

This slide deck presents findings from an ongoing research effort at IBI focused on improving employee health and performance.

In this study we bring together four components to understand:

1. How employee health is related to absence and job performance
2. How managers respond to absence or underperformance occurs
3. And the operational impacts and business costs of employee health and performance and management response
4. Employers can support access to timely and high quality treatment, to healthy choices and unhealthy choices and to job accommodations and work contexts that support healthy work.

Research Project Aims

- Clarify the relationship between employee health, job performance and organizational impacts
- Explore how managers respond to absence and lowered performance to maintain work flow
- Describe the organizational impacts of absence and job performance
- Provide employers useful models and measures to apply in their own work



This study grew out of a review of research and development needs about five years ago at a summit on health and productivity. Of particular interest was developing a better understanding of self-reported measures of presenteeism and health-related job performance.

This study includes three of the leading presenteeism tools and the developers of those tools as part of the research team.

This research will clarify relationships between the framework components to achieve the research aims on this slide

Data were collected through a cross-sectional web survey to employees and managers at two employer sites

- **Employees were surveyed on health, attendance, absence, job performance dimensions related to health and work climate**
- **Managers were asked a series of questions around**
 - **employee absence and performance**
 - **how the organization responds to maintain work flow**
 - **the associated operational impacts and costs**

Research Products

- Series of IBI Member Publications
 - March 2014 published *The Invisible Response to Absence*
 - June 2015 will publish *Work Climate, Employee Health & Performance*
- Publish results and conduct webinars on a range of additional topics for IBI Members
- Publish in scholarly journals

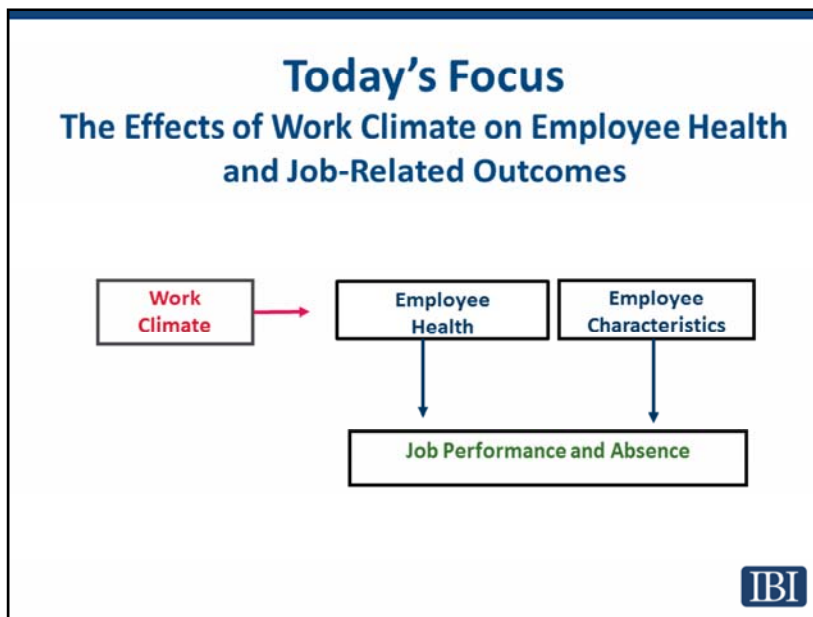


IBI will produce a series of publications and webinars for its members from this study

To date we have published a report on manager's response to absence demonstrating that managers escalate their responses as the length of the absence extends in order to minimize work disruption and costs of lengthy absences.

This presentation today will be published in June and include a broad range of findings related to work climate, employee health and performance.

The research team will also publish in scholarly journals.



- 1. This presentation focuses on a part of the overall framework**
- 2. How employee health affects job performance and absence**
- 3. And how work climate affects these job-related outcomes**
- 4. And how work climate alters the relationship between employee health and absence and job performance**

Employee Characteristics

- Predominantly Female (75%)
- Even age distribution with half age 30 to 59
- 60% married or cohabiting
- Half the sample has no children
- 35% less than a 4-year college education
- Wide income distribution



We received a total of 322 surveys, 29 from managers, 293 from employees.

Two sites provided data: Health Services (123) and County (199).

In addition to the summary on this slide, specific results follow:

Age: 22% ages 20 to 29; 53% ages 30 to 49; 25% ages 50 and above

Sex: 75% Female

Marital Status: 60% married or cohabiting

Number of Children: 53% no children; 37% 1-2 children; 10% 3 or more

Education: 35% less than 4-yr college; 37% 4-yr college; 28% more than 4-yr college

Income:

- **16% Salaried – 31% less than \$50K, 42% \$50K to 99K; 27% \$100K or higher**
- **84% Hourly Wage – 51% below \$20 per hour; 39% \$20 to 29; 9% \$40 or more**

Work Climate Dimensions

Safety

- Good safety and health conditions

Respect and Trust

- Treated with respect and trust management

Variety and Learning

- Learn new things

Workload

- Too much work



To measure work climate we used 15 items from the General Social Survey representing the dimensions on this slide.

