



BUSINESS TOOLKIT

**Mental health
awareness in the
micro workplace**



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5 TOP TIPS

Mental health awareness in the micro workplace



Helen Elson
Senior Account Manager and Mental Health First Aider
Approach PR

We often spend more time with the people we work with than our own families so, even in small and micro businesses (under nine employees), it's important to look out for each other. Making an effort to nurture our colleagues' wellbeing as well as their business objectives is good for morale and builds an environment of trust which helps the whole team to be happy and productive. Here are some tips on encouraging mental wellbeing in the smaller workplace:

1 Speak easily

Make it as easy as possible for people to talk if they have something they want to discuss. It can be particularly difficult in small teams to raise an issue or find the time and space to talk without the rest of the team being aware of what is going on. Try putting aside time for each and every person to chat with your nominated wellbeing officer at regular intervals. This allows someone to talk without feeling that it's obvious and everyone knows that 'having a chat' about something.

2 Wellbeing policy

Consider creating a wellbeing policy to set out exactly what employees can expect from you as an employer. Include the details of official organisations they can tap into, but also what you will do to ensure their mental wellbeing. This might include flexible working options that allow a good work/life balance or how to freely raise any issues they're having.

3 Socialise

Do things together outside of the office. If there's a greater sense of camaraderie it will be easier for anyone who has a problem to raise it if you're a close-knit team. It also makes it easier to spot if a colleague is struggling if you know them better and easier to approach them if you think they may be looking for someone to talk to.

4 Confidential

Ensure confidentiality when it's needed. There may be some people who raise an issue because they want it to be escalated or passed through the right channels so that something can be changed. But some people may just need to share something they're going through and are looking for nothing more than someone to listen. If so, respect their privacy and don't share what they've confided in you with anyone else inside or outside the workplace.

5 Keep in touch

Despite lockdown restrictions lifting, many employees are continuing home working for at least some of the time. Keep video calls a regular part of the working week to make sure everyone feels connected to the company and the team. For some people, the interaction they have with colleagues may be the most social contact they have, particularly if they live alone. Regular virtual meetings also allow you to pick up on how a person is really feeling. Their personal appearance and body language may give clues about how they're really doing.