ACTIONS

7 Things You Can Do Right Now to Improve Your Workplace

So, you already know mental health is important in the workplace. Now what?

1 Tell your team the truth about your own problems and/or mental health issues. Include any details about getting help, and any barriers you may have to getting help. Leadership requires courage and vulnerability.

2 Make mental health and wellness an operational topic, not an HR topic. Line managers, shift managers, and supervisors at all levels can start the conversation and make mental health a daily topic.

3 Stop telling people to leave their problems at the door.

4 Treat everyone who works for you as an indivisible whole. Embrace their entire being, not just the pieces you want working for you. In other words, channel Ghandi, who once said: "One man cannot do right in one department of life whilst he is occupied in doing wrong in any other department. Life is one indivisible whole."

5 Create a safe, reporting mechanism with a two-way communications function that can be anonymous for as long as the person needs.

6 Publicize a suicide hotline number, and acknowledge that calling a suicide hotline may feel like a huge stretch for many, even for those having suicidal thoughts. Also, give other ways to seek support, including saying things like, "If you've thought about calling that number on the poster, do it, or mention to one of the team you've been thinking about it."

7 Train management in signs to look for and how to recognize the difference between a performance lapse related to a "don't know, don't care, can't do" attitude vs a performance lapse related to feeling depressed, unable to get out of bed, partying too much because they're avoiding something, etc. Oftentimes, the pressure for performance can be focused on the wrong thing. Fine-tune the awareness skills of your entire team, which means paying close attention to the mental wellness of everyone around them.

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