



Mental Health for Small Workplaces



Using our online training
with your employees

Foreword

Mike Cherry
National Chairman
Federation of Small Businesses



Owners of smaller workplaces are brilliant at creating jobs and livelihoods for themselves and their staff – it's one of the main reasons why so many of us take great pride in what we do. As employers and business owners, we all know the importance of investing in our staff. Mind's 'Mental Health for Small Workplaces' e-learning is designed to make it easier for you to invest in their mental health as well.

Small workplaces have a unique ability to create a close-knit culture where employees feel they belong and are valued for what they bring to the organisation. This closeness allows employers to play a key role in supporting their staff, particularly when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. It's increasingly clear that supporting good mental health in the workplace is vital and the benefits this can bring in creating a positive and healthy workforce are evident. It can help us to build stronger organisations, increase commitment and productivity from staff, and help us to ensure our workplaces and businesses are places where people are happy to work.

We hear so many stories of smaller organisations already doing great work in creating a strong culture where employees feel confident and empowered to talk about mental health. But it can be difficult for many to know where to start. This free e-learning for employees makes it easier to take the first step. Mind's Mental Health for Small Workplaces gives employees of smaller organisations the confidence to talk about mental health, as well as quick and practical tools and advice to help them look after themselves and each other. It's an easy way to build knowledge amongst your staff and to prioritise mental health in your organisation.

By working together on this, we can help our communities, organisations and businesses to thrive.

Welcome

Small and medium organisations account for 99% of the businesses in the UK. But research shows that, when it comes to mental health, they often fall behind larger organisations.

We know that there are unique challenges, as well as unique opportunities, that come with working in smaller businesses. Along with the everyday stresses of work life, it can have a negative impact on the mental health of your employees.

We're Mind, the mental health charity, and we recognise the challenges that smaller workplaces face. We've created some free, quick online training to build your staff's confidence in thinking and talking about mental health.



Your people are your most valuable asset. We can help you support them.

What's in the training?



Mental Health for Small Workplaces contains three modules, each taking about 20 minutes to complete.

1

Building your awareness

2

Looking after yourself

3

Supporting each other

By the end of the course, employees will have a better understanding of mental health problems. They'll feel more aware of their own and their colleagues' mental health and wellbeing. And they'll have some practical tips to help them stay well at work, talk about mental health and spot the signs that a colleague might appreciate some support.

We worked with the Federation of Small Businesses and spoke to people from small businesses, charities and other organisations across the UK, to make sure that this training works for organisations like yours. In this guide, we've got a few suggestions for how you might share it with your employees, whatever sector you're in.

You don't need a huge budget or other resources to have a positive impact on your employees.

“ Mental Health for Small Workplaces is well structured, informative and easy to access and navigate through. Each topic covered can be completed independently and includes a range of facts, short informative videos, as well as links to valuable resources and support. I especially liked the relaxation topic in the second module and will definitely be trying some of the techniques suggested! This will be a great resource for our staff to access. ”

Alison Stainthorpe – Head of Operations, Cancer Care



What
people
think

“ Mental health support is absolutely vital in and out of the workplace. We all need some insight and structure to how we can help each other and, just as importantly, help ourselves. If you follow the guidelines contained within this material, it will do nothing other than benefit you: as an employer, employee or most importantly just you as a person. We all need help at times - we just have to be open to receiving it and accepting the need for it. This gives you exactly what you need. ”

Andy Neilson – Owner, Twisted Orange

Putting it into practice

We know that smaller employers or business owners are often time-poor and sometimes lacking in budget for formal mental health training. Mental Health for Small Workplaces is free and simple to access, so it's easy for you to give your employees the basics. With that in mind, we've come up with some ideas for how you can implement this training in your organisation:

- > **Induction:** This e-learning could be part of all new starter induction plans. Just as they might have to complete training on a particular process, technique or safety issue, why not introduce this as a mandatory course for all new employees at your organisation?
- > **Awareness events:** Special events in the mental health calendar, such as World Mental Health Day, Stress Awareness Day or Time to Talk Day are all great opportunities to get your workforce engaged on the topic of mental health and wellbeing. As part of any planned activity, you could send the training around for employees to complete on this day. Giving them plenty of notice will help them to plan this into their busy schedules.
- > **Lunch and learns:** Taking some time out of our days to switch off and do something different is really important. You could hold a 'lunch and learn' for employees to do one of the modules and then hold a discussion afterwards. It'll give colleagues an opportunity to chat about mental health in an open and safe environment.
- > **Dedicated time:** We understand that it isn't always easy for employers to arrange sessions or events for staff, especially if your work isn't in an office or involves shift patterns. We'd recommend line managers or supervisors working with their staff to set aside some dedicated time for them to complete the training – even if it's planning a 20-minute break in advance.

Spreading the word



Get the message out quickly and easily wherever you communicate with your staff - whether that's a poster on a wall, a message on the intranet or a section in a staff newsletter. Here's an example that you can amend as necessary:

To all staff,

We'd like to make you aware of some e-learning that's especially for employees of small workplaces, about looking after our mental health in the workplace. This training has been developed by Mind, the mental health charity.

Nearly one in three people have experienced mental health problems whilst in work, such as depression or anxiety. We're committed to making sure that everyone here at [insert organisation name] feels supported. That's why we're encouraging all employees to complete the Mental Health for Small Workplaces e-learning. Visit mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/smallworkplaces for more information and to register.

[sign off]

Signing up



Mental health for Small Workplaces is easy to use from any web browser – you don't need to install anything. We'd recommend that your employees use a desktop or laptop computer if possible. Everything you need to know about the training - including a copy of this guide - can be found at mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/smallworkplaces.

To register, simply send this link to your staff and they will be directed to the training. They can sign up quickly and easily with a few details.

mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/smallworkplaces

Getting support

It's great to start the conversation in your workplace and we hope that your employees will find this training valuable. Sometimes this can mean that people currently experiencing mental health problems will need some support, as sensitive conversations may bring up difficult things. We'd encourage you to think about the support and help that's already available in your organisation, and in your area, so you can highlight this to your employees. But you might also want to let them know about other sources of support:

- > **Mental Health at Work**
Website: www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk
Free, quick tools and advice from a range of experts all in one place, brought to you by Mind.

- > **Mind Infoline**
Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)
Email: info@mind.org.uk
Website: www.mind.org.uk/help/advice_lines
Mind provides confidential mental health information services.

- > **Samaritans**
Telephone: 116 123 (24 hours a day, free to call)
Email: jo@samaritans.org
Website: www.samaritans.org
Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide.

- > **Contact**
If you'd like to get in touch with the team behind this training, please email us on mentalhealthatwork@mind.org.uk



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