



Leadership | *Tip sheet*

Managing a Team During a Crisis

The days and weeks following a workplace crisis, a local or national trauma, or any event that threatens employees' sense of safety, can be a difficult time for managers. People may have a wide range of reactions that require your response in a timely and professional manner. Managers are not expected to function as counselors, but it is important for every supervisor and manager to be aware of potential reactions, and have a clear sense of how to respond.

What reactions/symptoms might employees exhibit during a crisis?

Fear or anger

Difficulty concentrating

Irritability

More conversing at work

Generalized fatigue or apathy

Sleep problems

Physical complaints

Anxiety and nervousness

Suspiciousness

Employees may not necessarily show any or all of these reactions, but they are normal responses to an abnormal event. Depending on personal life experiences, some may report or show more vulnerability than others.

Be prepared to respond and intervene:

Listen and be supportive. Respond to conversations and concerns with empathy and compassion.

Build a sense of control at work. What can employees control within the workplace to help them feel a little safer?

Pass out tip sheets provided by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Communicate that it is "okay" to experience these reactions in the face of these events.

Allow employees to talk about the events, but set limits on frequency. Keeping a normal routine is important.

Allow employees to check in by phone with family members.

Circulate among the team and be visible. You might say, "How are you doing today? I know that was upsetting news we heard today, how are you colleagues doing?" Or, "Do you feel productive today? If not, what can I do to help you?"

Allow time for group interaction.

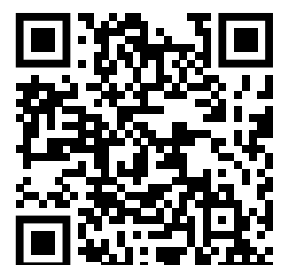
Be patient and tolerant of a temporary reduction in productivity.

Consult with the EAP when and if you observe an employee having difficulties.

◆ Your well-being is our priority.

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