



**A Line Managers Guide for supporting the wellbeing of
your direct reports**

Document prepared

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a guide for Line Managers to better support the wellbeing of themselves, and their team members and direct reports. This guide provides an overview of the role a Line Manager can play, a useful template and some tips to consider.

PEOPLEFUL INTRODUCTION

This document was authored by the registered Organisational Psychologist at [Peopleful](#), so the tips, tools and information provided are clinically robust. Peopleful is a company passionate about enabling employees to thrive and flourish in the workplace. Peopleful works with organisations to understand the impact of both the working environment on their employees' wellbeing and provide the data that informs practical change where it is needed.

YOUR ROLE AS A LINE MANAGER

It is important to understand that work-related wellbeing is a state, not a trait, and so it can change, and isn't necessarily fixed.

The experience that individuals have at work is impacted by a multitude of things, but an important factor is often the employee's relationship with their Line Manager. These relationships – both in and out of work – can have a big effect on individual levels of mental health and wellbeing, with management behaviour often cited as one of the main reasons for employees experiencing elevated levels of work-related stress.

In order to support and help your team, you need to tune into your own wellbeing first: just like on an aircraft, you're always advised to fit your own oxygen mask before helping others.

Therefore, starting with yourself is the first focus.

Starting with yourself

Sound overall wellbeing, a positive mindset, good health and happiness are increasingly recognised as crucial for success. And so, we encourage you to take some time to understand your own state and mood and then to think through any actions you might take to support your wellbeing.

Additionally, there are a set of questions below that might help you think about how you and your team are currently working together. You can use these questions, to support yourself and to think about how you can best support your team or to gauge where you think they are at:

1. What aspects of your job do you really enjoy? How might you do more of these?
2. What could your organisation do differently that would cause you to enjoy your job more? How might you help this to happen?

3. What is one small change you could make that would make your job more enjoyable?
4. Who might you talk to about helping you to make any changes you would like to?
5. What are the possible reasons for your higher levels of exhaustion?
6. What, outside work, energises you?
7. What could you commit to doing that would create space between 'work' and 'life outside work'?

Supporting employees

Your role as a manager is not to be an expert in mental health and wellbeing, or to feel like you need to have all the answers on this topic. Rather, you should strive to create an environment where your team feel comfortable to speak about these quite sensitive issues and be ready to support them with empathy and understanding, guiding them to help and/or resources offered by the company.

Your HR and Wellbeing teams could support you in this, so if you have any concerns, please do voice them – it is important that you feel well supported yourself in order for you to be able to offer appropriate support and guidance to those you manage.

Where appropriate, you might seek to empower your team members to take ownership of their mental health, improve their wellbeing and boost their resilience. Here are a few ways in which you can do so:

1. At the beginning of every meeting – however rushed or stressed things feel – make the time to check in briefly with everyone present. A few questions to use for this could be:
 - a. One a scale of 1-10, with 10 being “absolutely awesome” and 1 being “really struggling”, how are you feeling today?
 - b. If you could describe how you are doing today as the weather, what would you say?
2. Understand what resources your company has made available to all employees e.g. having access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), internal coaches, learning and development offerings for managing stress, and so on. Usually, the HR and Wellbeing teams have a clear understanding of what is available for employees and having a list of these resources is very helpful for you as a line manager. It may be worth getting the HR and/or Wellbeing team to talk you through the associated processes that go with these resources. They are often opaque, and employees could be anxious about confidentiality.
3. Encourage an environment where employees know that it's okay to talk about their wellbeing. If an employee does reach out to you, always maintain strict confidentiality, and ensure that they feel safe to talk to you. You could use the Personal Wellbeing Promotion Plan (PWPP) template as a tool to guide this conversation (see below).
4. Assess and review whether employees have manageable workloads and the right resources to do their jobs to the best of their ability. This can be positively impacted by giving employees as much autonomy as possible and involvement in decisions that affect their work, as a lack of control is known to be a major cause of stress.
5. One of the contributors to decreased levels of energy is a lack of rest and recovery. This is prominent in teams where employees are so driven by their dedication to their work that they

don't take enough time to recuperate. Reviewing annual leave and overtime data for your team empowers you as their leader to ensure that they are able to rejuvenate and replenish their energy levels.

6. A quick win to creating a great experience is to focus on ways to recognise and appreciate your team members when they do something great, seize the initiative or go above and beyond. Positive feedback goes a long way.

PERSONAL WELLBEING PROMOTION PLAN

This plan can be immensely helpful in keeping people well whilst they are at work but also provides a plan for what to do if someone becomes unwell. The main aim of this template is to assist all employees in maintaining and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing within the workplace. This provides an opportunity for an employee to tell you, as their line manager, what helps them in maintaining positive wellbeing at work and it is also an opportunity for an employee with a mental health issue to communicate how the issue can be best supported within the workplace. This template is usually drafted by the employee and then shared with the manager, but it can be drafted together. It should be a living document that is reviewed regularly between the manager and employee. Important to note that if an employee does not wish to engage with this template that's OK and it should not be forced on them.

Employee name:	Line manager:
The purpose of this template is to assist in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing at work. All employees are encouraged to complete this, however, they remain optional. One should only provide information they are comfortable sharing.	
1. On the scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being that you are feeling great at the moment and 0 being that things are really bad at the moment, where are you currently with regards to your wellbeing at work? And why would you say that?	
2. What helps you to maintain and promote positive mental health and wellbeing at work (e.g. recognition, being able to leave on time etc)?	

3. What might have a negative impact upon your mental health and wellbeing at work?

4. What can you do to actively improve wellbeing at work?

5. Is there anything that I, as your line manager, or the organisation could do that you think would help to promote positive wellbeing at work?

6. If your mental health or wellbeing were to deteriorate, how would you access health and support? Who might you contact?

7. If you needed to discuss your mental health and wellbeing when your manager was not available at that time (e.g. due to leave or illness) who would you contact? If you felt uncomfortable talking to your manager, who else within the organisation can you contact?

8. Is there anything else you would like me to be aware of as your line manager?

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your commitment to improving the experience you and your teams have whilst they are at work. We hope you'll find the information provided in this document useful.

For additional information please reach out to Genevieve Deacon at genevieve@peopleful.io.