

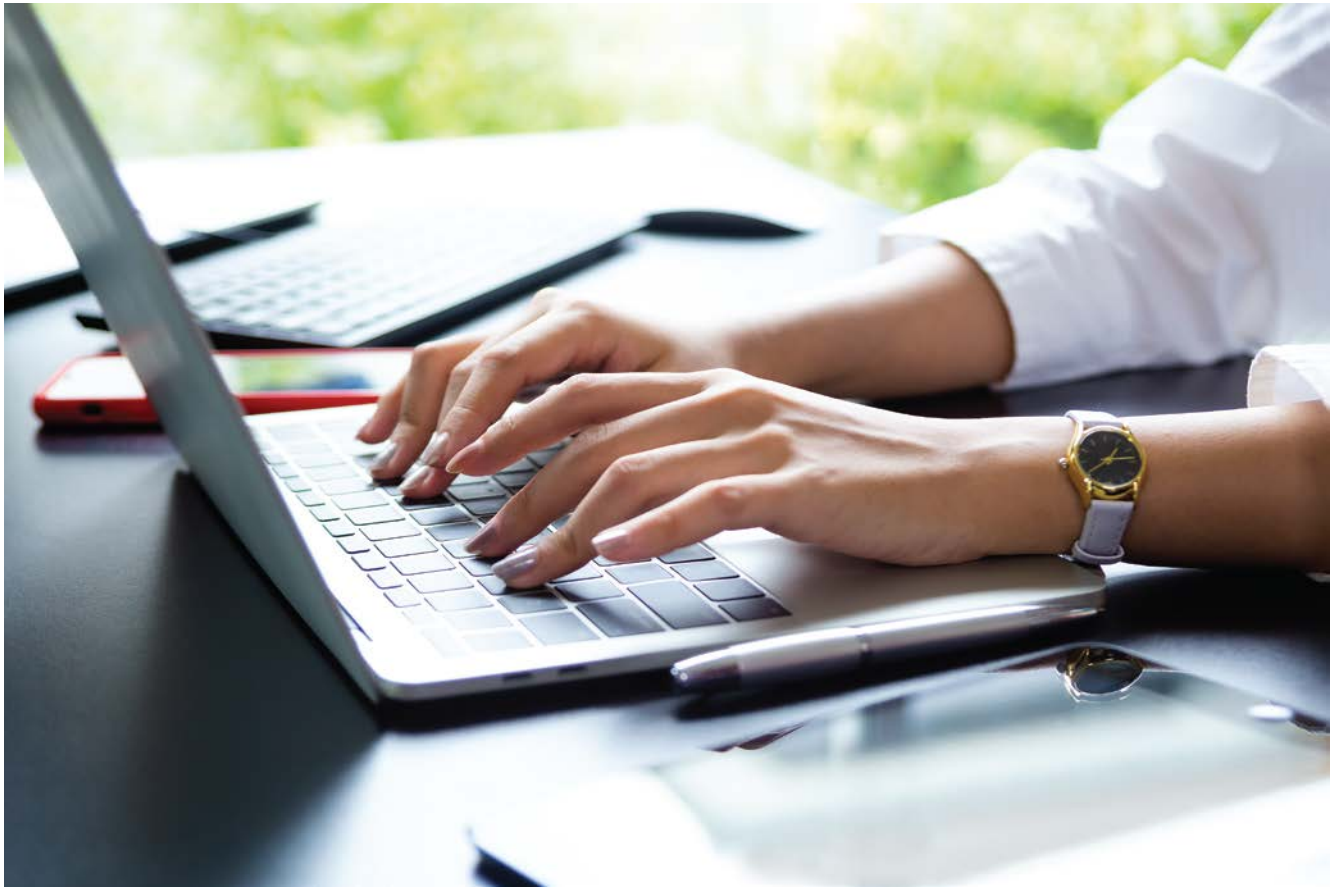
RE-DEFINING
HR & BEYOND

A Newsletter By


RethinkHR

India's Most Widely Read HR Newsletter





At RethinkHR, we are committed to empowering HR leaders with insights, strategies, and tools to manage India's changing workplace. This edition addresses a subtle, yet serious phenomenon called Quiet Cracking, where employees appear productive but are emotionally and mentally exhausted beneath the surface.

