



JULY

How Workplace Culture Impacts Your Mental Health

Prioritize Your Mental Health & Well-Being in 2021

Mental health and diversity within the workplace are interconnected. Employees from diverse backgrounds can face lack of representation, microaggressions, unconscious bias, and other stressors that impact their mental health. For this reason, a culture with safe and open communication is essential to employee engagement and overall well-being. Employees who empathize and can understand the background of one another can encourage an organization's leadership to be more culturally diverse, healthy, and supportive of one's mental and physical health.

FOUR WAYS CULTURE IMPACTS MENTAL HEALTH

- 1. Cultural Stigma** — Every culture has a different way of looking at mental health. Historically, there has been a stigma around mental health. According to the CDC, half of us will experience at least one mental health illness at some point in our lives. The current state of our world has started to normalize conversations around mental health. This universal concern is helping with fears of discrimination, and hopefully creating a lasting platform for change for individuals and understanding of these struggles within team environments.
- 2. Understanding Symptoms** — Culture can influence how people describe how they are feeling in any given moment. Workplace culture can also affect whether someone chooses to recognize and talk about only physical symptoms, emotional symptoms, or both. Acknowledging that your feelings are human and feeling comfortable enough to talk about them in the workplace is not only good for your mind, but also good for your body.
- 3. Community Support** — Cultural factors can determine how much support someone gets from their family, co-workers and community when it comes to physical and emotional health. Because of existing stigmas, minorities are sometimes left to find mental health treatment and support alone, especially when many employees are dealing with loneliness and isolation. When you realize you are not alone and within a safe and supportive environment, speaking your mind can allow you to begin to feel comfortable as you share your feelings with a group.
- 4. Resources** — It can sometimes be difficult or time-consuming to find valuable resources and treatment options that take into account a specific culture's factors and needs. When looking for a mental health professional and/or treatment, you will most likely want to talk to someone who understands your specific experiences and concerns. Take as much time as you need to find the right resources and do not hesitate to reach out to your family, peers, or colleagues for recommendations. As conversations surrounding mental health are on the rise, employers are being mindful of incorporating mental health benefits and support within employee benefit packages to benefit employee needs.

Every culture, every individual, and every organization is different and each face unique journeys in creating and identifying ways to provide and seek out beneficial mental health resources and support. You can help address mental health within your own organization by understanding the role culture plays in the overall well-being and morale of a workforce and engaging in open conversation about individual needs.