

Minding Workplace Mental Health & Morale During Turbulent Times

April 30, 2020

Reliance Insurance Webinar

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Zoom Functionalities & Logistics

- Angus and Alyson will be on-video on audio
- Participants are muted on audio and video.
- At the end of the presentation feel free to ask questions or make comments via *Zoom Chat*, Angus will moderate the question for everyone to hear.
- You can access chat via the lower Zoom screen. Please make sure your question is directed at all participants. Type your question in the chat box and hit enter.



Presentation

1. Mental Health Matters
2. A Brave New World
3. Keeping Workplace Morale Up on a Remote Team
4. How to Lead into the Unknown



Learning Objectives

1. Understand the impacts of mental health and morale and your role as a leader
2. Understand what mental health is and the implications of COVID-19
3. Apply resiliency strategies and support structures for yourself and your team
4. Have an arsenal of resources



The image features a dark gray background with three overlapping circles in shades of blue. A horizontal band of light blue color spans the width of the image, passing through the center of the circles. The text "Mental Health Matters" is centered within this band.

Mental Health Matters

What is Mental Health?

- Mental health is the state of your psychological and emotional well-being.
- It is a necessary resource for living a healthy life and a main factor in overall health.
- It does not mean the same thing as mental illness.
- However, poor mental health can lead to mental and physical illness.

(Public Health Canada)



Stress has Been an Issue Long Before Covid-19 existed

- High stress, poor work-life balance, overwork and burnout have long been featured in the literature on team leaders and entrepreneurs.
- The mental health cost of stress, anxiety and depression on high achievers has been an epidemic nobody is talking about – even before the endemic of Covid-19.
- Studies have shown that workplace stress may led to positive financial gains – but without some balance it can lead to negative physical and mental health outcomes.
- Studies suggest financial gains flowing from stress may come at a significant cost to health and well-being.



A Sign of the Times – Covid-19 has Increased Many of Our Mental Health Challenges

Employers and their employees are facing new challenges:

- Significant changes to routine.
- Balancing home life and work life have become very challenging.
- Not everyone wanted to work from home, but now they are whether they like it or not!
- Financial constraints and losses are a reality.
- Most people are struggling with general uncertainty and fears about health, money, work and the future.



A Brave New World



A Brave New World

- We are adapting as we go and nobody has all of the answers.
- The world is changing and change is difficult.
- We change when it is necessary, and now it is necessary.
- Necessity is the mother of invention.
- We all have different levels of comfort and discomfort with some of the changes occurring around us – and with the technology now needed to do business.
- Creativity and change go hand in hand.



Keep Mental Health a Top Priority

- Understand and acknowledge the stress that these difficult times may cause.
- If possible offer or encourage psychological counselling – you can get support online and on the phone.
- Destigmatize mental health. Treat it as part of a health routine.
- The physical well-being of the team remember mental health may have prompted the remote work – but mental health is just as important - commit to finding ways to support your team with their mental health needs.





Workplace Morale

What is Workplace Morale?

- Forbes magazine defines it as, “...*the attitude, satisfaction and overall outlook of employees during their association with an organization or a business.*”
- Positive workplace morale can enhance our work satisfaction, productivity and our state of mind.
- High workplace morale will contribute to increased mental health



What brings
job
satisfaction?

We can build morale by
establishing a positive work
environment and company culture



People need to feel they have

Enough
money (but it
is not all
about money)

Autonomy

Opportunity
for mastery

Space for
creativity

Opportunity
for meaningful
contribution

Ways To Increase Morale (in general)

- Communicate often.
- Solicit employee feedback.
- Make firm business decisions.
- Create an effective incentive program.
- Acknowledge your team members accomplishments.
- Have fun.



Remote Work Was Already On The Increase

- Studies indicated that 50% of the workforce was going to be remotely working by 2020 and with Covid-19 work at home has now become the norm.
- However, the methods you may have used in the past to motivate your in-house team may not work for your remote team.
- Many remote workers feel disconnected as remote work can be isolating at times. They may feel out of the loop, voiceless, and even lonely.



