

# How to Talk to Your Staff About Mental Health

As a leader, it can be daunting to talk to staff when you notice they may be struggling. Even more so when one of their colleagues reports a change in their behaviour or difficulty working with them.

It's important that you approach the concern as a workplace performance issue when that applies. Be sure to raise the possibility of providing adjustments or accommodations as needed, and help the person access the right supports and resources.

## 4 Steps for Talking About Mental Health



### STEP 1 Prepare.

- Plan what you are going to say, including the questions you will ask.
- Review your plan and consult with a trusted advisor.
- Choose a suitable time and location to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- Allow enough time, and be prepared to listen.



### STEP 3 Generate options and offer support.

- Collaborate on desired outcomes.
- Consider adjustments that could be made for both the organization and the employee.
- Focus on creating solutions, not diagnosing the problem.



### STEP 2 Have the conversation and explore the concerns.

- Be curious and take a neutral stance.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Use active listening skills and state observations about behaviour in an impartial manner.
- Define the important issues.



### STEP 4 Come up with a plan.

- Together, define specific steps to be taken by all parties.
- Follow up at an agreed time.
- Review the action plan together.
- Provide and listen to feedback.