



PERSONAL WELL-BEING AND MANAGING STRESS FOR MANAGERS AND LEADERS

FACTSHEET 1: WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IMPORTANT?

The line manager sets the mood and tone of the work environment and can therefore make or break a culture of well-being. As such, as a manager you are one of the most influential aspects in the workplace on a person's well-being, their discretionary effort and whether they stay in their role.

Key benefits of an active approach to mental health and well-being include the positive measurable impacts it has on:

- yourself - your performance, job satisfaction, productivity, success, health and well-being

- your staff and team - the productivity and workplace culture of your team and the organization you work for
- your organization - the impact your organisation has for populations you serve

THIS FACTSHEET WILL COVER:

- **Your mental health matters**
- **Promoting well-being and managing mental health in the workplace**
- **Actions you can take**

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

As managers and leaders:

- 1. You are a representative of the organisation.** You have a responsibility to ensure that you deliver the outcomes expected to achieve the purpose of the Organisation. It is important that you are operating at your best to achieve those outcomes. This includes your health and well-being.

Your performance and your health and well-being, directly impacts your team, the Organisation and the people it serves.

- 2. You function as a role model.** Looking after your health and well-being contributes to establishing an appropriate workplace culture and means that you are an example to those around you. The tone you set in the workplace needs to balance achieving work objectives with how those results are achieved. Prioritising work deliverables at the expense of your team members, and your own health and well-being, can send the message that

the individual is replaceable, and poor health is OK and not worth bothering about. Good health and well-being is usually associated with high performance and effective productivity.

Your role as a manager / leader is to bring out the best in others, and yourself, in order to deliver the results, you need as an Organisation.

- 3. Your own sense of job satisfaction, success and well-being is important.** Looking after yourself is as important as the technical expertise, skills and knowledge you bring to your role. If you are not thriving, is it difficult to effectively deliver and role-model positive behaviours to your team?

You can have a more positive impact on the organisation, on people and on your life and career if you don't neglect yourself.



“In order to bring out the best in people, you need to give them your best.”

- Omar Suleiman

As a leader and manager, being the best version of yourself will help prepare you and your team for the changing nature of work, and the future of work. This is extremely important in times of uncertainty and change.

Fit for the future leadership and management requires:

- adopting leadership and management styles that are transformational rather than to command and control
- a focus on ‘people’ can lead to improved productivity and results

- being able to adapt to transformed workplaces in the age of technology, knowledge based transformation and remote work

To best enable and support your team to perform well in these uncertain and changing circumstances you need to start with yourself.

Successful leaders and managers globally take well-being, minimising stress and managing mental health in the workplace very seriously and therefore achieve significant returns on investment at an individual and collective level.

This can be measured in hard returns on investment:

Do nothing or very little	Focused effort for change and investment
Results in no change or an increase in:	Results in:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost working days from sickness/ absence and turnover • Underperforming in productivity due to presenteeism and low levels of discretionary effort. • Low job satisfaction and performance (quality) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in optimal discretionary effort leading to higher quality and higher productivity. • Higher job satisfaction

REFLECTION 1: LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT STYLE

This mini reflection is an opportunity to ask yourself some early questions. Write some notes in your own journal or use the workbook at the end of this document.

It would enhance your learning and self-reflection if you could do this exercise with peers or in discussion with your own manager. Even more useful is having recent direct feedback on the impact your style has in workplace from those you manage.

- i.** How would you describe your leadership and management style currently?
Is this the style you would like to be recognised for?
- ii.** How has it changed over recent years?
- iii.** Do you know the impact your “style” has on the workplace as a role model for good health and well-being – what feedback have you had?



PROMOTING WELL-BEING, AND MINIMISING STRESS, MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

You will get the results you set yourself up to achieve.

Understanding discretionary effort – why is it something to pay attention to?

Discretionary effort is essentially the amount of work we do when no one is looking.

It is considered a good measure of how staff feel about the work they are doing, the people they work with and the organisation. We are unlikely to see high levels of discretionary effort alongside high levels of sick absence.¹

Our discretionary effort ranges between 0-100%. To push continuously for 100% effort is likely to lead to burnout. We are not promoting overworking. The optimum sustainable level is around 80% to stay resilient and within the coping zone. Some people will do as much (or little) as they can get away with

without sanctions or disciplinary measures- this tends to be around 30% discretionary effort.

Understanding what impacts positively and adversely on our discretionary effort and doing something about it can pay huge dividends to you as a person, and your role as a manager/leader in the people, productivity and benefit triangle.

The aim is not 100 – 120% effort but to ensure we facilitate the 80% sustainably with the occasional burst if it is needed.

REFLECTION 2: DISCRETIONARY EFFORT

With your current role as a leader or manager in mind, write in your journal or use workbook at end of this document.

- i. What influences your personal level of discretionary effort in your current role?
- ii. Where would you consider your current level of discretionary effort: between 30% - 100%?
- iii. What is the impact of your current level of discretionary effort on your experience of struggling, surviving or thriving in your role? Has this changed?

