

COVID-19 and Your Staff

Tips for Maintaining and Improving Productivity

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is being felt throughout our lives. Physical health, emotional well-being, economic security, social connections and spiritual life are all affected.

Business is not as usual. Your employees and supervisors may be experiencing increased anxiety and difficulties in productivity as they grieve the loss of life as we knew it.

How can you support your staff?

- 1 Adjust expectations.** Consider if your expectations are realistic and if they have been clearly communicated.
- 2 Check-in and connect.** Human connection is vital. Ask employees how they are doing and stop to listen. You don't have to solve the problem, but you can offer a space to connect and validate. Emotional connection fuels productivity.
- 3 Communicate understanding.** The working environment is new and there will be distractions. Essential employees are working with physical distancing requirements and many have families at home. Everyone is working with new demands and trying their best. Be empathetic; acknowledge that they have a lot on their plates and are trying to juggle competing demands.
- 4 Offer positive feedback.** Notice what is working and offer positive feedback more frequently than normal. While employees are expected to do their job and deliver outcomes, acknowledging that they are doing so under extenuating circumstances is vital.
- 5 Model self-care.** Take care of yourself so you are fully present for your staff. During check-ins, ask employees about self-care and share coping techniques. As a team, create a self-care plan and hold each other accountable. Self-care and resiliency practices can reduce absenteeism, turnover and maintain or improve productivity.
- 6 Seek help.** Experts in grief and trauma are available. Supporting your team's emotional and social needs will pay dividends both short and long-term.

Keep in Mind

We are in uncharted territory. There is no policy manual for managing this pandemic. This will require constant evaluation and readjustment on the part of staff and employers. What is working well one week may not work well the next; flexibility is key.

Employees are adapting to new work environments. From teleworking to physical distance requirements, employees are in new environments while balancing demands of family and households. They need support and understanding to do so.

This is a grief experience. Losses are vast: schedules, personal connections, vacations, freedom to go out; the list seems endless. Grief symptoms can manifest in a variety of ways: anxiety, sleep disruptions, difficulty with concentrating, plus impacted memory and recall to name a few.

People have different coping techniques. Each person will respond to crisis in different ways. When times get challenging, we fall back on the coping techniques that we know regardless of how healthy, or unhealthy, they may be.

For 45 years the Wendt Center has supported individuals and groups navigating the difficult paths of grief and trauma. We lean in during challenging times, providing support and expertise to help alleviate suffering. We have trained thousands of mental health professionals and provided crisis response services to dozens of organizations in crises from the Navy Yard shooting to neighborhood violence to the death of a colleague. We are here to help you care for your employees, strengthen your teams' focus and productivity and reduce trauma-related absenteeism and turnover. Supporting your people now will pay dividends today and in the future.

We can support your organization on multiple topics.

Grief and Trauma in the Time of COVID-19 - Build the knowledge and tools to navigate grief and trauma responses for yourself, staff members and others.

Vicarious Resilience - Understand vicarious trauma and its warning signs and learn tools to assess impacts and techniques to increase compassion and build resilience that can be immediately incorporated into practice to benefit you and those around you.

Supporting Students and School Staff Through Crisis - Strengthen your key professionals' capacity to support everyone in your school environment through this crisis while building long-term expertise.

Training options include:

One-hour Webinar	Three-to-four-hour Workshops	Individual or Group Support Sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build basic understanding of impacts of grief, trauma, vicarious trauma, etc. in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.• Learn simple strategies for helping yourself and others in the current crisis.• Strengthen your ability to engage effectively in work. <p>APPROPRIATE FOR Teams, leaders, managers, even all staff groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain in-depth understanding through customized training on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on self, colleagues and clients.• Learn practical ways to support others while sustaining yourself for work and other demands. Explore strategies for processing the impact of the crisis and navigating the weeks to come.• Strengthen ability to communicate within the organization and help others help themselves. <p>APPROPRIATE FOR Leaders, managers, mental health professionals, Human Resources professionals, EAP employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand responses and reactions; identify and practice coping techniques to help manage increased anxiety and grief. <p><i>Support will be provided through a HIPAA-compliant virtual platform and can be scheduled in one-hour increments at a time during the workday that is convenient for the organization and employee.</i></p> <p>APPROPRIATE FOR Any individual or team experiencing emotional distress, anxiety and grief related to COVID-19 crisis</p>

For more information and pricing, contact training@wendtcenter.org or 202-204-5033.