CCOHS CCHST

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

Beyond the Assessment: Conversations and Change
Workplace Mental Health Webinar Series

Do you feel safe raising your hand at work and saying:

- I don't understand…
- I'm concerned about…
- I have a different idea or opinion

- I made a mistake
- Things in my personal life are affecting my work
- I need help

These things can be challenging to say, and they can feel like taking a considerable risk. In a psychologically healthy and safe environment, though, we can be brave and take these risks, knowing that our leaders and colleagues will respond reasonably and support us where they can. A leader is responsible to make sure that workers feel safe reporting hazards and speaking when they have concerns.

Having courageous conversations on these topics is critical to strengthening many psychosocial factors, including clear leadership and expectations, workload management, psychological and social support, and involvement and influence. The more we feel that we can have these conversations, the more likely we will speak up when:

- we witness bullying and harassment
- we need support
- we need more clarity to do our tasks well

- we need help prioritizing competing projects
- we have a new idea

The foundation of creating and sustaining an environment like this comes from consistently and continuously working to foster trust and build relationships. Use the following tools and resources to help you start the conversation.

References

Tools to help leaders and workers start the conversation:

Mental Health – Having Courageous Conversations

https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/mh/mentalhealth_conversations.html

Talking Toolkit: Preventing work-related stress

https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/assets/docs/stress-talking-toolkit.pdf

An evidence-informed guide to supporting people with depression in the workplace (this guide can be applied to support everyone)

https://www.iwh.on.ca/sites/iwh/files/iwh/tools/managing_depression_guide_2018.pdf

Supportive conversation library

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/supportive-conversation-library

Emotional intelligence for leaders

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/emotional-intelligence-for-leaders

Good work design

https://www.comcare.gov.au/safe-healthy-work/healthy-workplace/good-work-design

Conflict response for leaders

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/conflict-response-for-leaders

Being a Mindful Employee: An Orientation to Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

https://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/mindful_employee/

Constructive criticism

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/constructive-criticism

How to talk to someone you are worried about

https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/support-someone/how-to-talk-to-someone-you-re-worried-about

Requesting accommodation

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/requesting-accommodation

Feeling Angry

https://cmha.ca/brochure/feeling-angry/

Mental health at work: A shared responsibility

https://www.wscc.nt.ca/node/5047