As organisations in India embrace AI, automation, and hybrid models, hidden burnout is quietly growing. Quiet Cracking is not a performance issue but a culture and leadership challenge. This newsletter explores how leading companies are tackling it through wellbeing programs, transparent leadership, and resilient workforce strategies.

Whether you are leading transformation, designing hybrid policies, or addressing engagement fatigue, this issue offers actionable frameworks and examples to help you build sustainable, resilient workplaces.

Understanding Quiet Cracking in India's Workforce

India Workforce Trends 2025



IT and Tech Sector

Quiet Cracking is rising in tech roles where hybrid fatigue and constant digital surveillance are becoming the norm. AI and automation are expanding, but emotional resilience is lagging behind.



Startups

Founders and employees face relentless pace and funding pressure. Startups in Bengaluru and Gurgaon report record high emotional exhaustion, especially in customer-facing and product teams.



BFSI and Retail

BFSI is facing performance burnout due to intense sales targets and regulatory demands. Retail is managing high turnover, driven by stress and schedule instability.



Employee Sentiment

A growing number of employees feel overmonitored and undervalued. Transparent communication and wellbeing access are now seen as critical to engagement.

Why HR Leaders Must Act

Quiet Cracking erodes trust, creativity, and retention. Proactive measures such as resilience training, workload redesign, and empathetic management are now essential to protect organisational health.

Emerging Patterns in Workforce Resilience



Empathetic Leadership

- Managers who address emotional stress openly create stronger teams
- Emotional intelligence and listening skills are top priorities for 2025



Psychological Safety and Wellbeing

- Therapy access, resilience sessions, and no-meeting days are growing trends
- Structured wellbeing ecosystems replace one-time wellness webinars



Technology with Empathy

- AI and analytics are useful only when combined with human oversight
- Predictive tools must serve as early alerts, not surveillance weapons



Reskilling and Mental Agility

- Cross-functional exposure builds adaptability and confidence
- Learning programs now include stress management and cognitive flexibility



Transparent Culture

- Communication through town halls, FAQs, & anonymous forums builds trust
- Clear acknowledgement of workload challenges prevents disengagement

Latest Examples of Quiet Cracking in Practice



Companies Struggling with the Issue

- Infosys introduced automated alerts that warn employees working over nine hours daily. The intent was to promote healthy work habits but employees saw it as surveillance, amplifying stress and distrust. (Moneycontrol, October 2025)
- TCS realigned more than twelve thousand roles to strengthen its AI division. While support and counselling were offered, unclear redeployment timelines led to anxiety and reduced trust. (Economic Times, September 2025)



Companies Getting It Right

- Tech Mahindra launched wellness partnerships and internal resilience circles. These programs reduced hidden burnout by combining flexibility with structural wellbeing support. (Business Today, October 2025)
- Accenture, Adobe, and Zomato integrated mental health metrics into leadership KPIs. These companies have shown that wellbeing, when tied to accountability, strengthens both morale and performance. (Forbes India, October 2025)

Key Takeaway

Surveillance-first cultures intensify fear and disengagement, while wellbeing-first cultures create loyalty, trust, and sustainable productivity.



