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Supporting Mental Health for Safer Workplaces

Mental health issues, such as stress and anxiety, often lead to distractions, reduced attention to detail and slowed reaction times, increasing the risk of workplace accidents. Similarly, depression and fatigue can also lead to mental exhaustion, impaired judgement and reduced decision-making abilities, further amplifying safety risks.

Taking proactive measures to support employees' mental health can improve their well-being and foster a safer work environment while boosting job satisfaction and improving productivity. Strategies employers can implement to improve mental health and, by extension, workplace safety include the following.

Create a Supportive Workplace Culture

Advocacy from leadership for mental health and well-being can foster a culture of openness where employees feel comfortable discussing their challenges and seeking help. Building awareness and encouraging discussions about mental health can allow employees to feel more comfortable when requesting assistance. Business leaders and managers should also model healthy work practices and demonstrate that mental health is an organisational priority.

Provide Mental Health Resources

Employers should offer assistance programmes to provide access to mental health services, including professional counselling and peer support groups, to ensure workers can get the help they need.

Establish Policies That Create Healthy and Safe Work Environments

Workplace policies should prohibit discrimination, harassment and bullying, as these behaviours can negatively impact employee mental health. Employees should also feel their workplace provides safe physical working conditions to support their overall well-being.

Provide Training and Education

Employers should offer programmes that incorporate regular mental health education, self-care guidance and stress management sessions. Training for leadership and staff on how to recognise, discuss and address mental health concerns within their teams is also essential.

Establish Flexible Work Environments

Clearly defining job responsibilities and leaving room for employees to have flexibility and a good work-life balance can decrease work-related stressors that can lead to unsafe behaviour or working conditions. Paid mental health sick days that allow employees to take time off when needed could also be provided.

Ensure Employees Know Their Value

When employees know their worth and feel valued, it can have a positive effect on their mental health. To foster this, business leaders and managers should acknowledge employees' contributions and provide opportunities for professional growth and development.

Evaluate and Adapt Programmes

Business leaders must continuously evaluate their mental health programmes and adapt them to help address the evolving needs of personnel. Gathering regular feedback through surveys, focus groups and individual consultations can ensure these programmes remain accessible and effective.

Conclusion

Prioritising employees' mental health can help employers increase workforce productivity, enhance operational success and increase engagement.

Contact us today for additional workplace well-being guidance.

Mitigating Supply Chain Risks

Consumers have come to expect numerous options, instant shipping and fast delivery, making a smoothly operating supply chain essential. However, the fragile nature of supply chains can lead to unexpected bottlenecks, delaying production or shipments and impacting an organisation's ability to meet customer demand. These delays can also disrupt cash flow and damage customer loyalty as expectations go unmet.

Several circumstances can disrupt supply chains, including cyber-attacks, geopolitical tensions, natural disasters and transportation disruptions. Other challenges include:

- **Supplier reliability**—Businesses often depend on a limited number of suppliers, making it challenging to secure critical goods when these suppliers experience disruptions.
- **Inventory management deficiencies**—Businesses may lack access to real-time data and predictive analytics to anticipate shifts in demand, which could result in under- or overstocking concerns.
- **Transportation and visibility issues**—Businesses may not have access to advanced tracking systems to enhance visibility in transit and negotiate shipping rates.

Businesses should consider the following tips to mitigate supply chain risks:

- **Diversify suppliers.** Businesses should enlarge supplier pools to include those from multiple geographical locations and evaluate suppliers based on reliability and capacity to meet demand spikes.
- **Strengthen relationships with suppliers.** Open communication and regular check-ins with suppliers are essential to developing transparency and trust. For example, sharing forecasts or potential order changes can help suppliers prepare for demand shifts.

- **Effectively manage inventory.** Holding too much stock can increase waste and storage costs, but maintaining a small reserve of critical components is a wise move against potential disruptions. Businesses can utilise inventory management software to optimise stock levels and track trends.
- **Plan for contingencies.** Businesses should have a contingency plan that includes alternative suppliers, emergency contacts and an emergency fund to cover costs that address supply chain issues (eg expedited shipping and temporary staff).
- **Leverage technology.** Tools that provide real-time shipment updates and predictive analytics to anticipate shifts in customer needs can improve supply chain visibility and minimise disruptions.
- **Secure insurance.** Contingent business interruption insurance offers important financial protection for operational disruptions caused by covered losses among businesses' suppliers and business partners. It is especially useful for organisations that rely heavily on third parties for supplies and key business functions.

Implementing strategies to improve the resilience of their supply chains can help businesses recover more efficiently from interruptions, maintain customer satisfaction and ensure operational continuity.

Contact us today for additional risk management guidance.



Risks stemming from supply chains were the number one threat facing businesses in 2024, according to research by professional services firm KPMG.