

## Holidays and Happier at Work: Tips for Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace

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### Capture On Yoga Workplace Mental Health

Let's face it—while the stigma about mental health issues has gotten better, much work is still needed. It is up to all of us to help improve the dialogue and tone around mental health in the workplace. The impact of mental health and costs related to missed days and productivity is significant. Luckily, creating a mentally healthy workforce is pretty cost effective. Below are few suggestions on how to start changing your workplace for the better.

1. **Talk with your benefits provider.** To share mental health resources, you need to know what resources your company has available. Schedule a call to talk with your benefits provider about what resources they offer, how they maintain an employee's confidentiality, and the process for employees to access them.
  - Employees may be afraid to sign up for Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or other resources because they fear their supervisors or coworkers may find out they sought mental health assistance. Discussing ways that you maintain employee confidentiality and sharing that

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with your employees can encourage employees to seek help when needed.

- Make sure you share the resources with your workforce often and explain how they can sign up. Create graphics or posters that identify various programs and explain the sign up steps. Hang the posters around the workplace, in breakrooms, in high-traffic areas, and in bathrooms. If your workforce uses email, send regular reminders with links to the resources.

2. **Be visible, check in, and listen.** Many employees are hesitant to come to HR with these issues. To encourage employees, try to be involved and visible to your employees so that they (hopefully) feel more comfortable and encouraged when they need help with difficult issues, like mental health. When you are checking in with employees make sure you listen to them and encourage them to ask for help.
3. **Reassure employees of confidentiality.** Many laws require that employers maintain employee confidentiality, particularly about medical and mental health issues. When speaking with employees about their mental health, tell them early and often that these issues will remain confidential. Let them know that you may need to loop in their supervisors but will not share any information they don't "need to know." Make sure your supervisors and managerial employees are trained on confidentiality as well.
4. **Know where to find resources.** Below are several resources to help you figure out how to spot mental health issues, how to be creative in identifying accommodations when needed, and how to have hard conversations.
  - For those who are members of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), there are several resources accessible on [shrm.org](https://www.shrm.org). SHRM even has a [free quiz](#) to determine whether you have a mental-health-

friendly workplace.

- The Job Accommodation Network – [askjan.org](https://askjan.org) – has a variety of resources to help identify accommodations for all types of disabilities, including mental health conditions. [Here](#) is a list of helpful questions to consider when working with an employee on accommodations, key accommodations for various mental health conditions, and some sample scenarios and solutions.
- The [Department of Labor](#) has collected a variety of resources to assist employers with following the law and creating mentally healthy workplaces.

The above is in no way an exhaustive list of resources or tips on how to handle these tricky situations. Each situation is unique and fact-dependent, but by using online resources, talking with your benefits providers, and familiarizing yourself with your local community resources, you'll have a good start on how to identify mental health issues and how to respond.

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