

NEWS FROM THE HR TEAM



3 ways the cost-of-living crisis is affecting your team



The cost-of-living crisis is affecting most of us in one way or another. And your employees are no different. In fact, our teams are more stressed than ever, and that's going to have a knock-on effect on your business.

How? There are 3 main ways you're going to notice the impact:

EMPLOYEE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Everyone experiences stress in their lives, but at a time when there's so much to worry about, we're seeing more employees struggling with stress, anxiety, and depression.

REDUCED PRODUCTIVITY

When your people are struggling with poor mental health, they have less focus for the job at hand. That means they're doing less, so your productivity levels take a tumble.

INCREASED ABSENTEEISM

Stress is the most common cause of long-term absenteeism, so it's easy to understand why you may see an increase in people taking sick leave throughout this crisis.

As well as wanting to help your employees avoid these issues, you'll need to protect your business from the impact of the cost-of-living crisis too.

If your business can't increase employees' pay right now, you need to look at what else you can do to help ease this burden. And placing a focus on mental health and wellbeing is just the way to do that.

There are lots of effective ways to encourage better mental health and wellbeing at work. And because we spend a lot of our lives in the workplace, it's important that you make sure your employees are taking the time to stay healthy, both mentally and physically.

Here are 3 simple ways you can help your people relieve or avoid additional stress:

1. Talk to them

Yes, it sounds basic, but talking to your people, asking them how they are, and an open and honest conversation can be a huge help for your people. Once they realise that it's ok to talk about things that may be bothering them, it'll be easier for you all to help them work through any worries and provide useful solutions or support.








2. Encourage them to take breaks

You know just how easy it is to hit burnout when you're working hard and have constant worries on top of that. One of the simplest ways to avoid this is by taking a break. That means you should be making your employees take their regular breaks during the working day, but also making sure they use their annual leave, even if they're not going away.

3. Look at other ways to boost happiness

That makes it sound simple, and of course it isn't that easy to make everyone happy! But look at the small tweaks you could make to create a big impact. Think about offering better flexibility, wellness programmes, or running stress management workshops.

If you'd like a hand dealing with increased stress in your business, give us a call to see how we can help.

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Is it time to tackle stress in your business?



April is Stress Awareness Month. If your business is going to take part in any awareness month, this is one of the most relevant ones to so many of us.

That's because stress and work, unfortunately, go hand in hand. In fact (brace yourself for this scary stat), stress is responsible for 40% of all work-related sickness in the UK. Effectively, 4 in every 10 sick days is because of stress.

What does that look like for your business? Do you have a lot of stress going on? Are the causes easy to spot? And vitally, are your people confident enough to talk about the issues with you or a direct manager?

It's not only workload that can be the trigger to workplace stress, either. We spend a lot of our time at work, so it makes sense that many different factors can be the cause of our stress. It could be long hours, conflict with colleagues, tight deadlines... or something else. There are a lot of possibilities.

Whatever the cause, as a business owner you have a responsibility to look out for the good health and wellbeing of your team. That means identifying when your people are dealing with a lot

of stress and dealing with both the cause and the resulting effects.

That means you should hold open and honest discussions about stress with everybody in your business, and make sure everyone knows what actions they should take if they feel their stress levels rising or becoming problematic.

Train your managers in stress awareness to make sure they're on the lookout for any signs that someone is struggling, and make sure everyone understands the possible solutions and support on offer.

Part of this year's official awareness campaign is a 30 day challenge, designed to help people create new healthy habits. It encourages us to pick one action each for our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, to do each day. This could be making sure you're getting enough sleep, that you're including more healthy foods in your diet, or even socialising a little more.

Is this something you could promote in your workplace to help ease the impact of stress? If so, we'd love to hear how your 30 day challenge goes!

LATEST NEWS;



10% of business owners consider decreasing salaries for remote workers

1 in 10 employers have said they would decrease the salary of home workers, according to new research. This could be a big mistake though. Not only are remote and hybrid workers happier and more engaged in their roles, but, thanks to the cost of living crisis, it's not necessarily less expensive to work from home rather than commute. Electricity and heating bills mount up!

<https://hrnews.co.uk/one-in-ten-uk-business-leaders-consider-decreasing-salaries-of-employees-working-remotely/>



Employers should shout about their charity work

A new study has found that 70% of people think their employers should be more transparent about their charitable donations. Almost half of employees don't know what percentage of profits are donated to good causes, and 35% don't think their employer donates at all.

47% of people would be more inclined to want to work for a company that gives back in this way.

<https://hrnews.co.uk/employers-should-shout-louder-about-their-giving-to-attract-new-talent/>

LATEST NEWS;

More businesses are favouring a casual dress code at work

According to research, more job ads are specifying a casual dress code than they have in the past 4 years.

Almost 80% of job adverts promoted casual attire, which may be thanks to the rise in remote and hybrid working, or possibly because of a shift in workplace cultures.

What's your dress code like today, and how has it changed since 2020?

<https://hrnews.co.uk/four-year-high-in-job-ads-citing-a-casual-dress-code-as-employers-favour-comfort-over-presentation/>



Employees worked a massive £26 billion in unpaid overtime last year

3.5 million people in the UK put in overtime last year, and weren't paid for it, according to research. That equates to 7.4 hours of unpaid time each week. And it means employers benefitted from £26 billion worth of free labour.

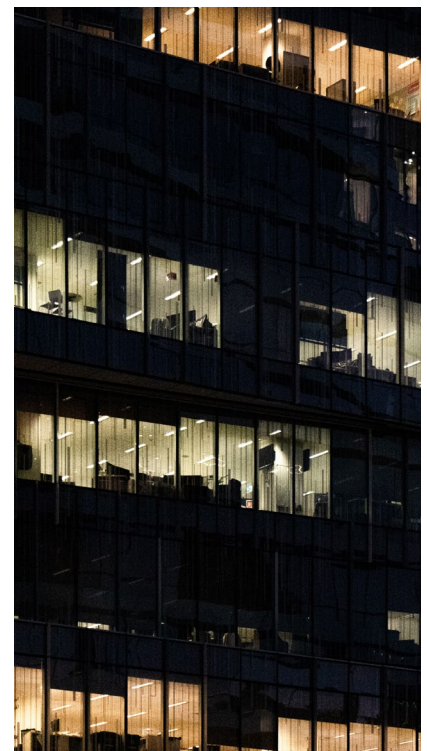
Of course, some employees don't mind putting in extra hours, but some employers are relying on this work, which makes it exploitation.

The side effects of long working hours can be increased stress, sickness, and burnout.

<https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/content/news/uk-employees-worked-26-billion-in-unpaid-overtime-in-2022>

6 in 10 employers say they would consider hiring ex-offenders this year. However, a fifth said they would only look to ex-offenders if the role had been open for six months or more. 23% of employers said they wouldn't trust these employees to behave appropriately at work.

<https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/content/news/most-employers-would-consider-hiring-ex-offenders-in-2023>



Q&A

My employee has informed me they are pregnant, what do I do next?

First, offer your congratulations! Arrange a meeting to discuss dates – due date, maternity leave, appointments, return to work etc. – and plan a risk assessment to make sure working conditions are still suitable. Make sure your employee knows what they need to provide and what to expect from you.

What is Shared Parental Leave?

Shared Parental Leave allows a new mother to share a portion of their maternity leave with their partner. Parents can share up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay in the first year from birth.



Do I need to conduct return to work interviews after sickness?

Ideally, yes, regardless of the reason for absence. Not only is it a good way to welcome back an employee and tell them what they've missed, but it helps you keep track of absence and spot if there are any underlying issues not being mentioned.