
Supporting mental health in the workplace is a key part of your duty of care to your employees' health and safety. In addition to this basic responsibility, this can lead to a significant commercial return.

In fact, the average return on investment of workplace mental health interventions is 4 to 1, which means that for every initiative put in place, the positive impact is fourfold.

Placing wellbeing at the core of your HR strategy is the first step to building a mentally healthy workplace. The following checklist can help you and your business to achieve this.

- **Workplace culture**

Build an environment that is open, transparent and empathetic by allowing for flexible working, social outings and more. Openly acknowledge key resources out there such as those from charities including Mind, Rethink and Anxiety UK.

- **Role modelling**

Normalise mental health issues by sharing personal stories, preferably from the top.

- **Work/life balance**

Establish and enforce boundaries at work so your employees know that after work hours are theirs to unwind and disconnect from the daily grind.

- **Physical wellbeing**

Whether by setting up cycle to work schemes in place or something as simple as a running club or meditation hour, try to introduce physical activities as part of your company's work life. This will give your team the option to incorporate physical well-being into their lives as well.

- **Peer support and mentoring**

It can be hard to open up to colleagues (or worse—your boss!), so by introducing peer counselling you could set the scene for your employees to connect with

colleagues in a way that gives them permission to open up and connect over shared experiences. Mentoring programmes where senior members of staff take juniors under their wing could also help create rapport and start a dialogue where they can be their authentic selves at work.

- **Build strong communications platforms**

Internal communication isn't just a large company's game. Even when running a startup you can keep the lines of communication open and transparent. Whether it's through messaging channels like Slack or a weekly meeting, keep everyone on your team in the loop about major work changes to ease their transition. It's also a great opportunity to praise employees and give kudos when deserved.

- **Monitor absences**

Absences can be a dead giveaway that things may not be smooth sailing for your employees. If an employee is absent or late frequently, it should raise questions about their wellbeing. This could present the opportunity to start an open dialogue about what's not working for them at work.

- **Seek employee feedback**

Adopt frequent wellbeing checks through formal surveys or informal one-to-one meetings to keep the channel of communication open both ways. Using the data you gather can help you understand where your wellbeing strategy may have gaps from the perspective of your employees.

- **Review all of your policies at least once a year**

Using feedback and monitoring progress of particularly vulnerable employees can help you stay accountable and reinforce your company's commitment to mental wellbeing.

Checklist Summary

| Number | Item |
|--------|--|
| 1 | Workplace culture |
| 2 | Role modelling |
| 3 | Work/life balance |
| 4 | Physical wellbeing |
| 5 | Peer support and mentoring |
| 6 | Build strong communications platforms |
| 7 | Monitor absences |
| 8 | Seek employee feedback |
| 9 | Review all of your policies at least once a year |