Keeping Morale Up On A Remote Team

- Streamline communication
 - Create clear communication channels
 - Be transparent
 - Encourage feedback
 - Keep current with announcements and updates
 - Use a communication app
- Make scheduling easier to connect remote workers and teams.
- Be clear on expectations.
- Implement remote team building games and activities.
- Focus on performance.
- Trust that they'll get the work done, don't micromanage.
- Create a positive company culture.
- Give recognition.





Tips for Leading into the Unknown

Provide Resources

- People are feeling anxious and overwhelmed.
- When it comes to your team members mental wellness during this pandemic seek and provide resources.
- Provide links to resources when you come across a good one, or make it a focus of one of your team meetings.
- Bring in experts to talk about different aspects of wellness, morale and mental health.
- Stay open-minded yourself.
- Don't be afraid to share your own challenges and resources – in a role appropriate manner.



Compassion, Kindness and Coordination

- Consistency helps us all - schedule virtual team meetings to ensure everyone is being looped in on updates, expectations and next steps.
- Leaders should create 1-1 check ins with each team member. This gives an opportunity for individuals to address personal concerns in private.
- Create opportunities for staff to connect in a fun way and feel a sense of workplace community.
- Operate with higher levels of compassion, kindness and hold a space for listening.
- Coordinate communication across the company to ensure people don't feel excluded and resources are available.



Communication

- It is essential that team stay in regular contact during these periods of uncertainty.
- Email communications should be clear and concise focusing on important pieces of information that will keep everyone up to date.
- Consider implementing regular team check-in meetings via video or conference call.
- At the start of each meeting dedicate a specific amount of time for social conversation, this will allow employees to reconnect.



Be Clear on Expectations and Goals

- If team members don't know what you expect of them or they aren't aware of what's going on in the company, they won't be motivated to get the job done to the best of their ability.
- You have to set clear and realistic goals for each employee.
- Schedule one-on-one meetings to track progress and to clear up any confusion.



Checking in With Your Team Members

- If you are concerned about somebody, or want to do a bit of check in do it in a 1-1 meeting, don't put anyone on the spot during a team meeting.
- It is ok to ask people how they are doing.
- It is ok to be real about how you are doing as well – you do not have to be handling everything perfectly!
- Vulnerability connects us – but stay aware of appropriate boundaries.
- Do not pressure anyone to talk – just let them know you are available and you are paying attention.



Start the Day/Meetings in a Mindful Manner

- Find your own mindful practice (walk, breathing, exercise, meditation, quiet moment and a cup of coffee)
- Consider starting your team out by leading a mindful moment which sets positive intentions, creates and clears the mind.
- Allocate time in your team meeting to check in with people and discuss book suggestions, binge-worthy Netflix shows and favourite meals.
- Focus on gratitude - especially when overwhelmed.



Use Online Tools to be Social as a Team

- Share tips for working from home, pictures of pets, recipe ideas and workout tips throughout the day.
- Virtual happy hours, teatime and coffee breaks are other ways are checking in with each other.
- Meet up on Zoom and show off their virtual backgrounds.
- Small doses of team bonding throughout the week can boost team morale.



Celebrate Together

- To keep your employees' spirits up while they're working from home, it's crucial to continue celebrating team members milestone.
- Celebrate birthdays and work anniversaries.
- Celebrate personal and professional accomplishments.
- Celebrate when something good happens in the world.
- Recognize team member by sending out virtual cards or hosting a virtual team event to celebrate.



Company Wide Contests

- A good laugh and some friendly competition can go a long way.
- Throw virtual company-wide contests to boost team morale.
- From submitting creative ideas for things to do during self-isolation to designing Memes, you can host a variety of contests to keep your employees engaged.
- You can offer the winners prizes, such as Amazon gift cards or food delivery vouchers.



The Great Outdoors!

