

Addressing Mental Health in the Workplace

Patrick Bailey

Addressing employee mental health can often feel taboo to executive coaches who are unsure how to approach it. Rather than shying away, challenge yourself to learn about your employees, prepare resources to support them, and create a culture of wellness they trust. By creating an infrastructure that promotes their wellbeing, employees will lean on you for support and thrilled to be part of your team.

Approachable Conversations

If you have opened your doors to employees as their executive coach, they should be able to come to you when they need support. Making yourself approachable and open to [conversations about mental health](#) is a positive way to earn your employees' trust and remind them you care about their wellbeing beyond the workplace. If you notice your coworker is struggling or stressed, a professional but caring coach check-in is appropriate in case they truly need support.

Ways to initiate employee coaching conversations about mental health include:

- "How are you doing lately?"
- "What can I do to support you right now?"
- "Are you taking enough breaks or time to recharge?"
- "Can I connect you to the best resource to help you with this?"

Resources

Executive coaches should actively keep a library of mental health resources to refer to when needed. Often times, work is at the core of peoples' stress and anxiety, so keeping this in mind allows you to go the extra mile and show them you are here to help. As a coach, you are qualified to refer them to certain resources or ask motivational interview questions to learn more about what they need. Ensuring that good mental health resources are available is a retention (and good faith) strategy that educates your employees to show up as the best versions of themselves and ask for help.

Mental health resources in executive coach arsenals should include:

- Treatment programs for alcoholism and other addictions
- Referrals for licensed psychologists or psychiatrists
- Hotlines and helplines for suicide and other emergency situations
- Support groups for various challenges
- Health and lifestyle coaches
- Relevant health insurance benefits

Proactive Culture

Coaches like yourself promote mentally healthy teams when your culture allows for mental health to have its place in the workplace. Burnout, anxiety, and overwhelm impact productivity (and overall general health), so it is also in the company's best interests to support employees. Look for ways to incorporate wellness and self-care into employee benefits and workplace activities, whether you provide more coaching sessions or implement new programs. Your employees will thank you by showing up to work as their best selves and staying loyal to a company that puts their mental health first.

Consider these ideas for building a workplace of wellness:

- Promote open conversations between team members
- Dedicate space for meditation and recharging
- Bring in wellness experts for mental health discussions
- Stock healthy food and tea in work kitchens
- Negotiate with health insurance benefits to include mental health services

Addressing mental health in the workplace can be professional and caring at the same time. Employees remain loyal and passionate about their jobs if they feel supported and cared for by a coach they trust. Invest in your company by researching and preparing ways to promote their mental health and the success of your team.