

Team Talk Good Work Design: Supporting your team



Australian Government

Comcare



This team talk is part of a series created to help you discuss good work design with your team. Read the team talk to your team and use the questions to start a discussion.

Introduction

We all have times when things aren't going well. We may be caring for a loved one, having financial issues, managing ill health or struggling with a looming deadline.

A change in mood or behaviour can be a sign that someone isn't coping. If you are concerned that someone you work with is not behaving as usual, they may need more support. You don't need to be an expert in mental health to provide support, you just need to have a conversation.

Comcare's [Supporting your team](#) video and [better practice guidance](#) outlines how great managers support their team. Let's watch the video – which is designed for managers but has messages that are relevant for all of us.

How to support your team

Providing support involves listening to the person and encouraging access to workplace or other supports.

Supportive people remember to be **CLEAR** by showing **Compassion, Listening** to others, **Empathising**, and being **Accepting** and **Real**.

Look out for signs that someone needs help:

- They may be late to work, or appear agitated or flat.
- Understand that changes in behaviour can be harder to notice when people are working remotely.
- Consider your own behaviour and feelings. Emotions can be contagious. You may notice that you or others pick up on the emotional tone when someone is feeling disturbed.

Let the person know that you are concerned about them:

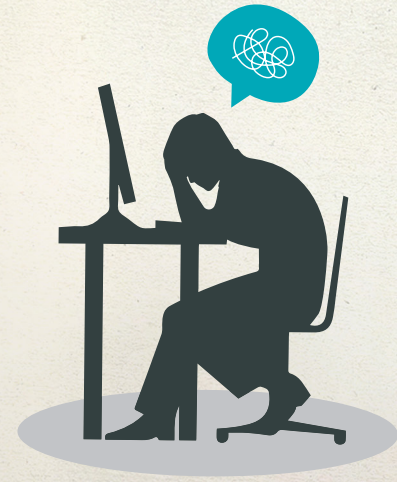
- Find a convenient time and a private location to reach out.
- Describe what you've noticed. For example, you might say 'I've noticed you seem distracted, is everything ok?'
- Encourage them to do the talking and listen carefully, without offering opinions or solutions. You can validate what they have to say, for example, 'I'm really sorry to hear that, it sounds tough.'



[CLEAR framework courtesy of I Am Here](#)



Changes in mood or behaviour can be a sign that someone is struggling



Guide the person towards available support:

- Where appropriate, encourage the person to talk to their manager and ask for more support.
- Understand what support services are available and encourage the person to access appropriate support.
- Workplace services and programs may include:
 - an Employee Assistance Program
 - Early Intervention Service
 - NewAccess mental health coaching
 - Harassment Contact Officers
 - Mental Health Contact Officers.
- **Beyond Blue** can also help workers access mental health support.
- Regularly check in with them and remind them of available support, as needed.

You may not feel that you are the right person to start a conversation – for example, if you don't know the person well or don't feel you have established trust. In this case, it's important to still take action – this may be by talking to your manager or HR area.

We never know when we may need support ourselves and it can be hard to recognise that we need help. Talking to someone we trust and/or accessing a support service at an early stage is important.

Discussion

What are some signs that someone needs support?

What helps you to feel supported at work?

Do you feel comfortable accessing a support service when there's a situation they could help you with? If not, why?

Notes

This section can be used to record agreed actions arising from your discussion and/or attendance.