Leading Through Quiet Cracking

Strategies for HR Leaders

A. Communication

- Hold regular wellbeing town halls to discuss workload and stress openly
 - Encourage employees to voice concerns without fear of judgment
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B. Resilience Building

- Introduce resilience coaching and mental fitness workshops
 - Offer mindfulness and unplug sessions during high-pressure cycles
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C. Technology Governance

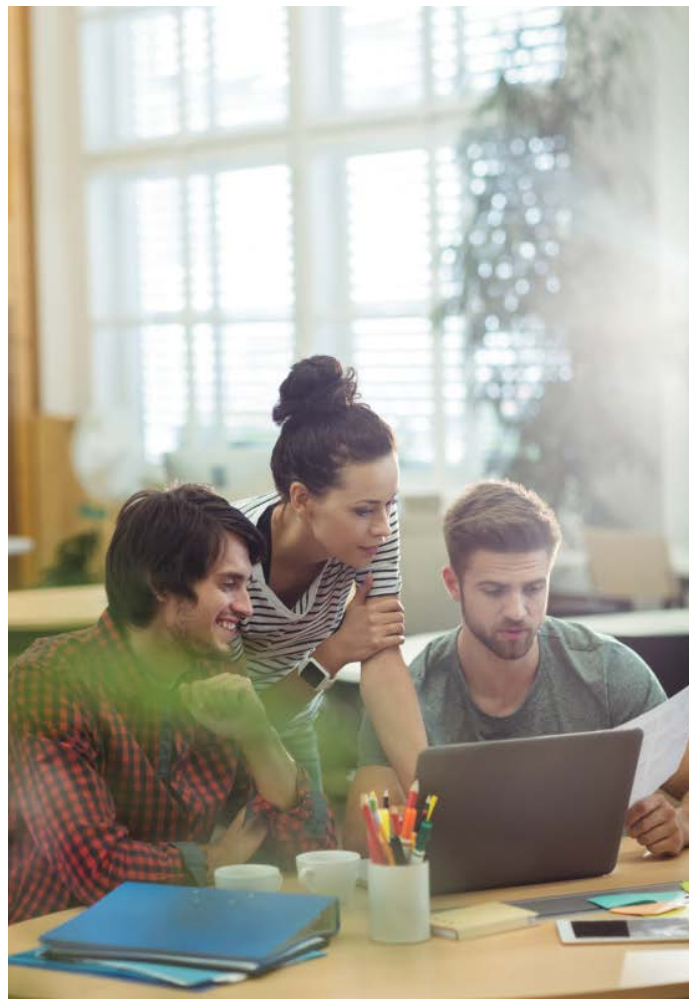
- Use analytics to identify burnout risk but validate through human feedback
 - Ensure AI tools track capacity, not compliance
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D. Manager Enablement

- Train leaders to recognise behavioural changes such as fatigue and withdrawal
 - Recognise managers who lead with empathy and balance
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E. Wellbeing Framework

- Create structured wellness policies with therapy access, leave flexibility, and rest periods
- Make wellbeing an integral KPI in organisational scorecards



India Workforce in Numbers | 2025

Survey Highlights



68% of employees report emotional fatigue due to constant monitoring



52% say wellbeing programs improve motivation and loyalty



61% expect their managers to discuss workload and stress regularly



73% believe companies that invest in resilience will retain top talent

Employee Priorities in 2025

Transparent Communication

73%

Emotional Wellbeing Support

68%

Workload Flexibility

61%

Resilience Training

55%

Key Insight

Organisations that prioritise communication, balance, and psychological safety are outperforming others in engagement and retention.

City Highlights | Bengaluru



Tech startups are revising hybrid policies to include offline collaboration days for connection



Large IT companies are offering structured mental health leaves



HR forums in the city are discussing predictive wellbeing tools that identify early burnout risk



