

Taking care of your own mental health at work

Your Guide to

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS



Mental Health
in the workplace

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

INTRODUCTION

Statistics show that one in four people in the UK are experiencing a mental health issue at any one time.

Fortunately, employers are beginning to recognise the link between work and mental health, and we are beginning to see a change in approach from reactively 'managing' the issue to proactively 'improving' working conditions and 'promoting' a culture of wellbeing.

Employers who choose to adopt this approach provide education and tools to enable their people to take personal responsibility for, and manage their own mental wellbeing, both at work and at home.

Mental Health In The Workplace specialise in supporting organisations with this approach with strategic advice & facilitation, education & training and practical tools.

This guide is for you if you are employed or volunteering for an organisation and would like to understand how you can support your own mental wellbeing at work.

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

What is a

WELLNESS ACTION PLAN?

Firstly, it is not necessary to be experiencing a mental health issue in order to benefit from having a Wellness Action Plan in place. In fact, because the intention behind one is *prevention*, it makes sense to have one in place, even when we are in positive mental health.

Just like we all have physical health, we all have mental health and a Wellness Action Plan enables us to identify what we can do to proactively support our own mental wellbeing at work.

It helps us to identify specifically what causes us stress at work (our unique triggers and responses) and what doesn't, how to spot the signs if we do begin to experience challenges and what to do to address them.

Whilst it's not essential for a manager to be involved in creating your Wellness Action Plan, it is advisable to involve them, as the process of creating it together encourages open dialogue, which enables increased self-awareness and enables both you and your manager to understand *you* better, so they can effectively support you. This is especially important if your role involves remote working, or your interaction with your manager is limited.

A Wellness Action Plan can also be a very useful tool to facilitate a successful return to work after a mental health related absence as it provides important information as well as a framework within which to have conversations around workplace adjustments and other support that will aid a successful return for everyone.



WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

Creating a

WELLNESS ACTION PLAN

Creating a Wellness Action Plan will enable you to gain essential self awareness of what works for you (and what doesn't!) when it comes to managing your own wellbeing and to identify what habits and behaviours you can adopt as well as what support you can ask for to help you plan for the future.

In the event that you do experience a mental health issue, you and your manager will both be able to refer to your Wellness Action Plan and implement the ideas in it to support you.

Your Wellness Action Plan can be created by you and kept for yourself, created by you and shared with your manager, or created in partnership with your manager – it is entirely up to you.

We advise involving your manager in the creation of your Wellness Action Plan as they are likely to be best placed to support you if it ever needs to be applied.

If you do choose to involve your manager, the Wellness Action Plan needs to be written by you in your words, expressing your own thoughts, feelings, experiences and ideas.

Your manager's role is to be there to understand your experience and to discuss the content of the plan, including any adjustments or other support that might be relevant, but the process is led by you and the plan is owned by you.

It's important to review your Wellness Action Plan regularly to reflect new knowledge or insights.

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

Your

WELLNESS ACTION PLAN

The content of this Wellness Action Plan, if shared with your manager (which we recommend), will be held in confidence (please see the footer for the exception to this).

Whilst the more open you are, the more your manager will be able to support you, you need only divulge thoughts, feelings and information that you are comfortable sharing and that relates to your work.

1. WHAT CREATES/INCREASES STRESS FOR YOU AT WORK?

Examples: change, workload, deadlines, conflict, noise.

*Helps to
understand
stressors*

In order to fulfil their legal obligation to protect the health and safety of their people, your employer may be obliged to break confidentiality if they believe that you or someone else is at serious risk of harm.

Your Guide to

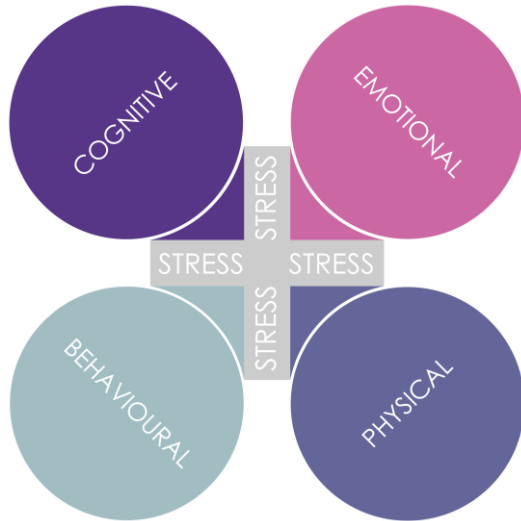
WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

Helps to understand symptoms

2. HOW SPECIFICALLY DOES STRESS IMPACT ON YOU?

Tick the symptoms that you experience most commonly.

Inability to focus/concentrate
Difficulty making decisions
Poor retention/recollection
Uncharacteristic errors
Negative perspective
Racing thoughts
Constant worrying
Forgetfulness
Disorganisation
Poor judgment



Overwhelm/powerlessness
Anger without cause
Moodiness/irritability
Guilt without cause
Fear without cause
Loneliness/isolation
Depression
Obsessions
Paranoia
Sadness

Panic
Tearful
Self-harm
Aggressiveness
Social withdrawal
Fidgeting/nail biting
Relationship problems
Increased alcohol/caffeine
Changes in appetite/eating
Grinding teeth/clenched fists

Headaches
Tiredness/fatigue
Dry mouth/throat
Digestion problems
Sleeping difficulties
Rashes and eczema
Sweating/clammy hands
Shakiness, tremors, twitches
Racing pulse/rapid breathing
Muscle tension and/or aches

What did you notice?

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

3. HOW MIGHT THESE SYMPTOMS IMPACT YOU AT WORK?

Examples: decision making, prioritising, concentrating, participating.

*Helps you
spot signs of
stress*

4. WHAT MIGHT HELP TO LIMIT THESE SYMPTOMS AT WORK?

Examples: clarity, teamwork, breaks, air, banter, space, quiet.

*Helps you
identify
solutions*

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5. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MINIMISE THE STRESSORS?

Examples: diet, sleep, prep, breathing, exercise, ask for help.

*Helps you
manage your
stress*

6. WHAT CAN WE DO TO MINIMISE THE STRESSORS?

Examples: guidance, adjustments, regular catch ups.

*Helps
us support
you*

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7. WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU BEGIN TO SEE SIGNS?

Examples: talk to a colleague/manager, take a break, get outside.

*Helps you
feel in
control*

8. WHAT CAN WE DO IF WE BEGIN TO SEE SIGNS?

Examples: talk to you about it, contact someone you've specified.

*Helps
us support
you*

WELLNESS ACTION PLANS

*Helps us
understand
you*

9. WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE?

Examples: your preference for email or face to face communication, your need for quiet to focus on particular tasks, your desire for a buddy to talk to, or your need for clear deadlines.

This Wellness Action Plan was created by:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____