



Workshop 14:

"Promoting Emotional Well-being and Inclusive Work Environments"

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Defining Mental Health



What is Mental Health?

- Mental health refers to our **emotional, psychological, and social well-being**.
- It **affects** how we think, feel, and act, and influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.
- Mental health is not just the absence of mental challenges, but also the presence of positive characteristics such as **emotional resilience, healthy relationships, and self-care**.



Mental Health in the Workplace

- Mental health influences **productivity, job satisfaction, and overall work performance.**
- Mental health challenges in the workplace can stem from stress, lack of support, and poor work-life balance.

Employees with **good mental health** tend to contribute to **higher engagement** and lower absenteeism, while those experiencing challenges may face difficulties in coping with job demands.

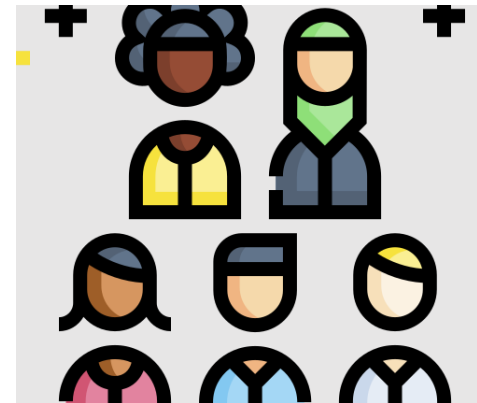
Inclusive Workplaces



- A truly inclusive workplace promotes **diversity, equity, and belonging** for all employees, regardless of their background, gender, race, or mental health status.
- Inclusion means **recognizing and celebrating differences**, creating an environment where everyone feels accepted and valued.

Included means

- Heard and seen
- Sense of belonging
- Valued and appreciated
- Safe and Supported
- Equal rights and Justice
- Acknowledged for skills
- Given career opportunities



The Importance of Work Inclusion



Fostering work inclusion is **not only a valuable opportunity for organisations** to enhance their workforce diversity and achieve better business outcomes, but a **legal and ethical responsibility**.

- Employees from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences are included and valued, they bring **unique perspectives** and ideas. This diversity of thought leads to **innovation** and **creativity**.

The Importance of Work Inclusion

- When employees feel included and respected, they are more likely to **be engaged** in their work. This sense of belonging increases **job satisfaction** and reduces turnover.
- Fosters better **collaboration and communication**. When employees feel valued and heard, they work more effectively in teams and are more motivated to contribute to shared goals.
- Research shows that inclusive companies tend to have **higher productivity**, because employees are more **committed** and **focused** when they feel a sense of belonging.

Inclusive Policies

Companies should:

- Enforce strict policies that **protect employees** from harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or mental health status. It's important to create a **zero-tolerance culture for any form of exclusion**.
- **Respect** working and civil rights
- Ensure that all employees have **equal access to resources** like ergonomic equipment, assistive technology, and accessible digital platforms.

Inclusive Policies

Companies should:

- Offer **flexible work schedules**, such as remote work options, part-time roles, or staggered hours, allows employees to better **manage their personal and mental health needs**.
- Offer **regular training** for all employees on **mental health awareness**, and the importance of inclusion helps create a more **empathetic and open-minded workplace**.
- **Reflect the diversity** of the workforce, and **managers should be trained** to actively encourage diversity of thought, background, and experience.

Inclusive Practices in Action

- Encourage open discussions about mental health and well-being to normalise these conversations and **reduce stigma**.
- Establishing **Employees Resource Groups** for underrepresented groups or those facing challenges in the workplace fosters a sense of **community and support**.
- Creating a culture where employees **feel safe giving feedback** about inclusion practices helps identify areas for improvement and **empowers employees to voice their needs**.

Supporting Employees with Disabilities: Inclusion

- Employees with disabilities should be valued for their **skills and contributions**
- Focus on abilities and ensure **non-discriminatory recruitment** and interview processes.
- Programs based **on the principles of Supported Employment** help individuals with disabilities secure and maintain employment by providing job coaching, training, and long-term support.

Workplace Accommodations

- **Physical accommodations:** Accessible office layouts, ramps, and adjustable workstations.
- **Assistive technologies:** Screen readers, speech-to-text software, or modified keyboards.
- **Flexible work arrangements:** Part-time hours, remote work options, or flexible schedules.
- **Job restructuring:** Modifying job duties that a person cannot perform due to their disability, without changing the essential functions of the job.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to **recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions**, as well as the emotions of others.

Five Core Components of EI:
Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

These components are crucial for building relationships, managing conflict, and promoting an inclusive environment.

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Workplace Inclusion

Emotional Intelligence Enhances Inclusion because:

- enables employees and managers to put themselves in the shoes of others, helping them understand colleagues' diverse backgrounds and emotional experiences, which fosters a **more inclusive and understanding environment**.
- helps individuals to handle conflicts constructively, promoting a **harmonious and inclusive workplace**.

Practices for Promoting EI in the Workplace (1/2)

- **Training programs** help individuals improve their ability to **recognize and manage emotions** and practice **active listening**—listening without interrupting or judging, and providing thoughtful feedback. This builds a culture of **mutual respect and inclusion**.
- Activities and workshops that focus on **collaboration** and **empathy** help employees build **stronger emotional connections** with each other, increasing understanding and reducing biases.

Practices for Promoting EI in the Workplace (2/2)

- Establishing **mentoring relationships between employees** helps foster **empathy** and emotional growth. Senior employees can guide newer team members in understanding the emotional dynamics of the workplace, while also learning from their mentees' diverse experiences.

