

# Workplace Resilience

## *Understanding the Impact of Stress and Trauma on Employee Wellbeing*

Understanding the effects of stress, adversity, and trauma on professional wellbeing is crucial for creating a supportive work environment. Insights from neuroscience, attachment theory, and restorative practices inform approaches that foster resilience and promote mental health, allowing individuals to reach their full potential.

### **Impact on Professional Wellbeing**

- Performance and Productivity: Neuroscience shows that stress and trauma can impair cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and decision-making. Recognizing that employees are doing their best with the resources available allows for adjusted expectations and support, helping them thrive despite challenges.
- Absenteeism: Chronic stress often leads to physical health issues and emotional fatigue, resulting in increased absenteeism. By offering flexible work options and supportive policies, employers can address employees' needs, promoting a healthy work-life balance.
- Engagement and Motivation: Attachment theory suggests that early experiences shape how individuals connect with their work environment. Stress and trauma may hinder engagement and motivation. Cultivating a supportive atmosphere fosters belonging, acknowledges employee struggles, and enhances overall motivation.
- Retention: Burnout from stress can lead to high turnover rates. Embracing restorative practices helps create a culture that prioritizes strong relationships and ongoing support, ultimately nurturing employees' resilience and potential.

## Impact of Trauma

- Emotional and Psychological Effects: Trauma impacts the nervous system, leading to challenges like anxiety and depression. Empathy creates a non-judgmental environment, acknowledging employees' internal struggles.
- Cognitive Effects: Stress disrupts brain function, impacting problem-solving and focus. Acknowledging that employees are utilizing their skills to the best of their abilities, and providing clear guidance and reasonable accommodations, supports their performance and wellbeing.
- Physical Health: Chronic stress and trauma can contribute to physical health problems, negatively affecting work performance. Providing access to health and wellness resources ensures that workplace policies promote the holistic wellbeing of employees.

## Training and Development

- Manager Training: Equip managers with training to recognize signs of stress and trauma and apply restorative practices. This training should emphasize the importance of understanding that everyone is doing their best and that supportive leadership is essential for a positive work environment.
- Professional Development: Support ongoing learning and skill development to help employees build resilience and achieve their potential.

## Fostering a Positive Work Culture

To cultivate a positive workplace culture, employers should prioritize open communication, celebrate achievements, and promote work-life balance. Creating inclusive spaces, offering growth opportunities, and encouraging team-building activities strengthen relationships and ensure employees feel valued. Leading by example and implementing supportive policies enhances a culture of empathy, respect, and overall wellbeing. By integrating insights from neuroscience, restorative practices, and attachment theory, employers can create a resilient and thriving workplace that supports employees through challenges and nurtures their strengths.

