programmes that we would roll out for our leadership and managers, just the acknowledgment that when you are thinking about people, that when you are thinking about driving the people agenda, it's not just about blindly driving improved performance and productivity, but a huge enabler of that is really focusing on health and wellbeing. And, you know, the word that Sakshi used earlier, I'm going to pick that up again and talk about holistic wellbeing, right? It's, you can't necessarily separate it out and say that, you know, I'm going to focus only on physical or mental or emotional or whatever and stuff like that. To us it's pretty combined. So, there's a lot of physical stuff, more focused on health, that we do which I spoke about earlier. But I think beyond that, we run programmes which are, we literally have a large suite of programmes, which are training oriented - some are classroom, some are virtual,</p>



some are online - which focus on different aspects of health and resilience. They are individual, sometimes they are for leaders, sometimes they are for people managers, sometimes teams can go in together, and different markets then pick up from that suite of programmes, on what works for them. So, for example, in India, we've been running a programme called "Energy for Performance," and it's been tremendously successfully. I mean, I was surprised when I joined, and I realised that that's one programme which has a long waiting list of people, and people signing up for it, and waiting for it to kind of get nominated for it and go through that 3-day programme, which is really transformational in nature. Then you've got other programmes, which are like I said, for example, something around managing for resilience, and saying that in stressful times, how do you maintain, sort of, emotional equilibrium over a period of time? Not just for yourself, but for the world and the environment around you, and that's kind of an online virtual programme that we have to offer people. So, these are some ongoing stuff, and a suite of products that we have for different markets to pick up on. And then in addition to that you kind of do different things, depending on what the need of the particular location might be. So, for example in Head Office, which you know, is pretty much centre of the maelstrom when it comes to driving performance, etc, we've done a programme called "Wellness Connection," and we ran a series of sessions on every Friday for consecutive 6 weeks and got a fabulous response. We had half of our head office population across functions turning up, and each session had a different theme. One was focused on, say on, holistic sort of healing and talking about alternative therapies. One was talking about women's health, for example, and talking about that. And each session had a different theme and talking about it. Similarly, the sites, and we need to focus on that because we are part of the community outreach as well. But if you look at our sites, we ran programmes called Brand New You, which is really again about looking at physical, mental, talking accommodation and yoga, health, cooking, all of that stuff put together and seeing how you can really transform yourself as an individual, and it was a much more simplified version that we ran for our manufacturing sites. Again, got tremendously positive



	<p>feedback from employees. I think employees are a little tired of traditional engagement activities that HR used to conduct earlier. This is lot more responsive to their, I think, comprehensive needs, and we've got a lot of success in rolling out a lot of these programmes too.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Thanks, Sudeep. That's a, that's a wonderful, and I think in the course of our discussion, once we get on to the Q&A's, we do anticipate a lot of questions around these themes, so if you all would just gather your thoughts around that as well, because it's coming up in the next 10-15 minutes from now.</p> <p>Over to you, Sakshi, on the emotional wellbeing. I think that's something that you wanted to hear, and you had alluded to that in the initial part of our conversation, but I would just want you to elaborate that a little bit here.</p>
Sakshi	<p>Sure, Hrishi. So, emotional wellbeing, again, a very important aspect, you know, very much linked to the mental wellbeing as well, because, you know, the mental state of affairs and your emotional wellbeing also actually go hand in hand. But really, we take it very very seriously. We have a counsellor sitting in office. We do realise that with our, with our sort of lifestyle and our sort of changing job needs, and high-pressure environments, you know the pressure cooker environment that we operate in, we try not to make it pressure cooker but it really depends on the resilience of the employees as well. So, resilience has actually come up in a big way and we try to get people back on track as soon as possible. There is a counselling service in office. We have a counselling helpline, you know, it's a toll free 1800 sort of a number. We call it "Reach Out." It's in 7 languages, 24x7 helpline that we have, with professionally trained counsellors on the other side who are listening to you with a very unbiased ear, and provide you with, you know, actual counselling, varying from various professional areas.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Right, so this is something which is, which lies outside the boundary, which means the ones who run this kind of a service, which is on, on calling a number, a toll-free number, and maybe speaking to the individual. I'm assuming this is not, which lies within the Unilever boundary?</p>



