



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

Your Role in Fostering a Positive Work Culture

Work plays an important part in our lives. It can give us a sense of accomplishment, bolster our self-worth and self-esteem, and provide a sense of belonging and security. But it can also be a source of stress.¹ In some instances, work culture can create unhealthy environments that impact morale, our ability to engage and be productive, and our mental health.

Culture often comes down to unspoken rules about how we behave and interact with one another.

A positive work culture is safe, supportive and mentally healthy. Employees at all levels feel valued and comfortable sharing their ideas, raising issues, asking questions and bringing their whole selves to work.²

What does that look like in practice?

- Employees are respectful of one another; they are thoughtful with their words and actions.
- People feel like they have what they need to do their job and that they can ask for help when they need it—from their managers and from their co-workers.
- Employees are encouraged to ask questions and raise concerns.
- When there are issues, teams work together in productive ways to find solutions.
- Everyone is encouraged to take care of their mental health; they know the signs and symptoms of mental health issues, and they know how to find support for themselves and others when mental health problems arise.
- Everyone is included and valued for what they bring to the workplace and to the work itself.





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Values that Support a Psychologically Healthy & Safe Workplace

- Respect
- Trust
- Fairness
- Security
- Support
- Learning
- Growth
- Flexibility
- Communication
- Appreciation
- Putting people first



Your Call to Action

There are specific things leaders and people managers can do to set the tone for a safe, supportive and mentally healthy work culture, but employees at all levels can and should feel like they can take a leadership role when it comes to creating a positive work culture.

Leaders

- Lead with honesty and integrity.
- Consistently communicate and embody the vision and goals of the organization.
- Model values that foster a safe, supportive and mentally healthy work culture.
- Ensure employees and co-workers feel valued.
- Recognize effort and excellence.
- Keep lines of communication open.

People Managers

- Clearly define roles, responsibilities and expectations.
- Provide feedback in a way that is constructive and solution-focused.
- Reduce unnecessary work stress by making space to talk about job-related stressors and strategies for addressing them.
- Identify and resolve issues early on; don't let them stew or escalate.
- Encourage people to ask for the help and support they need, and point them in the right direction when you can.
- Be flexible to find solutions that can work for everyone.

Employees at All Levels

- Bring the values of a psychologically safe workplace to life.
 - Take care of personal mental health.
 - Become more aware of signs and symptoms of mental illness.
 - Support co-workers during challenging times.
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Not Myself Today Resources that Can Help:

- Commit to some activities in the Building Culture module, like Mission: Possible and Kindness Cards at notmyselftoday.ca/culture
- Get to know each other through Q&A Corner at notmyselftoday.ca/culture
- Explore learning materials in the Learning the Basics module at notmyselftoday.ca/basics
- Let the Talking Openly resources and activities guide you in having better conversations at notmyselftoday.ca/talking
- Encourage stress reduction in the workplace by introducing the learning resources and activities in the Addressing Stress module at notmyselftoday.ca/stress

1 Canadian Standards Association. (2013). CAN/CSA-Z1003-13: *Psychological health and safety in the workplace – Prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation*.

2 Edmondson, Amy C. (2019). *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*. Hoboken, New Jersey, Wiley & Sons Inc.