Leadership teams are integrating empathy training into performance metrics

Tips for HR Leaders



Build a Resilience Map to identify high-stress roles and teams



Create an Employee Listening Framework using surveys and small group discussions



Train managers to conduct wellbeing check-ins, not just performance reviews



Introduce mindfulness and recharge breaks as policy, not perks



Recognise and reward resilience and empathy in leadership behaviour



Align wellbeing KPIs with business outcomes to reinforce value creation

HR Trends | 2025

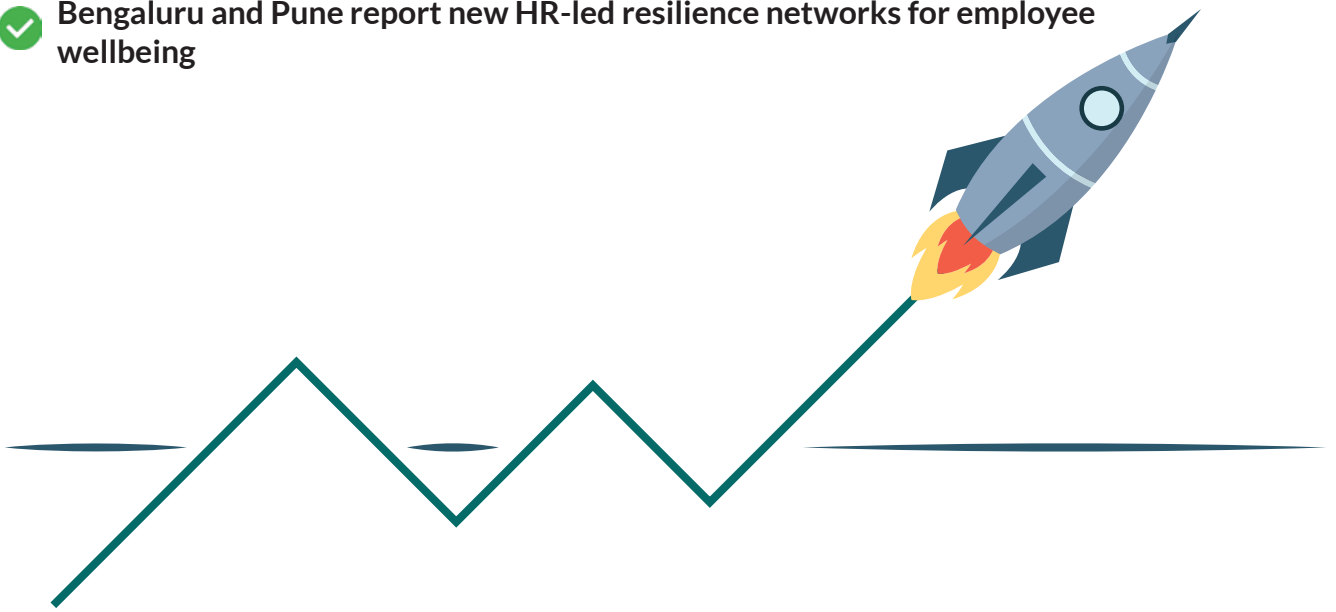
Focus Area	Trend
AI in HR	Shift from surveillance tools to wellbeing analytics
Leadership Action	Rise of empathetic management and resilience-based KPIs
Engagement	Increased focus on psychological safety
Workforce Agility	Reskilling and flexibility as retention drivers

Takeaway

Balancing technology, empathy, and resilience defines HR leadership in 2025.

India HR Roundup | September–October 2025

- ✓ Quiet Cracking recognised as the top emerging risk for Indian tech employees
- ✓ Infosys, TCS, and Wipro under review for AI-driven productivity monitoring practices
- ✓ Adobe, Accenture, and Tech Mahindra praised for resilient leadership models
- ✓ Bengaluru and Pune report new HR-led resilience networks for employee wellbeing



The RethinkHR Perspective

Quiet Cracking is a leadership wake-up call. It reminds us that productivity is not performance and engagement is not endurance. Building resilient workplaces means designing for recovery, empathy, and trust — not just output.

Connect with the RethinkHR Community

Join peers and thought leaders at the **RethinkHR Conclave Mumbai Edition** to explore practical strategies for building workforce resilience.

Look forward to the latest RethinkHR newsletter for insights, strategies, and frameworks that help you lead through change with confidence.

**Thank you for being part of the
RethinkHR community.
Together, we are building humane,
future-ready workplaces.**

