



Toolbox Talk Template: Mental Health in the Workplace

Title: Mental Health in the Workplace: Building a Supportive and Safe Environment

Introduction:

Presenter Name and Role:

Hi, **who you are**

Purpose of Today's Toolbox Talk:

In today's 10 minute session, we'll cover:

1. How mental health impacts workplace safety and productivity.
 2. How to identify when someone may need mental health support.
 3. Tools like stress risk assessments and wellness action plans.
 4. Practical strategies for building a wellbeing-first culture.
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Key Content:

1. Mental Health and Workplace Impact

- **Key Statistic:** 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year.
 - Mental health affects how we think, feel, and function - just like physical health.
 - Poor mental health can lead to:
 - **Concentration Issues:** Mistakes and accidents.
 - **Stress and Fatigue:** Burnout, poor decision-making, slower reactions.
 - **Team Impact:** One person's struggles can affect overall morale and safety.
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2. Identifying When Someone May Need Support

Look for these **early warning signs** in yourself or colleagues:

- Lack of focus or memory issues.
- Irritability, frustration, or being "out of character."
- Physical signs: headaches, fatigue, trouble sleeping.

Steps to Start a Conversation:

1. **Choose the Right Setting:** Find a quiet, private place.
2. **Express Your Concerns:** Say, "I've noticed you're not yourself lately. How are you?"



3. **Ask Twice:** It's natural to say "I'm fine" initially. Ask again to show genuine care.
 4. **Listen:** Focus on understanding, not fixing.
 5. **Reassure and Support:** Let them know you're there for them.
 6. **Signpost to Help:** Share resources like Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or contact details for Mental Health First Aiders.
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3. Tools for Supporting Mental Health

Stress Risk Assessment

- **What It Is:** A process to identify and address workplace stressors.
- **Steps:**
 1. Identify stress triggers (e.g., workload, role clarity).
 2. Evaluate the impact and address major concerns.
 3. Monitor and review progress regularly.

Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

- **What It Is:** A personalised tool that helps employees and managers collaborate on mental health strategies.
 - **Benefits:**
 - Empowers employees to communicate needs.
 - Helps managers offer tailored support.
 - Builds a culture of trust and openness.
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4. Building a Wellbeing-First Culture

1. **Foster Open Communication:**
 - Normalise conversations about mental health.
 - Use regular check-ins: *"How are you doing today?"* and *"How can I help?"*
2. **Lead by Example:**
 - Take breaks and prioritise your own wellbeing.
 - Show empathy and support when employees open up.
3. **Share Resources:**
 - Provide access to EAPs, Mental Health First Aiders, or external support groups.
 - Encourage employees to use these resources without fear of judgment.



4. Encourage Balance:

- Respect personal time.
 - Promote regular breaks and discourage skipping lunch.
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5. Practical Tips for Self-Care and Team Support

For Employees:

- Take regular breaks and get fresh air.
- Engage in physical activity, like walking or a steps challenge.
- Speak up if you're overwhelmed - adjusting workloads can make a difference.

For Teams:

- Create informal opportunities to connect, like a buddy system.
- Share simple stress-relief techniques, like deep breathing or mindfulness.

Personal Self-Care Suggestions:

- Talk to a trusted friend.
 - Stay active - find an activity you enjoy.
 - Prioritise sleep and good nutrition.
 - Do something kind for someone else - it boosts your mood too!
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3 Key Takeaways

1. **Ask Twice:** Show genuine care by checking in beyond surface answers.
 2. **Listen to Understand:** Focus on understanding, not offering quick fixes.
 3. **Be Kind:** It costs nothing and could mean the world to someone struggling.
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Closing Summary

- **We all have mental health**, just like physical health, and mental health challenges are common.
- **Stigma stops people from talking**, so lead by example and keep the conversation going.
- Support others and look after yourself - drink water, move your body, and prioritise sleep.

Remember: By being proactive and supportive, we can create a healthier, safer workplace where everyone thrives.

