

GETTING HELP FOR MENTAL ILLNESS



“A psychologically healthy workplace fosters employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance and productivity.” – American Psychological Association, 2015

Employees are facing mounting pressure in today’s workplace. The demands for increased productivity, as well as the expectation that employees be available outside of their normal work hours can make it challenging to find a balance between work life and home life. The stress related to these demands can take a significant toll on employee job satisfaction, health, and well-being.

According to a recent poll conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA), two-thirds of employees report that work has a significant impact on their stress level. In addition, one in four has called in sick or taken a “mental health day” as a result of work-related stress.

Job stress affects more than just employees’ mental and physical health – it also impacts the employer’s bottom line. Job stress is estimated to cost U.S. industry \$300 billion a year in direct and indirect costs as a result of things like absenteeism, diminished productivity, employee turnover and medical, legal and insurance costs. As a result of these costs, along with other factors such as global competition and changes in the economy, employers are more concerned than ever about employee morale and attracting and retaining high-quality employees.

In response to these challenges, some companies have begun to think of new ways to support their employees. These employers are creating workplaces that not only improve productivity, but also help build a resilient organizational culture that can help the company achieve its long-term goals. They are building a psychologically healthy workplace.

According to the APA, there are 5 components of a psychologically healthy workplace:

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

- Self-managed work teams
- Employee committees or task forces
- Continuous improvement teams
- Participative decision-making
- Employee suggestion forums, such as a suggestion box and monthly meetings

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WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Flexible work
- Childcare assistance
- Eldercare benefits Personal financial resources
- Benefits for family members and domestic partners
- Flexible leave options

EMPLOYEE GROWN AND DEVELOPMENT

- Continuing education
- Tuition reimbursement
- Career development or counseling
- Skills training
- Opportunities for promotion and internal career advancement
- Coaching, mentoring, and leadership development

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Training and safeguards
- Health promotion programs
- Adequate health insurance
- Health screenings
- Access to health/fitness/recreation facilities
- Resources for life problems

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

- Fair monetary compensation
- Competitive benefits packages
- Acknowledge contributions and milestones
- Performance-based bonuses and pay increases
- Employee awards
- Recognition ceremonies

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There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to creating a psychologically healthy workplace. Employers must first look closely at their own practices to address their own unique challenges and then create policies and programs that meet their needs. Communication is a key component in the success of any workplace program or policy and serves as the foundation for all five components of a psychologically health workplace.

Source: <http://www.apaexcellence.org/resources/creatingahealthyworkplace/>