We present findings from the overall work climate measure (measured on an agreement scale (1=strongly disagree and 4=strongly agree).

Additional results are available for each work climate dimensions

Averages for the four climate dimensions and corresponding items are below:

Safety average 3.4: Safety high priority; No shortcuts on worker safety; Managers and employees ensure safe conditions; Good safety and health conditions

Respect and Trust average 3.2: Clear expectations; Use skills and abilities; Treated with respect; Trust management; Proud to work for employer; Place of work runs effectively

Variety and Learning average 2.9: Learn new things; Pace of work; Variety

Workload average 2.9: Too much work; Productivity limits (items reversed)

Self-Reported Health Symptoms

Physical Health Symptoms (Top 3)

- Tired/Low energy
- Back/Neck Pain
- Sleeping trouble

Mental Health Symptoms (Top 3)

- Nervous
- Restless
- Everything an Effort



Our prior work and that of others has found that self-reported symptoms often predict absence and presenteeism.

Therefore we used standard symptom batteries of questions on physical and mental health symptoms to capture employee health.

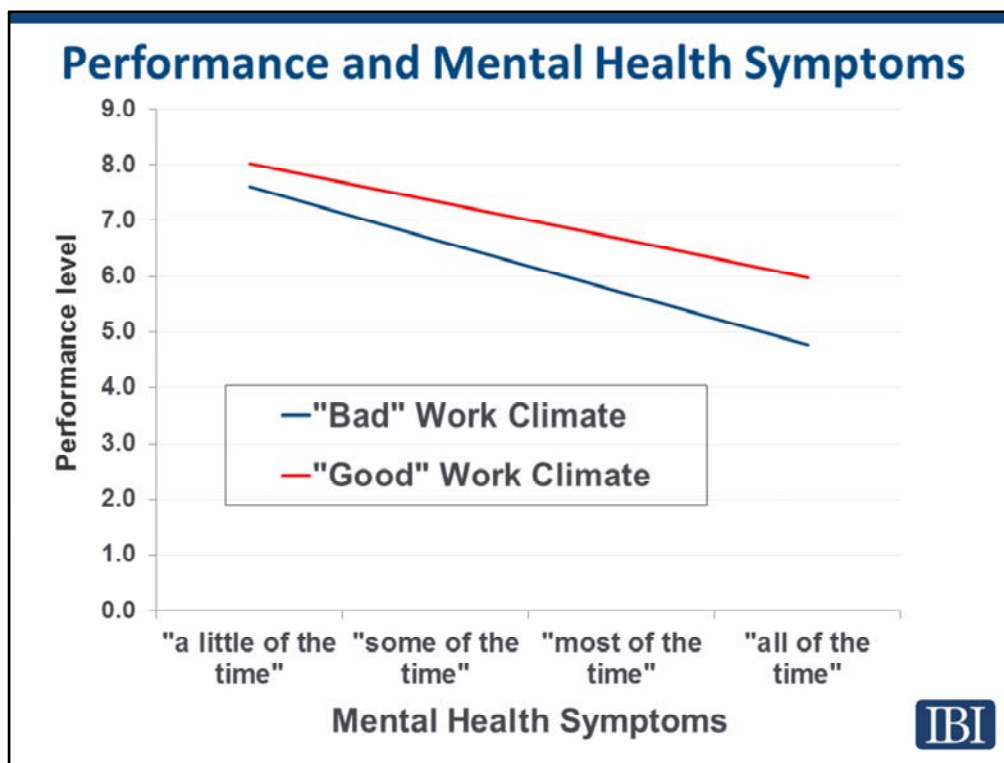
Self-report was reflective of the prior two weeks

