

VinciWorks



# Mental Health

## Wellbeing at Work



**Gary Yantin**

Director of Best Practice  
VinciWorks



**Nick Henderson**

Director of Learning and Content  
VinciWorks

## Mental Health: Wellbeing at Work

- Useful tips and suggestions from a range of organisations
- “Stress at work” assessment which can help pinpoint teams and departments which could be at risk
- Dedicated module for managers instantly added via a “course builder”
- Fully customisable - Include internal policies, resources and your organisation’s commitment to your staff’s wellbeing



**What legal obligations do companies have when it comes to mental health?**

## Employers' legal obligations towards mental health

- Employers also have a duty to assess and mitigate the risk of stress-related mental ill health
- Excessive exposure to stressful situations can trigger mental health conditions, or exacerbate existing ones
- Should be addressed the same way other health and safety matters are addressed
- Employers are liable if an employee develops PTSD as a result of work-related stress for example

## Mental health and the Equality Act 2010

- Some mental health conditions may be considered a disability:
  - Depression
  - Schizophrenia
  - Bipolar affective disorder
  - Others
- Entitled to reasonable adjustments at work
- Those who have suffered in the past are also protected by The Act



**If someone is disabled under the law, what responsibilities does an employer have?**

## Employers' obligations towards staff with a disability

- Staff with a disability are entitled to reasonable adjustments in the workplace, including:
  - Flexible working hours for appointments
  - Quiet areas to work
  - Support with managing workload
  - Changes to contracted hours
  - Phased return to work after time off
  - Developing a wellness and recovery action plan with the employer





**Gary Yantin**

Director of Best Practice  
VinciWorks



**Ben Morris**

Head of Employee Relations  
DAC Beachcroft LLP



**What initiatives have you introduced at DAC Beachcroft?**

## Mental health and wellbeing initiatives

- Collating and sharing resources with staff and other firms
- Face-to-face and over-the-phone counselling
- Inviting guest speakers
- Discounted gym memberships
- Training sessions
  - Yoga
  - Mindfulness
  - Health checks



**What is the connection  
between mental and  
physical health?**

## Connecting mental and physical health

- Exercise is key to relaxing our minds
- Benefits of exercise:
  - Detoxes our bodies
  - Helps change our perspective
- Add more exercise to daily routine, even if it's just a few minutes
  - Get off the bus one stop early
- Include others in your exercise
  - Walking groups



What is the role of leadership regarding change?

## The role of leadership

- Support for initiatives and promoting culture change should come from the top
- Anyone can be a leader
- Measure what's important
- Leaders should challenge behaviour that is contradictory to the organisation's values



**What can organisations do to support staff in light of the spread of COVID-19?**



## Supporting staff through the pandemic

- Be understanding to all employees' worries
- Be flexible
  - Allow people to work from home
  - Enforce a temporary change of policy to support working from home
- Have a daily team meeting
- Ensure your staff have everything they need to work effectively
- An opportunity to develop better practice for the office



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**What are the benefits of  
mental health first aiders?**

## What are the benefits of mental health first aiders?

- A great initiative as part of a set of measures
- Consider it holistically as part of a range
- Might not be sufficient on its own
- Important to have a range of initiatives



**What is the correct terminology to use with regards to this topic?**

## Using the correct terminology

- Work-related stress can aggravate an existing mental health condition
- Once this happens, separating stress from other mental health conditions difficult
- The better an employee's wellbeing, the less likely they are to suffer from stress
- Better to keep language on the topic neutral
  - E.g. **'issues'** and **'conditions'** rather than **'problems'** and **'illness'**



**Gary Yantin**  
Director of Best Practice  
VinciWorks



**Kate Dodd**  
Diversity and Inclusion Specialist  
Pinsent Masons LLP



**What strategies are firms putting in place to deal with the Coronavirus pandemic?**



## Tackling the coronavirus outbreak

- Uncertainty and lack of control can increase stress and anxiety
- Challenges facing staff during this crisis:
  - Isolation
  - Working from home
  - Removal of familiar support system
  - Stress in both the work life and personal life
- “We’re all in this together” attitude
- Encourage staff to speak face-to-face even when working remotely



## What is the Mindful Business Charter?

## The Mindful Business Charter

- The last 10 years has seen a huge shift in how quickly staff are expected to respond to clients
- This has impacted employees' wellbeing
  - Staff don't feel they are able to switch off at home or while on holiday
  - Those with families are unable to balance work-life and home-life
- The MBC was launched to tackle the root cause of work-related mental health issues



## What's in the Mindful Business Charter?

## The Mindful Business Charter

- **Openness and respect**
  - Being respectful of everyone's preferred method of communication
- **Smart meetings and emails**
  - Being respectful of others' time by planning meetings properly
  - Avoiding over-use of email and not copying people into emails that they don't need to receive

## The Mindful Business Charter

- **Respecting rest periods**
  - Let people switch off from work
- **Mindful delegation**
  - Negotiating rather than imposing a deadline
  - Being confident to flag unrealistic deadlines

## The four pillars of the Mindful Business Charter

- Openness and respect
- Smart meetings and emails
- Respecting rest periods
- Mindful delegation



What is the impact on firms who are not mindful of mental health and wellbeing?