Sakshi	<p>So, it's a corporate tie-up, Hrishi. It's a corporate tie-up which we have with a global healthcare provider. They have professionally trained counsellors and its a, it's a sort of a benefit that we offer to our employees, that they can call up anytime and get proper sort of counselling from these trained counsellors absolutely free of cost. And you know, the extent of this, the benefit of this counselling service has been immense. We have been able to save 2 lives. So, there were people who were calling up with suicidal tendencies, and you know a lot of these things do happen, you know, starting from work. Sometimes you know, the concoction between your work pressures and your house, your home pressure, the kind of pressure you have from your children, and all of that, just gets too much on certain employees. So, we've been able to save lives because of this, you know. We've been able to save people from falling into severe depression, because of this sort of a helpline. We call it Employee Assistance Programme and it's very very, you know, beneficial in India. We've already seen about 850 calls this year, and these are unique employees who've called up to, you know, discuss their personal and professional problems. And we're rolling it out in all the other South Asia countries as well. So, we're rolling it out in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, everywhere. The other part, of course, is around creating more and more awareness that your emotional and your mental wellbeing is important. Don't hush it up. Don't brush it under the carpet. You know, it's absolutely okay to talk about it. So, you know, for our population which is sitting in factories, and is not very savvy, you know, we can't reach them out physically, and you know, they don't have a physical counsellor sitting in the site, you know, we try to bring about awareness through street plays. So, we had a World Mental Health Day activation very recently, where we actually carried out street plays in local languages, you know, in Hindi, in Bangla, in Kannada, I mean, you name it, we actually rolled it out in different languages. For the head office, you know head office is always a privileged location, we do have something called Wellbeing Wednesdays. Again, you know, Sudeep also referred to something like this, but we have it every Wednesday. Basically, we call it Wellbeing Wednesday, in which we pick up a topic which is relevant, you know, to</p>
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	<p>employees, which they currently grapple with. You know, I'll give you a very simple example. Last week we had a fantastic talk about how to deal, how to deal with the stress of raising a teenager, you know. So, this is something that we're not prepared for, you know, all of us are parents for the first time. We don't know how to deal with a teenager at home. It gives us stress, right? And we actually had a dedicated workshop for that and it was a big hit, so we're planning to do a repeat of that. We've had Zumba classes. We've had meditation classes, you know. So basically, you've got to cater out and customise to the needs of the, of your current workforce, you know, the millennials and the older ones. You know, basically keep that balance.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Well thanks, thanks Sakshi for that, and I think it was really a pleasure listening to both of you on these facets of employee wellbeing. And as we are coming to the end of the session, I would just want to spend a little bit of time on how do you see the future of employee wellbeing? And in particular, when we say that companies have to move from employee engagement to focus more on employee experience, and how do you really see the wellbeing getting stitched into this entire employee experience? So, I would just go to, maybe I can start with you, Sakshi, because you've been on this, on the ball, and then I can move to, and then I can go to Sudeep after that.</p>
Sakshi	<p>Sure, Hrishi. You know to me, this is extremely important because employees are the core of what you do. If you want to be an employer of choice, which you compete for aggressively on campuses, and the market, in the talent market, you also got to take care of your employees. You can't be just bringing people in with a promise and then not taking care of them. To me this is extremely central to your employee value proposition. You know, wellbeing is, there is a reason for which, you know, wellbeing is on the top of the charts for every CHRO right now. It is very much to do with your employer brand, with your value proposition. So, to me it is extremely central and there are tremendous benefits of looking at it holistically and not just in a linear way or in a unidimensional.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Great. Sudeep, what's your take?</p>



Sudeep	<p>Yeah, I think we spoke about this earlier about how the journey has been, right, and the fact that this became important some time ago and it's kind of getting more and more integrated in the overall people agenda. The way I see it, the true measure of success is when we don't necessarily need forums like this to even have a conversation about it. Ideally a few years down the line, this should become a hygiene factor. It should be so embedded in, in our ways of working, in our business strategy, in our people strategy, that it should be taken as a matter of fact by most HR professionals, whether it be with larger firms or smaller firms or more progressive ones or less progressive ones, doesn't matter. So, I think that's really, and I do see it going in that direction because like we've been discussing, health and wellbeing is pretty much on the priority list for everyone. I think we've articulated the business case relatively well. And, you know, there are some companies which are doing a lot more, maybe they're some organisations which are doing a little lesser, but I think all in a period of time we'll get to a level playing field and this will be a hygiene factor and no longer a separate and specific agenda. And I think that's really the direction in which I see this going over a period of time.</p>
Hrishi	<p>Well thanks, Sudeep, thanks for that response. And well as the session draws to a close, I would really want to thank both Sakshi and Sudeep for sharing some very progressive practices, some of the processes that they use and some of the insights that they shared with all of us on the forum here. And I would really urge, I would also thank the participants. And the recording of this session will be available for the next 30 days, so if any of your colleagues would have missed out a chance to look at this, request them to watch it, because it really has a tremendous amount of insights on how some of the best companies in the world are actually working on the topic of employees' wellbeing. And as we are, what I'm taking away from this particular session is, that while companies are focusing on it, I think it'll only become better from here, and it'll rather become not really employee engagement but actually it will become some kind of an employee experience to go forward. So, thank you all once again and see you all soon and goodbye.</p>



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