

Best Mental Wellbeing in the Workplace Strategy: Large Company

Winner

Bank of Ireland



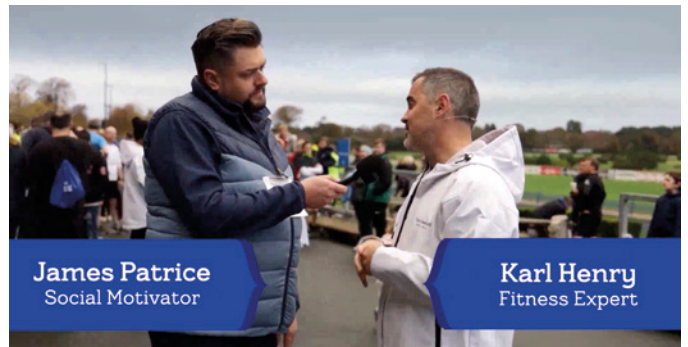
This award recognises workplaces with over 750 employees that have implemented an exceptional strategy to strengthen mental wellbeing in the workplace

Bank of Ireland is a diversified financial services organisation with staff in Ireland, the UK, the USA, France, Germany and Spain, providing personal and commercial financial services through its branch network, phone and online banking services. To deliver for its customers, the bank recognises it needs to prioritise its employees' wellbeing to ensure they are thriving, happy and healthy.

The cornerstone of its wellbeing strategy is Power Down & Recharge: a commitment to encourage leaders and colleagues to support their daily wellbeing. It is underpinned by four Ws: wellbeing, workspace, working day and workload. As Covid-19 restrictions lifted in 2022, the bank chose to focus on several key areas to support employee wellbeing: transforming its colleague policies; celebrating and supporting women's health; managing stress; supporting hybrid working; and providing opportunities for connection.

The bank undertook a full review of legislation and best practice, looking to embed its purpose and values in its policies and include staff views through focus groups. To improve its support for female employees, it held a series of women's health live sessions and podcasts from June to November and also introduced domestic abuse and menopause policies.

To help employees manage stress better, the bank kicked off a segmented campaign.



All staff had access to a stress management model, conversation guides and podcasts and could complete a workplace wellbeing assessment to raise awareness of their current wellbeing and possible risks, with support from group/one-to-one coaching.

The bank also ran a burnout awareness conference for managers, while senior leaders could attend an event focusing on stress and access the Blink Effect programme, designed to build psychological flexibility in current and aspiring leaders.

To support hybrid and flexible working, it provided conversation guides on returning to office and introduced new hybrid supports. The focus on opportunities for connection included a six-week programme, Tom's Desk to 5K, in memory of loved ones who have passed away, supported by competitions, charity funding, colleague motivators and training guides

The bank either enhanced existing policies

Snapchat star James Patrice and personal trainer Karl Henry provided motivation for the 'Tom's Desk to 5K' initiative





Shortlisted

- Avanade
- Bank of Ireland
- Experian
- Wave

The bank introduced various new types of paid leave to support families

or introduced new ones for family-friendly paid leave – including foster care, surrogacy, fertility and enhanced paternity leave. The judges praised this alongside the bank’s “market-leading policies” on domestic abuse and menopause.

Achievements

Some 3,500 staff completed the workplace wellbeing assessment and received personal reports identifying key drivers of burnout in the organisation, while the people managers’ burnout awareness conference had 1,000 attendees over five sessions. More than 50 senior leaders enrolled on the Blink Effect programme.

The bank opened a wellbeing studio on 1st November to support hybrid working and more than 7,000 employees registered on its BOI Wellbeing app. It also rolled out Gympass, offering free apps for mediation, nutrition, coaching and free online classes as well as access to subsidised fitness venues for staff. 1,200 staff registered to complete Tom’s Desk to 5k across 15 locations in November.

Finally, the bank reported improved scores from staff on engagement (up five points from the 2021 survey), feeling positive about work (up 11 points), with staff saying they had better work-life balance and felt supported and connected. Staff reporting constant strain dropped four points and was below the financial services average. ■

Judges’ comments

- ✦ The Bank of Ireland has taken a huge positive step with the introduction of family-friendly paid leave including foster care leave, surrogacy leave, fertility leave and enhanced paternity leave. Excellent to see this kind of commitment.
- ✦ The video brought it to life. Sometimes strategies can be so broad, but this one is niche – I really admire that
- ✦ I love this entry, any employer who can pay you and tell you to power down is commendable in my eyes. Thriving employees make a great workforce!