

# Create a culture of mental wellbeing



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What do you do to encourage wellness for your team? Mental health is an important part of physical health. And mental health concerns can impact your organization. In fact, untreated mental illness can account for approximately \$105 billion in lost productivity each year in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

## The impact of stigma

Even though mental health issues are widespread, there's a lot of misinformation. And many believe mental illness is a sign of weakness or makes people dangerous.<sup>2</sup> It's not uncommon to hear the media reference mental illness in relation to horrific crimes.

Considering this stigma, it's no surprise that people are afraid of being judged. They may be afraid of missing out on opportunities in the workplace. And people sometimes internalize these stigmatizing beliefs, thinking of themselves with negative labels like, "crazy."

Worst of all, stigma prevents people from seeking help for their mental health problems. In fact, up to 75 percent of people with a mental health issue don't seek professional support.<sup>3</sup>

## Lead the way

As a manager, you're in a unique position to set the tone when it comes to health and wellness. You don't need to diagnose or solve problems (in fact — you shouldn't for liability reasons). But you can help reduce stigma and point your staff toward resources.

## Spread education and reduce stigma

How do you support mental well-being in your workplace while avoiding issues of liability? One of the best things you can do is create opportunities to learn about mental health issues. Consider these programs:

- **Stamp out stigma.** Find out about mental health issues and pledge to help reduce stigma at [stampoutstigma.com](http://stampoutstigma.com).
- **The Campaign to Change Direction.** Learn five of the signs a person might be suffering emotionally and how you can show compassion at [changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org).

A healthy workplace is a productive workplace. Think of the ways you support physical health initiatives. And remember — mental health is a critical piece of overall health. You can't be healthy unless you're emotionally and mentally well.

<sup>1</sup>Williams, Ray. [The Silent Tsunami: Mental Health in the Workplace](#). Accessed on February 6, 2018.

<sup>2</sup>Morin, Amy. [The 5 Most Common Misconceptions About Mental Illness](#). Accessed on February 6, 2018.

<sup>3</sup>Stigma Still a Major Hurdle in Getting People the Mental Health Care They Need. Accessed on February 6, 2018.

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