



2026

bigmoose toolkit.

how to look after your
team's mental health



bigmoose.
saving lives



why mental health matters in the work place.

mental health shows up everywhere.
it affects how we feel, how we connect with other
people and how we show up at work.
when people feel supported, understood and safe to be
themselves, good things happen. people are more
engaged. more creative. more connected.
creating a workplace that cares about mental health is
not just good for people. it is good for teams, culture
and performance too.
this guide is here to help you take practical steps
that make a real difference.
you might already be doing some of the things in here,
which is brilliant.

over the years, we have worked
with businesses of all shapes
and sizes. no two approaches
look the same. what matters is
creating an environment where
people feel able to talk, ask
for support and know they will
be listened to.

take what is useful, build on
what you already have in place
and keep the conversation
going.



jeff & chloe



who has written this doc?



jeff smith

bigmoose ceo and co founder

chloe smith

bigmoose coo and co founder



tanya green

bigmoose lead therapist

katie nelson

bigmoose therapist



bigmoose.
saving lives



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 ...”

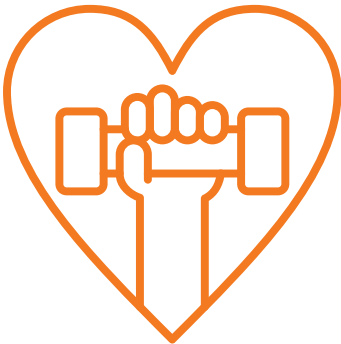
"the way we talk about mental health
can either be a bridge or a
barrier."

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 bigmoose can 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 54 incredible therapists.

final word from us.

we hope this guide has given you a few ideas.

this is not about getting everything right, it is about creating a workplace where people feel seen, supported and able to have honest conversations.

every organisation has strengths. every organisation has things it can improve. that is normal.

what matters is being willing to listen, learn and take action.

if you have made it this far, chances are you care about your people. that matters more than any checklist ever could.

if something in this guide has sparked an idea, or you would like some support turning ideas into action, we would love to help.

we work with good humans who want to make a difference.

we're here
to help