We created a physical health symptoms scale from 11 items

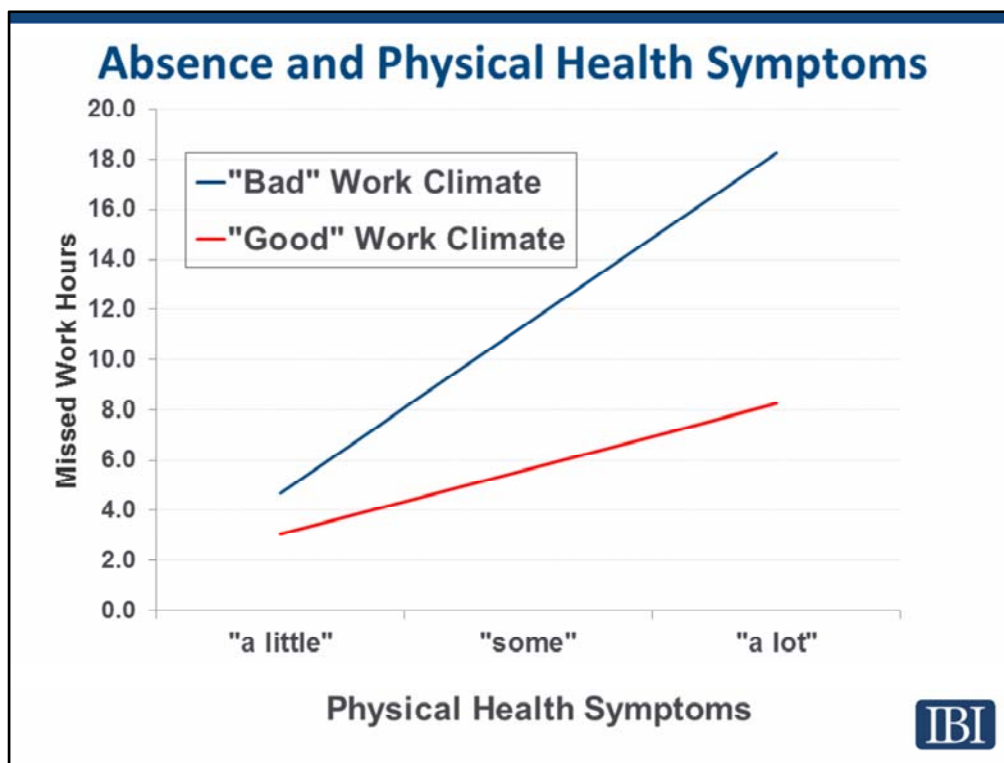
AND

A mental health symptoms scale from 6 items

On this slide you see the top 3 symptoms from each scale



1. Our main findings corroborate the existing literature that as mental health symptoms get worse (go from a little of the time to all of the time) job performance declines.
2. You can see that in both the blue and red lines on this chart, they start high when mental health symptoms are low and decline as symptoms get worse.
3. What our study adds is the effect of being in a “bad” or “good” work climate. To the extent respondents agreed with positively worried statements about their work climate we labeled these “good”.
4. To the extent they disagreed with these statements we label these “bad work climates”
5. This slide demonstrates that as symptoms worsen employees in bad work climates experience lower performance levels than someone with the same symptom levels in a “good” work climate. Work climate appears to exacerbate the effects of mental health symptoms on job performance.



1. We find the same pattern for the effects physical symptoms on absence.
2. When employees experience low levels of physical health symptoms they miss relatively little work
3. But as those symptoms start to get worse (go from a little to a lot) we start see a separation of the lines.
4. The line for the “bad” work climate is steeper than the “good” work climate
5. Individuals in “bad” work climates experience more missed work hours than individuals with the same symptom levels in “good” work climates
6. “Bad” work climates appear to accentuate the effects of physical health symptoms on absence

Summary of Findings

- “Bad” work climates are associated with higher absence and lower job performance
- Physical symptoms primarily affect absence while mental health symptoms affect performance
- However, “bad” work climates appear to exacerbate the effects of physical and mental health symptoms on both absence and performance
- There remain prominent sex differences that demand further investigation



These results reflect multivariate regressions analyses controlling for age, sex, mental and physical health symptoms

Discussion Panel

Jamie Stalker, MD, Division Director, Health and Employee Wellness Division, Argonne National Laboratory

Kathy Gerwig, Vice President, Employee Safety, Health and Wellness, Kaiser Permanente

Chris Chan, Innovation Imagineer, Mercer LABS

Mary Tavarozzi, National Practice Leader – Group Benefits, Towers Watson



The 2015 IBI Plenary presentations was followed by a discussion panel who talked about their own efforts to understand and alter work climate as part of their employee health, wellness and lost time improvement initiatives.

Topics for Panel Discussion

- Measuring Work Climate
- Business Goals and Leadership Involvement
- Return to Work and Stay at Work
- Employee Engagement
- Opportunities for Work Climate Change



These are some of the topics the panel discussed

Measuring Work Climate

- How do employers and their supplier partners begin to understand their work climate and culture of health?
- How do you know when you might have a work climate problem or “poor culture of health”, that is, what do you measure?

Business Goals and Senior Leadership

- How does a strong culture of health help organizations meet business goals?
- How is senior leadership informed about the effects of work climate on employee health and business operations?

Return to Work and Employee Engagement

- How does work climate affect the success of stay at work and RTW programs?
- Since employee engagement is key to success, what are some ways your organization has improved engagement, particularly among the difficult to engage? How do you know, that is, what do you measure?

Obstacles and Opportunities for Work Climate Change

- What are the practical steps to improve work climate and what are the challenges?
- Since change often creates resistance what are promising practices for creating a positive work climate?
- What are the most important components of a health work climate or “culture of health”?