Managing Employee Emotional Well-being

Why it matters

Studies show that people want their employers to both do more to help them improve their health as well as help them get the most from their employer-provided health and wellness plans.

Employees experience the highest levels of engagement, productivity and well-being when they feel their supervisor cares about their well-being and feel they can discuss their well-being with their supervisor.

Signs That an Employee is Struggling with Emotional Well-being

What It feels Like to the Employee

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Deep feelings of sadness, anxiousness, hopelessness</th>
<th>Trouble making decisions</th>
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<td>Loss of interest in work or social activities</td>
<td>Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much</td>
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<td>Lack of concentration, slowed thoughts or difficulty thinking</td>
<td>Feelings of worthlessness or experiencing inappropriate guilt</td>
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<td>Forgetfulness or trouble remembering</td>
<td>Energy loss or increased fatigue</td>
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<td>Change in weight or appetite</td>
<td>Irritability, anger or tearfulness</td>
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How it Looks at Work

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<th>Withdrawal from team, isolates oneself</th>
<th>Late to work, can't get going in the a.m., afternoon fatigue, accidents on the job</th>
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<td>Indifference</td>
<td>Unsure of abilities, lack of confidence, feelings of helplessness</td>
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<td>Disorganized, poor quality work, missed deadlines, reduced productivity</td>
<td>Low motivation, absenteeism, “just showing up”</td>
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<td>Seems &quot;scattered&quot; or absentminded</td>
<td>Inappropriate reactions, strained relationships with coworkers or clients</td>
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<td>Procrastination, indecisiveness</td>
<td>Change in appearance</td>
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Actions

When facing employee performance issues, recognize that there might be other factors that are contributing (e.g. impaired mental wellness, a physical condition, substance use/abuse, etc.).

Promote transparency and openness in discussions of wellness including mental health concerns. Maintain confidentiality.

Support employees when they seek assistance. Encourage use of a therapist and EAP.

Do
✓ Ask open-ended questions.
✓ Say, “You don’t seem like yourself. Do you want to talk about it?”
✓ Say, “How can I help and support you to do your job?”
✓ Listen and let them tell their story.
✓ Say, “I may not understand what you are going through, but I can see that it is distressing for you.”
✓ Assure employee all medical information is confidential.
✓ Show appreciation that they were open.
✓ If not willing to share, let them know door will remain open.
✓ Commit to keep checking in and do so.

Don’t
✓ Ignore or avoid the person.
✓ Say, “You seem depressed” or “How is your health?” or “Are you depressed?” *
✓ Ask, “What medications are you taking?” *
✓ Say, “Snap out of it” or “Toughen up.”
✓ Say, “I know exactly what you’re going through.”
✓ Say, “You’re overreacting.”
✓ Don’t gossip or breach confidentiality.
✓ Try to fix the problem.
✓ Don’t add unnecessary stress on employee.

*ADA violations

Resources

City of Denver Resources

- Guidance Resources Employee Assistance Program serves all City Employees — GuidanceResources.com Company ID DENVEREAP or call 877-327-3854.
- Nicoletti-Flater Associates Employee Assistance Program serves Department of Safety Employees — 303-989-1617.
- Denver Wellness at wellness@denvergov.org or 720-913-5690 and www.denvergov.org/wellness
  o Denver Wellness is available to set up classes to help train you and your staff on resiliency and other emotional well-being topics.

RightDirectionForMe.com— Additional education materials

National Suicide Prevention Line 800-273-TALK

Mental Health America http://screening.mentalhealthamerica.net/screening-tools