Manuel Cuevas-Trisán joined Harvard as Vice President for Human Resources last August, coming from Northwestern University. Manuel shares his thoughts on the critical role wellbeing plays in supporting employees, especially during a period of unprecedented workplace change due to the pandemic, in an insightful interview.

Here are some excerpts:

**Q: What is workplace wellbeing, and why is it important?**

A: My notion of wellbeing is about seeing employees holistically, in their full humanity, not just through the exclusive lens of their output. In practice, this means acknowledging factors such as mind, body, family, community, physical safety, shelter, food, and financial security as integral to overall wellbeing—and making investments in ways that target these factors.

**Q: How has your understanding of wellbeing changed during the pandemic?**

A: COVID-19 has severely shaken our individual and collective sense of safety and wellbeing. ... Our social interactions are less spontaneous, impaired by distance or masks, or mediated by technology. ... And at work—on campus or at home—we are looking inward, grappling with questions of meaning and purpose, in ways that we have not done routinely before. ... There are two other takeaways from this pandemic that I would highlight: first, the growing de-stigmatization of mental health issues, and second, the need to close digital accessibility gaps so that those with and without disabilities have the same ease of access to content and programs.

**Q: How does workplace wellbeing connect to Harvard’s institutional priorities?**

A: The challenges of our time—diversity, equity, and inclusion; ecological and organizational sustainability; our ability to attract and engage the most diverse and innovative talent—can only be met by a healthy and resilient workforce. A comprehensive wellbeing strategy recognizes and intersects with each of these institutional priorities.

**Q: What are the benefits of having leaders who support workplace wellbeing?**

A: When we feel welcome, respected, and supported, we can contribute to the full extent of our capability. Harvard’s investments in wellbeing set us apart as an employer. ... Wellbeing is one of the key elements of our talent strategy because when our people thrive, our community thrives.

You can read the full Q&A with Manuel Cuevas-Trisán here.
Making Harvard Accessible for All

Providing resources for and information on making Harvard an accessible place to work, study, or visit is the mission of University Disability Resources (UDR). Along with recommendations on how to plan inclusive events, upgrade workplace ergonomics, and improve access to digital resources and physical spaces, UDR provides leadership and guidance on reasonable workplace accommodations.

Workplace accommodations may be necessary when dealing with changing life circumstances—aging, illness, an accident, a new medical condition, or the worsening impact of an existing condition—that lead to new challenges at work. If you find yourself in this situation, you may request an accommodation such as an adjustment to your work schedule, special equipment like sit-to-stand desks, or a different worksite to avoid a location-based allergen. Reasonable workplace accommodations can help remove barriers to productive work and reduce stress, increase job satisfaction, and improve your overall sense of wellbeing.

If you would like to request a workplace accommodation, talk to your Human Resources or Faculty Affairs representative, or UDR. For more information, please consult the reasonable accommodations fact sheet or Frequently Asked Questions on the UDR website.

Mind and Body

Invest time and energy in yourself so that you can be at your best for the ones you love.

- Looking to get more fit? Find one-on-one, partner, or small-group personal training (in person or over Zoom) from Harvard Recreation, at highly competitive rates.
- Start the year right with on-demand workshops on a variety of health topics, like advance care planning, smoking cessation, or weight management, from Blue Cross Blue Shield’s ahealthyme, available to all faculty and staff with Harvard health coverage.
- Find out how to flourish mentally, physically, socially, and purposefully with the new Flourishing app from the Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science’s Human Flourishing Program.

Learning and Growth

Take the next step toward your career and life goals with help and advice from the Center for Workplace Development.

- Refresh or upskill your management chops with new course offerings from the Center for Workplace Development, including Managing Engagement and Burnout, Influencing Without Authority, and more.
- If you’re considering retirement within the next five years, be sure to register for Reimagining Retirement: Planning Your Third Act (HarvardKey required), a dynamic, two-part workshop that focuses on the nonfinancial dimensions of successful retirement.
- Exchange ideas and resources with other midcareer professionals (grade 57+) and identify the core values that will drive your next career goals at A Midcareer Check-In (HarvardKey required).
LIVING AND WORKING
The Office of Work/Life offers programs and services to help you throughout this new year, no matter your life stage.

• From mindfulness and wellness programs to adoption assistance, nanny services, and more, review the wide array of resources offered by the Office of Work/Life.

• You can make good habits inevitable and bad habits impossible through the tiny decisions you make each day. Understand how at the Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results engaging, one-hour webinar.

• Whether you like reading white papers, skimming FAQs, listening to podcasts, or watching webinars, Care@Work delivers information about caring for dependents (of any age) in a variety of formats.

FINANCES AND SECURITY
Make smart choices today to stay in the know and help ensure a more secure financial future.

• If you have pre-tax savings in your Harvard Tax-Deferred Annuity Plan (TDA), you can now convert some or all of it to an after-tax Roth TDA through a “Roth In-Plan Conversion.” Learn more about the benefits of this feature.

• Explore a wealth of classes on financial education—or set up a one-on-one meeting with a TIAA advisor. Check out the January–February Financial Education Calendar for details.

• Reminder: If you are enrolled in the auto-escalate program for your TDA, your contribution will increase by 1% starting this month. Not in the program? With 2022 limits increasing to $20,500, now is a great time to start saving more. Contact the Harvard University Retirement Center (HarvardKey required) at 800-527-1398 to make changes.

To explore additional Harvard employee events, view the full calendar on HARVie.