

Mentally Healthy Workplaces: Strategies for Success

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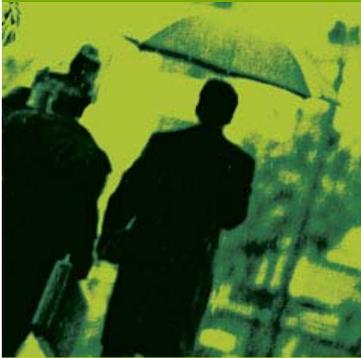
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Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety  Centre canadien d'hygiène et de sécurité au travail

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Today's Webinar



- ▶ What affects our mental health at work
 - ▶ risk factors
 - ▶ protective factors

- ▶ What we can do for
 - ▶ our organizations
 - ▶ our teams
 - ▶ ourselves



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Mental Health Works – what we do



- ▶ Raise awareness about mental health and mental illness at work
- ▶ Train managers and other workplace professionals on effective approaches and strategies
- ▶ Educate employers and employees to create and maintain mentally healthy workplaces



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Businesses report changes



Increased workload	91%
Emotional tension is prevalent	64%
Increased absences	68%
Loss of productivity	61%
Changes in duties	72%
Adjusted schedules	44%



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Affecting workplace mental health



- ▶ Decrease risk factors
- ▶ Increase protective factors
- ▶ Solutions in the context of you, your team, your organization
- ▶ No quick fixes



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Effect of chronic stress



- ▶ Anyone will break down after being exposed to sufficient distress
- ▶ Stress has a cumulative and additive effect over time
- ▶ We all have different thresholds



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Effect of chronic stress



▶ Resistance

- ▶ fearful, angry, shocked, argumentative, irritable, emotional, avoiding

▶ Exhaustion

- ▶ feeling hopeless or victimized, not coping, raging, shutting down

▶ Crisis

- ▶ Make changes or become ill



Risk factors



- ▶ Work overload
- ▶ Unreasonable work pace
- ▶ Uncertain or chaotic environment
- ▶ Role conflict
- ▶ Conflicting tasks
- ▶ Demand/control imbalance
- ▶ Effort/reward imbalance



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What we can do about risk factors



- ▶ Decrease them
- ▶ Buffer or mitigate effects
- ▶ Change our response



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Risk factors: workload, pace, environment



- ▶ Too much work
- ▶ Constant, unreasonable demands
- ▶ Swiftly changing priorities with little predictability



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Risk factor: role conflict



- ▶ Having to choose between family obligations and work
- ▶ Values of organization differ from personal values
- ▶ Questioning your integrity, e.g. having to report on co-worker errors



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Risk factor: conflicting tasks



- ▶ Simultaneous deadlines
- ▶ Inadequate resources
- ▶ All tasks are deemed high priority



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Underlying risks



- ▶ Demand/control imbalance
- ▶ Effort/reward imbalance



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Protective factors



- ▶ Skill discretion
- ▶ Decision authority
- ▶ Self efficacy
- ▶ Perceived fairness
- ▶ Social support



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Protective factor: skill discretion



- ▶ The opposite of micromanagement
- ▶ Autonomy and choice with HOW the work is done
- ▶ Meet needs of employee and manager
- ▶ Individual differences



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Protective factor: decision authority



- ▶ Your authority to make decisions connected to your work
- ▶ Meaningful participation in organizational decision-making
- ▶ Asking for input then not using it creates cynicism
- ▶ Some people are stressed by increased decision authority



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Protective factor: self efficacy



- ▶ Believing that we have a measure of control over our lives
- ▶ Translates at work into:
 - ▶ success on the job
 - ▶ achieving goals
 - ▶ feeling valued
- ▶ Severely affected by harassment, bullying, and mobbing



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Protective factor: perceived fairness



- ▶ Perception is real to the perceiver
- ▶ Not necessarily about absolute justice
- ▶ Being able to understand and accept reasons behind decisions
- ▶ Commitment to transparency and accountability



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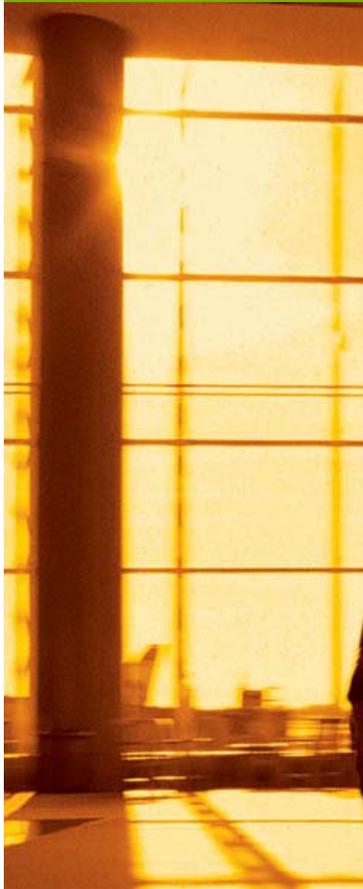
Protective factor: social support at work



- ▶ A workplace culture that provides a sense of belonging
- ▶ Neighbour at work approach
- ▶ Can be influenced by all employees every day
- ▶ Is severely affected by mobbing



What we can do with protective factors



- ▶ Identify what we have
- ▶ Build what is missing
- ▶ Create processes to maintain



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As an organization



- ▶ Include employee wellness in organizational objectives
- ▶ Create and implement policies and processes
- ▶ Commit to clear and open communication
- ▶ Walk the talk



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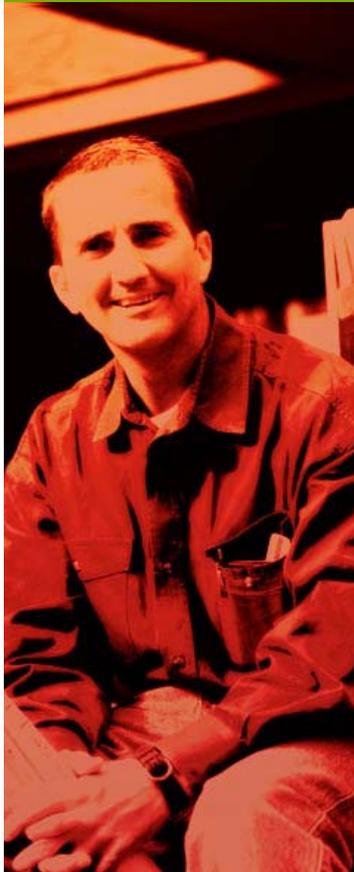
As a team



- ▶ Recognize differences
- ▶ Create clarity of roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Build toward collective success
- ▶ Share commitment to wellbeing of all team members



As individuals



- ▶ Raise self awareness
 - ▶ needs
 - ▶ responses
- ▶ Practice self care
- ▶ Manage up



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Resources

- ▶ Mental Health Works
www.mentalhealthworks.ca
- ▶ Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health
www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com
- ▶ Guarding Minds at Work
www.guardingmindsatwork.com



Thank You

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