

# Executive Briefing

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## Why Mental Health Must Be an Inclusion and Talent Priority Now

*Research Findings on the Mental Health Crisis at Work*

### Mental Health Is Now a Core Business Risk

US employers lose **\$225.8 billion annually** due to lost productivity from worker illness and injury, with an increasing share of that sum related to mental health-related absenteeism and burnout. In Seramount's latest national survey of employees at large companies, the data is clear: **The workplace mental health crisis is deepening, and traditional HR and wellness strategies aren't keeping up.**

This new research uncovers not just where employees are struggling but which interventions are actually moving the needle. For CHROs, CDOs, and Heads of People, Talent, and Wellness, this is your roadmap to smarter investments and better outcomes in 2025.

### 5 Warning Signs You Can't Ignore

- 1) Burnout is the norm:** Two-thirds of surveyed employees report at least one symptom of burnout.
- 2) Absenteeism is rising:** 1 in 4 employees took time off for mental health in the past year.
- 3) Support is lacking:** Less than half feel supported balancing mental health and work.
- 4) Stigma is real:** 41% don't feel comfortable discussing mental health at work with anyone.
- 5) Younger and frontline employees are hurting most,** and they're least likely to feel heard or helped.

# What Today's Employees Want

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They're not asking for Ping-Pong tables or platitudes. **They're asking for:**

## 1. EXPANDED MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Including therapy coverage, mental health days, and telehealth access.

## 2. FLEXIBLE, EMPATHETIC MANAGERS:

The #1 predictor of well-being is whether a manager listens and adapts.

## 3. REDUCED STIGMA

Especially for hourly workers, caregivers, Gen Z, and neurodivergent employees.

## 4. WORK-LIFE AUTONOMY

Fully remote employees report significantly higher well-being.

## 5. PURPOSE AND BELONGING

Employees who volunteer regularly report much higher personal well-being.

## Why It Matters to You

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**For CHROs & Heads of People:** This is a retention and performance issue, as burnout drives disengagement.

**For DEI & Inclusion Leaders:** Mental health is inclusion. Gen Z, caregivers, and hourly workers are disproportionately affected.

**For Talent & EVP (Employee Value Proposition) Leads:** Mental health support is a competitive differentiator. Expectations have changed.

## What You Can Do Now

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### Start Here:

- 1 Train your managers** to listen, notice burnout, and respond with empathy.
- 2 Normalize mental health conversations**, especially for vulnerable or underrepresented groups.
- 3 Expand access:** Therapy, flexibility, and mental health days need to be more than policy; they need to be visible and encouraged.
- 4 Measure what matters:** Track burnout and stigma, and ensure proper support across roles and demographics.

### The Bottom Line

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**Best-in-class employee experience in 2025 demands more than awareness; it requires action.**

Organizations that embed mental health into their inclusion strategy, manager training, and cultural norms will see stronger performance, deeper engagement, and a real competitive advantage in recruitment and retention of top talent.

✓ This is your playbook for leading forward in 2025.



### Ready to Take the Next Step?

Let's talk about how to strengthen your mental health strategy.

Start the conversation at [seramount.com/contact-us/](https://seramount.com/contact-us/).