

Workplace wellbeing- Hour of Power

A guide to implementing Hour of Power in a modern organisation

What is 'Hour of Power'?

Hour of Power is a one-hour, unpaid window of time occurring at the same time each day, for staff to dedicate to their health and wellbeing. As everyone has differing drivers and motivators of what constitutes their personal wellbeing, activities undertaken during Hour of Power will vary. For some this may be a walk, a run, or a class; for others it may be stretching, mindfulness or an allied health appointment.



Photo 1 - HWQld team walking together

Why implement 'Hour of Power'?

With the changing nature of work, and desire to deliver, employees can feel hesitant to take breaks and might work through to get more done. Research has shown that better breaks at work improve productivity, improve employee wellbeing and reduce incidence of burnout.

Many Queenslanders are not moving enough. This is having considerable impact on the community, with 2.1% of the burden of disease in Australia attributed to insufficient physical activity. Promoting a good break at work with the opportunity to move can significantly benefit employees, workplaces and the community.

How to implement Hour of Power

No two organisations are the same, and implementation may look different for your organisation depending on the work environment and

business functions. Below is a guide on how to roll out an Hour of Power, based on how it worked at Health and Wellbeing Queensland:

- Engage with staff before commencing to discuss how it could work at your workplace.
- Schedule a convenient one-hour window of time, occurring at the same time each day. At Health and Wellbeing Queensland this occurs between 1-2pm each day. Make this time consistent and available for everyone across an organisation to diminish a need to 'catch up' after the hour and allow for a true time out.
- Where possible, avoid scheduling meetings to make sure the time is free for staff to support their own health and wellbeing.
- Make sure that it is embedded as part of daily operations, for instance, blocking out an hour each day. At Health and Wellbeing Queensland, the invitation is sent from the Chief Executive Officer to highlight the organisational commitment to the initiative.
- Allow staff to wear comfortable shoes and bring comfortable clothes or active wear, with no requirement to change back to business attire following Hour of Power (if that is their preference). External meetings are scheduled for mornings.
- Measure success – you can do this through staff surveys and checking in with staff either individually or through team meetings.
- Don't feel like it has to stay a certain way. Change the approach depending on staff feedback.



Photo 2 - CEO and DCEO HWQld on an Hour of Power

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Key to success and long-term impact

Executive leadership – Implementation of Hour of Power must be strongly supported by a top-down approach. It has to be seen as important to senior executives and modelled, to enable staff to feel empowered to take it up as part of their day.

Managerial support – Hour of Power needs to be promoted, supported and encouraged, with Managers taking a flexible approach to enable staff to actively contribute to their health and wellbeing.

Consultative – If you are considering an hour of power in your organisation, consider trialing the initiative for 3 months and assessing the impact and seeking employee feedback.

Adaptative – To make sure the initiative remains beneficial for staff and your organisation, make time to seek feedback and make adjustments to see the benefits continue.

There will be people in your organisation who will not opt in, or who will opt in occasionally. That is okay. The initiative is about establishing space for employees to reach their health and wellbeing goals. Creating a positive culture around staff wellbeing and ensuring appropriate flexibility and creating conversations around wellbeing will support team members who decide not to opt in.



Photo 3 - HWQld staff enjoying a game together

Health and Wellbeing Queensland Hour of Power Trial results

- 79% of staff agreed or strongly agreed Hour of Power improved their wellbeing
- Improved sense of connection with colleagues at work
- Staff expressed having more energy in the afternoon when participating in Hour of Power
- 71% agreed Hour of Power improved their work-life balance
- 92% of staff agreed Hour of Power should be implemented permanently

‘Exercise doesn’t have to be expensive, and I like to get out and move during my workday. But I don’t wish to impose what works for me on anyone else. That’s why I introduced a daily “Hour of Power” in my workplace so all staff can have the time to do what they need to stay well. This supports our productivity as individual workers and as an agency’

**CEO – Health and Wellbeing
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For more information on creating healthier workplaces, visit: <https://hw.qld.gov.au/healthy-workplaces/>

For information on work health and safety responsibilities, including information on Workcover, please visit: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/>