## The impact on firms who aren't thinking about mental health

- More difficult to attract talented staff
- Impacts reputation
  - Workplace review websites
  - Social media
- High turnover of staff and people who often take time off work for mental health reasons reduces company productivity
- The MBC aims to reduce “unnecessary causes of stress”

## Pressure Vs stress

- Pressure can be a positive thing
  - Increases productivity
  - Creates camaraderie within a team
  - Feels good to complete a task on time
- Law Society survey shows 1 in 15 junior lawyers have experienced suicidal thoughts in the months leading up to the survey
- Stress levels are likely to be exacerbated in light of the spread of the Coronavirus



**Does management need to be involved in promoting mental health?**

## Involving senior staff in the process

- First initiatives began with inviting junior lawyers and PAs to talk about mental health
- Senior staff then followed
- Many are still concerned about being stigmatised for their mental health issues
- Seeing mental health issues in their children has opened people's eyes to the wider problem



**What is a mental health  
champion?**

## Mental health first aiders and champions

- “First aider” creates an expectation of someone who has a clinical qualification
- Mental health champions are trained to keep an eye out on their colleagues and point them to supportive resources and services
  - A half-day course rather than a two-day course
  - Creates advocates for mental health and wellbeing
  - Results in more people being involved
  - Improves workplace culture



What practical steps can we put in place to support staff?

## Practical steps in light of COVID-19

- Join the Mindful Business Charter: [www.mindfulbusinesscharter.com](http://www.mindfulbusinesscharter.com)
  - Have a separate code of conduct for each department
- Leadership buy-in
  - Encourage senior staff to share their own experiences
- Social connectedness is key to solving crises
  - Strive to stay connected when working remotely
  - Video calls rather than phone calls
- Talking about our concerns shows others they are not alone





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**Nick Henderson**

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VinciWorks

## Mental Health: Wellbeing at Work

- Designed to give users an understanding of some of the causes of stress at work
- Fully customisable - Include internal policies, resources and your organisation's commitment to your staff's wellbeing
- "Stress at work" assessment which can help pinpoint teams and departments that could be at risk
- Dedicated module for managers instantly added via a "course builder"
- Nominated for the InsideOut mental health awards in the "Best Use of Technology" category



## Welcome to Mental Health: Wellbeing at Work

Please choose the version most relevant to you:

- United States
- United Kingdom
- Hong Kong
- International

Next



## Watch out for these warning signs:



High-pressure environments



Lone working



High-risk roles



Negative relationships or poor communication



Job insecurity or poor change management



Unmanageable workloads or lack of control over work



People working long hours and not taking breaks



An unsupportive workplace culture or lack of management support





## Stress risks at work

Take this stress risk test and pinpoint your biggest stress risks. This assessment is completely anonymous. Your scores are not recorded.

Here are six key causes of stress at work. Consider each area and rate how much stress it causes you. Remember, this is anonymous.

### Your workload

Is your workload reasonable and achievable in relation to your hours and role?

Low  
stress



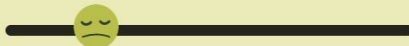
High  
stress



### Hours and breaks

Are you involved in decisions about your hours, breaks and work patterns?

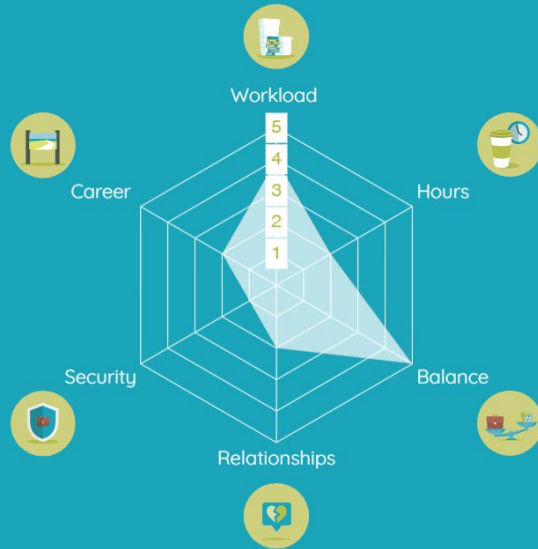
Low  
stress



High  
stress



## Stress risks at work



Your stress risk is:

**Medium** - Being exposed to too much stress at work could end up being damaging in the long term. Sorting out issues before they become problems can be beneficial.



## Welcome to your dashboard



Signs and symptoms



Promoting wellbeing



All about stress

1

Mental health and wellbeing

Additional resources



Click on a circle to find out about common signs and symptoms of each mental health condition.

Depression

Anxiety and  
panic attacks

Post-traumatic  
stress disorder  
(PTSD)

Obsessive-  
compulsive  
disorder (OCD)

Eating  
problems

Addiction







How can I justify spending money on initiatives around mental health and wellbeing?

## How can I justify new spend?

- Cost of mental health to UK employers is somewhere between £33 billion and £42 billion a year
- 12.8 million working days are lost every year from poor employee mental health and wellbeing
- The law protects those with mental health issues
- [Download our report](#)

## Q&A



**How do you make yourself visible in the workplace so initial contacts can be made?**

## Q&A



**What are the factors that contribute to a healthy working environment, including those not linked to salary?**

## Q&A



What is the best way to demonstrate that mental health awareness boosts productivity?



VinciWorks

Thank you for joining us

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For any questions on our training, email  
[training@vinciworks.com](mailto:training@vinciworks.com)

0208 815 9308