

Press Releases

Steelcase comments on Blue Monday

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In past years, Blue Monday has been trivialised as the day when the post-holiday buzz wears off and most of us realise we have a long year ahead. But for many, depression is a very serious and threatening illness. As we become more aware of the growing concern around mental health, we should use this 'Blue Monday' as an opportunity to look out for our own wellbeing as well as that of our colleagues.

Business leaders should use 2018 as a year to implement policies and practices to ensure a greater sense of wellbeing among their employees. Steelcase's Global Workplace Report found only 9 percent of disengaged workers thought their organisation cared about their wellbeing. Just by raising awareness of mental health problems at work through internal communications channels – like blogs or posts – and FAQs for managers – employees will be less scared to talk about their problems. HR leaders can make mental health part of the induction process for any new employees.

There is a clear link between the design of the workplace and employee wellbeing. Relaxation areas are proven to increase wellbeing, particularly as part of a varied ecosystem of workstations. Business should also consider turning to biophilia, the principle that human beings have an innate desire to connect and bond with nature, to help workers thrive. The elements of biophilic design have been found to be building blocks of emotional, cognitive and physical wellbeing, including productivity, happiness, stress reduction, learning and healing.

This is in the interests of all involved. In the United Kingdom, research by the [Centre for Mental Health](#) puts the costs of mental health-related presenteeism (at work but physically but unproductive mentally) at £15 billion per year—almost twice the cost of absence. Furthermore, employees with a greater sense of wellbeing will not have more loyalty to their company, but have a healthier and more enjoyable life.