1) 2019. Pages 23/24. Wellbeing at Work: How to Design, Implement and Evaluate an Effective Strategy.
By Ian Hesketh, Cary Cooper. CIPD. Kogan Page



One of the things you can most directly influence is yourself.

As managers and/or leaders it is very difficult to do our job well if we are suffering or languishing, from the impact of cumulative stress, poor mental health and/or poor well-being generally. This impacts you and others adversely.

Start with yourself.

- Adopt or strengthen effective leadership and management styles
- Build trust, healthy and safe workplace cultures and workplaces.
- TAKE ACTION. Complete some but preferably all the reflections to really understand your WHY. You can record your reflections in a personal journal or at the end of this fact sheet.

Start with one thing you can think, say and do differently.

REFLECTION 3: WHERE ARE YOU ON THE CONTINUUM AT PRESENT IN RELATION TO YOUR WORKING LIFE AS A MANAGER AND OR LEADER?

Read through the Self-Reflection table below as an initial reflection.

Think about how this relates to you over the past four – six weeks.

- i. How well are you doing in balancing your work's impact on your energy, thinking, emotions and resilience?
- ii. Circle or highlight the statements that you relate strongly to because you have thought this or said to yourself or someone else. These are all based on other personal experiences and comments.
- iii. Has this changed recently, or has it been like this for some time?

- **This is not a scientifically validated assessment** but an initial reflection for you to check-in on yourself, where you relate to most over the past 4-6 weeks based on lived experience and comments of other managers and leaders.
- If you are on the left-hand side, we would strongly recommend you do assess this further and seek some help to do so.



SELF-REFLECTION – DO ANY OF THESE SOUND LIKE YOU?

Struggling - Languishing	Frustrated - Coping	Doing OK - Performing	Successful- Thriving
<p>I am not really making progress with anything and living in quiet despair about it.</p> <p>I am falling behind in my work. Some days I struggle to get anything much done.</p> <p>I am having more days off but still don't seem to be feeling better.</p> <p>I am having quite a bit of trouble with maintaining good relationships at work often due to how I am feeling, thinking and communicating.</p> <p>I notice I am irritable/ grumpy most of the time with the people around me, and towards myself.</p> <p>I am struggling. I feel overwhelmed and or stressed, anxious or worried much of the time (More than 75/80% of the time). I am not my usual myself.</p> <p>I feel stuck and not able to bounce back from some of the challenges at work.</p> <p>I feel like I am on edge of not coping at all or burn out.</p> <p>I struggle with sleep, regulating my emotions, thinking clearly and making decisions.</p>	<p>I am coping, just keeping my head above water but concerned how long I can keep this up.</p> <p>I am not really myself or how I would like to be.</p> <p>I feel frustrated with my role and work situation a fair amount of the time.</p> <p>I notice I am more irritable with people.</p> <p>I am more irritable and critical with myself – the inner critic is quite strong at the moment.</p> <p>I have noticed in my health, my mind and body, some of the symptoms of built up stress and/or poor mental health.</p> <p>I have started to lose or have lost my health and well-being habits – it feels hard to keep these up - I don't have time.</p> <p>I feel frustrated and sometimes just not engaged in my working life, and not getting as much satisfaction from it.</p>	<p>I'm doing OK.</p> <p>I feel like I am performing my role pretty well much of the time (60-75% of time).</p> <p>Although I am doing OK, I think there is potential to improve, or go to another level - particularly my awareness, knowledge and skills in topping up my well-being, managing my mental health better and minimising impact of stress I experience.</p> <p>I do notice some symptoms of distress, but I tend to resolve these quite quickly.</p> <p>I notice that my working relationship are mostly strong. I am supportive with my team, and peers and I feel my communication is clear, consistent and calm.</p> <p>I practice my health and well-being habits most days.</p> <p>I enjoy my job and get a good level of job satisfaction much of the time.</p>	<p>I have the energy, optimism and ideas I need to thrive and be successful in my role most of the time (75% or more of the time).</p> <p>While I do sometimes experience distress, and the pressure of challenges we have at work, I bounce back quickly.</p> <p>I have well established habits that keep my well-being and health strong – and I make sure I am consistent in keeping up with these habits.</p> <p>I am creative in solving issues we face at work and we are delivering great results.</p> <p>I receive great feedback from my team on my leadership/ management style and the level of trust.</p> <p>I enjoy strong trusting workplace partnerships.</p> <p>In general, I love my job.</p> <p>I feel like I have very clear sense of purpose.</p>



WHAT SHOULD YOU BE DOING?

