



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS: HOW BUSINESS LEADERS CAN HELP

Mental health is an issue that affects all of us, but for business leaders it can be especially daunting. In a world where success is measured in terms of profit and productivity, it's easy to lose sight of the importance of mental health for both you and your teams. As a leader, it's important to recognize the impact of mental health on overall performance and take steps to ensure that your team is well supported in this area.

High stress can quickly [destroy trust, inhibit empathy, and break down teams](#)—each of which makes it more difficult for people to do their jobs. Fortunately, employers can provide some support.

Here are some things employers can do to help employees manage stress and tend to their mental health:

WHEN POSSIBLE, GIVE EMPLOYEES A LITTLE EXTRA TIME TO SLOW DOWN AND REST

Employees may need a moment to breathe or a day to regain their peace of mind, and they shouldn't be afraid to ask for time to take care of themselves. The ability to occasionally function at a medium (or even slow) pace should be built into performance expectations so that employees can avoid burnout or breakdown.

OFFER PTO, MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS, AND FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES IF APPROPRIATE

In some cases, employees who want to get the mental health care they need can't afford it. Losing pay from a missed work shift might be too great a hardship, and effective treatments might be financially out of reach. These financial hindrances can exacerbate conditions like anxiety and depression. In other cases, employees can afford the time off and the treatments, but they can't make regular appointments work with their schedules. If you can offer paid time off, health insurance benefits, or flexible schedules, these can help employees get the care they need.



OFFER AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

An EAP gives employees access to expert, confidential assistance for substance abuse issues, relationship troubles, financial problems, and mental health conditions. These services are offered through an outside provider that connects employees with the appropriate resources and professionals. These programs enable you to provide professional assistance to employees while allowing them confidentiality at work. EAPs are also inexpensive, costing between just 75 cents and 2 dollars per employee per month.

MAKE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS WHEN POSSIBLE

If an employee informs you that they have anxiety, depression, or another mental health condition, and they request an accommodation, you should begin the interactive process to determine what reasonable accommodations you can provide in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA applies when an employer has 15 or more employees, but many states have similar laws that require employers to make accommodations at an even lower employee count.

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CREATE SPACES FOR FRIENDSHIPS TO GROW

Loneliness in the workplace can be a serious issue, with significant negative effects on both employees and the workplace. Employers can facilitate friendships and connections between employees by setting up virtual chat programs and video conferencing apps. Employees also need to be reassured that it's fine for them to take a little time during the workday to reach out to others about non-work matters and participate in virtual games and other fun group activities. Managers can set the tone by participating in fun chats and activities and encouraging employees to join in. Helping employees foster friendships is not only the right thing to do, it can also reduce turnover and increase engagement.



HOW KAPNICK CAN HELP

A mentally well workforce is a workforce that is more resilient, more productive, and more satisfied. As always, Kapnick can help.

Want us to evaluate your:

- EAP services?
- Mental health services?
- How you could expand your well-being services to your employees?

Reach out at 888.263.4656 or info@kapnick.com.

We take our role as your advisor seriously and are happy to help you strategize effective programs and communicate those resources to your employees.



PROMOTE GOOD MENTAL (AND PHYSICAL) HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

Healthy habits are important for everyone to practice. Consider setting time aside during the week or month for employees to participate in activities like yoga, meditation, and mindfulness that develop and strengthen these habits. Unsure where to start? [Kapnick Strive](#) is a customizable, holistic worksite wellness program designed to help employers manage their healthcare costs while engaging their employees on a multitude of well-being dimensions.

MAKE USE OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

During this time, employees might benefit from additional resources:

- [Virtual recovery resources](#) from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- [Fact Sheet #280](#): Mental Health and the FMLA
- [Blog – The FMLA](#): Essential for Mental Health-Friendly Workplaces
- [Coping with Stress](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Mental Health and Coping links](#) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

