

Employee Wellness Training: 5 Ways to Build Resilience

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May is Mental Health Month, which has been observed for over 50 years, but this year, it is especially important to raise awareness of ways to improve mental health and increase resilience. As employees are forced to work remotely, some may be doing so in isolation as a result of living alone. This strain can have a huge impact on workers' mental health, which is why you must train workers to be resilient.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 19.1% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2018 (47.6 million people); however, the worry, isolation, and anxiety associated with the coronavirus are things literally everyone may experience.

Resilience is a crucial skill we need to thrive in uncertain times, says meQuilibrium, a digital employee resilience solution. Resilience represents the ability to rebound productively in challenging situations, and it has a strong protective effect against anxiety. In today's anxiety-ridden environment, those who possess adaptive capabilities will be better equipped to handle the psychological toll. The scientific research has shown that highly resilient people are 28% more able to adapt to changing circumstances.

"People are experiencing heightened levels of uncertainty and anxiety from COVID-19," says Andrew Shatté, PhD, Chief Science Officer for meQuilibrium and a world-renowned resilience expert. "The human brain is wired for the negative and it's natural for us to be worried about the future. However, instead of anxious feelings getting in the way, we can take productive steps to be in problem-solving mode rather than worry and stress mode."

5 Ways to Build Resilience Among Your Workforce

Learning to recognize responses to stress, emotional strain, and exhaustion provides the foundation for resilient self-management. Even small improvements in individual cognitive performance can make a positive impact on emotional distress. Look for these steps to build simple resilience practices in your daily routine:

1. Keep your emotions in check.

The coronavirus has our brains pinging on "future threat," driving global anxiety and shared fear. Stay calm, and work to keep your emotions in check, particularly anxiety, which will take center stage. Work to catch those anxious thoughts before they spiral, and reframe them into more realistic, probable outcomes.

2. Remain realistic.

People will begin to catastrophize in this extreme situation. It's a natural response that's rooted in self-preservation. But when you focus on the worst-case scenario, you allot the majority of your energy to worrying about something that has only a small chance of happening without devoting any resources to the negative things that are very likely to happen. At the same time, there may be other possible outcomes and choices at your disposal that you're not seeing.

3. Adaptive is key.

Make informed adjustments based on the information you have. Limit the amount of energy spent on speculation. Use mindfulness to stay in the moment. Every day, take a moment to pause, breathe deeply, and focus. We can exert the most control over today, this moment. Using simple breathing mindfulness techniques or meditation will serve to bring us back to the present, calm the mind, and reduce the high level of stress we are all feeling now.

4. Practice gratitude.

The coronavirus is a new threat, and coping with new threats requires strength and energy. So give yourself some credit. Remember to end each day with a measure of gratitude for having successfully navigated the world around you, and let this positivity build on itself. You have the power to care for your physical and mental health; don't let anxiety control your well-being.

5. Prevent.

When individuals recognize their own habitual patterns and begin to manage stress in healthier ways, healthier behavior and interactions spread in what we can consider a positive network effect. We become better equipped in our interactions, even under stress, and better able to support one another.

“Resilience helps people respond to change more effectively by managing their minds and emotions in high stress, adverse situations,” explains Shatté. “People who can quickly switch gears from threatened to productive, can navigate this challenging time more effectively.”

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