



2026

bigmoose toolkit

how to look after your
team's mental health

bigmoose

who has written this doc?



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why mental health matters in the work place

mental health affects every part of our lives including how we show up at work.

when people feel supported, safe and understood, they're more engaged, more creative, and more connected. creating a workplace that prioritises mental wellbeing isn't just good for people, it's good for business.

this guide is here to help you take simple, meaningful steps to look after your team's mental health because when we care for each other, everyone benefits.



over the years we have worked with many businesses and they all have a range of mental health support in place.

some things you read in here you will already be doing but we hope we give you some ideas and ways to build on the foundations you may have already laid.

jeff & chloe





simple ways you can help your team



ensure managers are trained to recognise the signs of poor mental health and understand how to approach conversations.



build a culture in which your team can feel comfortable talking about their mental health.



check in with your team regularly and encourage a healthy work-life balance.



offer and promote mental health resources to your team and ensure they know how to access them



the outcomes?

the impact of a mentally healthy team on business success

poor workplace mental health costs uk employers around **£56 billion** each year

(mhfa england, 2021)

up to **£8 billion** could be **saved** by uk businesses each year by investing in mental health initiatives

(koa health, 2017)

investing in mental health can result in increased **productivity**, fewer sick days, and lower staff turnover

(axa, 2024)

investing in mental health at work yields up to a **£5 return for every £1 spent**

(deloitte, 2024)



the power of empathetic leadership

when leaders show they care, employees are more likely to feel valued and connected to their work. engaged teams have **21% higher** productivity and 41% lower absenteeism.

it benefits leaders too, empathetic leadership improves self-awareness and emotional intelligence. studies show that empathy is the most critical driver of overall leadership performance.

how to approach conversations

- listen actively and without judgment - this may be the first time they've opened up.
- ask open-ended questions - try to really understand their situation.
- respect that they may not be ready to talk yet.
- follow up with a gentle check in.
- signpost them to support options when appropriate.



the power of empathetic leadership

ideas to open up conversation

“how are you finding your workload these days?”

“is there anything you need more support with right now?”

“i’ve noticed you’ve seemed a bit different lately - is everything okay?”

“if there’s anything affecting you, personally or professionally, i’m happy to chat or help where i can.”

“sometimes it helps just to talk things through. if you ever want to talk, i’m here for you.”

“sometimes the most important conversations are the most difficult to start”.



the impact of leadership on your team

studies have found that only 14% of workers feel comfortable discussing mental health issues and 52% of employees don't feel that they are receiving enough support from employers on mental wellbeing.

common mistakes in conversations

- don't offer unsolicited advice - ask them *how* you can help.
- don't dismiss the way they are feeling - it can reinforce stigma.
- don't push for more details if they aren't comfortable.
- don't make the conversation about job performance alone - there could be a lot more going on.
- don't gossip or share without consent - respect confidentiality unless there is a risk of harm.
- don't ignore signs - you never know how much someone may appreciate support.



the power of unsupportive leadership

unhelpful responses

“you just need to toughen up / get on with it.”

“you don’t look stressed / you seem fine.”

“it’s just part of the job.”

“everyone feels like that sometimes”.

“you’re making a big deal out of nothing”

“you should try ...”

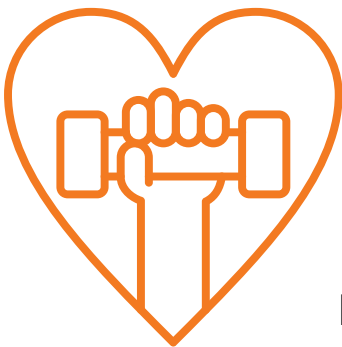
**“the way we talk about mental health
can either be a bridge or a barrier.”**

recognising the signs

warning signs that someone may be struggling

cognitive

difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, brain fog, indecisiveness, confusion



physical

changes in appearance or reduced self care, fatigue, complaints of illness (e.g. headaches, stomach issues, muscle tension)

emotional

low mood, anxiety, lack of enthusiasm, tearfulness, irritability



common mental health issues experienced in the workplace include depression, anxiety, stress, burnout and substance misuse.

recognising the signs

social

isolating behaviour (e.g. avoiding teamwork, reduced participation and communication), negative self-talk, more short-tempered or argumentative.



behavioural

calling in sick more often, noticeable drop in performance (e.g. missed deadlines, making more mistakes, reduced productivity), loss of motivation, increase in substance use.

leadership plays a vital role in shaping how mental health is perceived and supported within an organisation. when leaders normalise conversations around mental health, model healthy behaviors, and demonstrate emotional intelligence, it can create a culture of openness and safety within the team.

how can bigmoose help?



business mental health check

we offer a free business mental health check of your workplace to establish things you're doing well and then areas to improve and where we can help.



workshops

our therapists can offer educational workshops on topics such as sleep quality, avoiding burnout and stress management. these can be bespoke to you and your business



training

bigmoose offers training and qualifications in mental health first aid and suicide first aid, enabling people to feel confident having conversations about challenging topics.



therapy

we can provide therapy support from our team of 36 incredible therapists.

final word from us

we hope this guide has been helpful.

we just want to say this isn't about being perfect or ticking every box. it's about starting conversations, celebrating what you're already doing well, and spotting a few ways to keep getting better.

we're not here to judge. honestly, most businesses have areas they can improve when it comes to mental health and that's okay. the fact you've taken the time to read this means you care, and that's a brilliant place to start.

if there's anything in here that's sparked ideas, or you'd like a bit of support putting some of it into action, we're here. we love working with good humans who want to make a difference.

jeff, chloe & team bigmoose 🍷



we're here
to help