Emotional Well-being in the Workplace

Work-Life Balance

- Maintaining a **healthy separation** between personal and professional life is crucial for **preventing burnout**. Overwork can lead to stress, anxiety, and exhaustion, negatively affecting both performance and mental health.
- Employers can promote balance by offering **flexible working hours**, remote work options, and clear boundaries around work expectations (e.g., limiting after-hours emails).

Stress Management

- Chronic workplace stress can lead to **emotional exhaustion**, decreased productivity, and mental health issues like anxiety and depression.
- Employers can help reduce stress by promoting **reasonable workloads**, encouraging breaks, offering stress management programs, and fostering a supportive work environment where employees can seek help if needed.

Emotional Well-being in the Workplace

Supportive Work Environment and Safety

- Healthy relationships among colleagues are essential for emotional well-being. **Positive communication, mutual respect, and teamwork** enhance an employee's sense of belonging.
- Employees should be able to **express themselves, and their needs** share ideas, and take risks without fear of negative consequences.
- Managers play a crucial role by being **approachable, empathetic, and supportive**. They should foster **open dialogue** and encourage employees to speak up about concerns or issues affecting their well-being.
- Offering **confidential counseling** and mental health support for employees.
- Providing **workshops** on stress management, mindfulness, resilience-building, and regular check-ins with mental health professionals.

Emotional Well-being in the Workplace

Autonomy and Control

- Giving employees a **sense of control over their work** (e.g., decision-making authority, flexible schedules) can greatly improve emotional well-being. Autonomy reduces feelings of helplessness and enhances job satisfaction.

Recognition and Appreciation

- Employees feel emotionally fulfilled when their **efforts are acknowledged and appreciated**. Recognition boosts self-esteem and motivation.
- Regular feedback to employees, ensuring they feel valued.

Emotional Well-being in Workplace

Opportunities for Growth

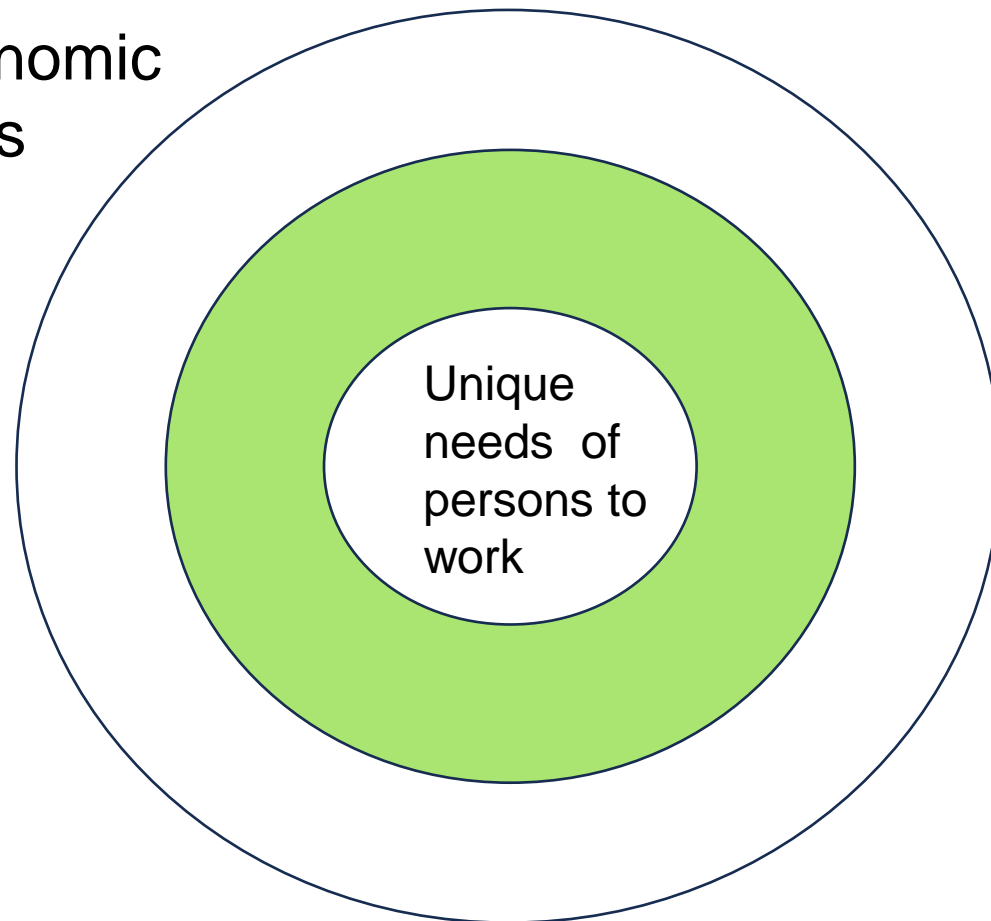
- Offering **opportunities for learning**, growth, and advancement contributes to a sense of purpose and fulfillment, leading to higher emotional well-being.
- Employees who receive **guidance and encouragement** through mentoring programs tend to feel more confident and supported in their roles.

Diversity and Inclusion

- An inclusive workplace that values diversity (in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability, etc.) ensures that all employees feel **respected and supported**. This improves emotional well-being by reducing feelings of isolation or exclusion.
- Creating Employee Resource Groups

Conclusion

General
socioeconomic
conditions



Mental Health and
Emotional Well-
being in the
Workplace



Thank you!

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