Struggling - Languishing	Frustrated - Coping	Doing OK - Performing	Successful- Thriving
<p>Seek advice NOW and help with recovery if that is appropriate.</p> <p>Do not treat suffering with high cumulative stress and/or poor mental health as a badge of honour – it's not. It is nothing to feel shame about either, but you do need to TAKE ACTION now. It will just get worse if you don't.</p> <p>What you do now will strongly impact on how your health, career and life is impacted over the next weeks, months and years.</p>	<p>Invest your attention, time and energy into ACTING EARLY and PREVENTION, while continuing to work on promotion and protecting strong well-being and good health – this will likely take some focused effort, clear identification of strengths and issues and a plan. Seek advice to get yourself started.</p>	<p>Invest your energy and attention on Promotion, Protection and Prevention.</p> <p>Have a daily attitude of prevention and build your awareness, knowledge and skills, know your potential vulnerabilities, understand source of potential harm and have a plan for dealing with them if they arise.</p>	<p>Invest your energy and attention towards promotion and protection - sustaining strong well-being, health and resilience for day to day and when the going gets tough.</p>



SUMMARY OF KEY MESSAGES AND STEPS

WELL-BEING

- Well-being is the foundation - focus on this first and stay focused on it whether you have strong or poor well-being.
- It is the key ingredient for promotion, protection, prevention, resilience and recovery at an individual level (and a collective workplace level)

GOOD HEALTH

- Focus on the basics of your health, for example, diet, exercise, sleep.
- Find out what you can access in terms of health promotion at work.
- Establish your health habits and support others at work in theirs.

STRESS

- Learn how to identify early when you experience distress - how it shows up in your body (physical sensations, ill-health) and in your mind (thinking and feelings).
- Prevent or minimize and manage exposure to adverse and/or prolonged stress - at work and in your life.
- Learn about psychosocial hazards in your workplace. Collaborate with staff in your team, the Staff Counsellor, and senior management on a plan to address them and create a healthy workplace.
- Understand your individual responsibilities around awareness, reporting and taking action where appropriate.

MENTAL HEALTH

- We all have mental health. Invest in your positive mental health - practice mental hygiene or habits that build mental fitness and support/encourage others with theirs.
- Be mindful of where you are on the mental health continuum. Act early if you notice you are in 'just coping' or 'problem point' - Seek help and support if you are struggling. Ask others (twice) are they OK if you notice changes in them.
- Build your knowledge and awareness to combat mental health stigma and discrimination
- Learn how to recognise early signs in yourself and in others - start a conversation.

RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

- Resilience is our ability and capacity to bounce back and grow after dealing with adversity and the challenges in life
- We can learn and strengthen our resilience. Sometimes we have different levels of resilience in different parts of our life and at different times. Know your resilience strengths and keep investing in them.
- Recovery thinking is about our journey to living life well, in the presence or absence of symptoms of poor health. It is about empowering people to lead their own recovery, draws on their strengths, resilience and decision making. It recognises what may have happened in someone's life rather than what's wrong with them.
- Recovery thinking is an important approach to support others achieve their goals and aspirations.



FACTSHEET WORKBOOK - TAKE ACTION

Start with yourself.

Where are you now/over past month

In your journal write your reflections on the questions below.

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I would describe my current leadership and management style/s as...

I would like to be recognised for this styles – Yes | No | Not Sure | comment

My leadership and management styles has changed over the past 5 years in these ways:

-
-
-

My “style” and my impact as a role model for good health and well-being has impacted on the workplace in the following ways:

-
-

The type of feedback I get is:

-
-
-



REFLECTION 2: DISCRETIONARY EFFORT

What are the three main influences on your personal level of discretionary effort in your current role?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Where would you consider your current level of discretionary effort sits between 30% - 100%? Please circle or tick:

<30% 30-40% 40-50% 50-60% 60-70% 70-80% 80-90% 90-100%

What is the impact of your current level of discretionary effort on your experience of struggling, surviving or thriving in your role?

Has this changed recently/ in the past 6 weeks?

How important to the work of the team, Department, Division or your organisation is the discretionary effort – of yourself, and of your staff in general?

What do you need to do to make a positive change to your discretionary effort – either increasing, reducing or keeping the same

-
-
-



REFLECTION 3: WHERE ARE YOU ON THE CONTINUUM AT PRESENT IN RELATION TO YOUR WORKING LIFE AS A MANAGER AND OR LEADER?

Read through the table on page 5 & 6 as an initial reflection.

- **This is not a scientifically validated assessment** but an initial reflection for you to check-in on yourself, where you relate to most over the past 4-6 weeks based on lived experience and comments of other managers and leaders.
- **If you are on the left-hand side, we would strongly recommend you do assess this further and seek some help to do so.**

Think about how this relates to you over the past four – six weeks.

How well are you doing in balancing your work's impact on your energy, thinking, emotions and resilience? ...

Circle or highlight the statements that you relate strongly to because you have thought this or said to yourself or someone else. These are all based on other personal experiences and comments.

Has this changed recently, or has it been like this for some time? Yes No Not Sure

In Summary:

Start with yourself.

- Adopt or strengthen effective leadership and management styles
- Build trust, healthy and safe workplace cultures and workplaces.
- TAKE ACTION.

Start with ONE thing you can think, say and do differently.