- Since gyms and other fitness centers have closed due to the Coronavirus people may be cooped up in their homes as they work remotely.
- Therefore, encouraging people to exercise outdoors is critical to their physical and mental health.
- To help your team stay active and get a break from working inside, suggest that they take conference calls that don't require sitting in front of a screen outdoors.
- It is good to encourage some walk and talk meetings where team members can stroll around their neighborhoods, nearby parks, or even backyards for a change of scenery and some fresh air.



Be as Flexible as Possible

- Implement flexible sick leave and support policies and practices.
- Ensure that you have updated any leave policies to align with provincial and federal legislation.
- Come up with a contingency plan for sick leave and employee downtime.
- Connect team members to assistance programs (EAP) resources (if available) and community resources that may help them navigate emotional and financial stressors.



Humans are Resilient

We will bounce back, adapt, learn and grow



Questions

1. As a leader should I ask somebody about their mental health, and if I do is there a risk that I might be triggering them?
2. What about those small business owners who do not have a large team and their business revolves around the service or product they deliver? What do they need during this time?
3. Can there be such as things as too much digital communication right now, are we risking remote overload? What can we do this mix it up, and still stay connected?

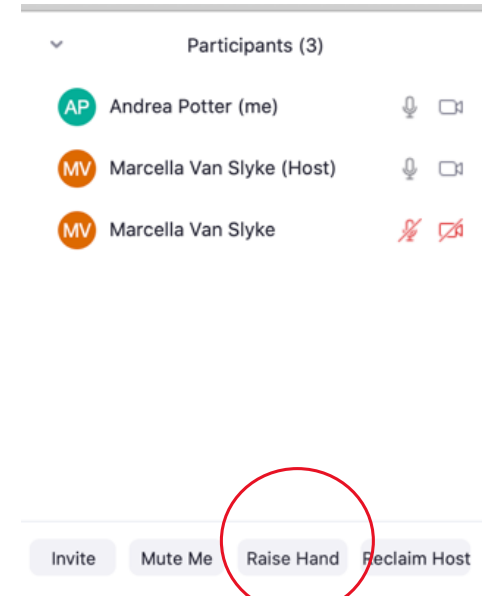
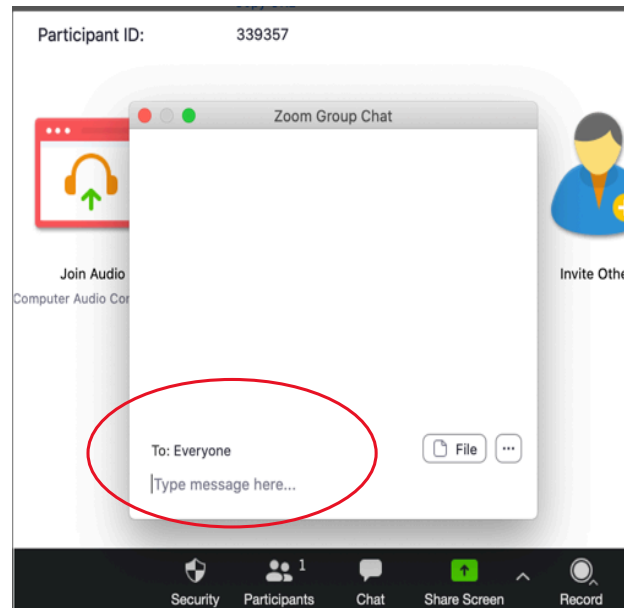


Participant Questions

Raise Hand: Please raise your hand on zoom. Located on your participant window. The moderator will unmute you to allow you to ask your question.

OR

Chat: You can ask your question in chat. Choose everyone in the drop down beside To: before you type your message. The moderator will ask the question out loud for the benefit of other participants.



Minding Mental Health and Keeping Up Workplace Morale During Turbulent Times

For my full article here is the link

<https://www.alysonjones.ca/blog/covid-19-keeping-up-workplace-morale-during-turbulent-times/>

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