

Mental Health Support For Employees In Times of Crisis and War

As the conflict continues, many in HR are already working outside of company boundaries to provide some form of support to their employees.



LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM , April 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The war

unfolding in Ukraine has many people on edge. Some of your employees will likely feel shocked, saddened, and powerless to help. The constant stream of war images flooding the news and social media may also be triggering past personal trauma. Circumstances like these create the potential for high rates of stress, heightened emotions and anxiety that leave employers wondering how they can genuinely be of support in times of humanitarian crisis and war.

Over the past few weeks, Onebright has received several enquiries from employers concerned about the mental health toll this is having on their employees. Some have friends or family in Ukraine or Russia, and others want to help their migrant, refugee, or veteran employees who could be experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or a range of emotions, including grief, stress, despair or even anger.

About Onebright: <https://onebright.com/>

The source and severity of reactions will differ between each individual. Still, these events have provided a chance for employers to reach out and acknowledge that their people's concerns are shared by the organisation.

It can be helpful to consider how you might bridge any gaps with your employees during these uncertain and sensitive times. You could follow some simple steps to begin the conversation and consider adding professional [mental health awareness training](#) or additional [therapy services](#) to provide extra levels of support.

Address the situation:

If you haven't already, consider issuing a statement acknowledging how the crisis may be affecting employees. As business leaders, it is essential to communicate that you are aware that

some people have elevated levels of stress, anxiety and depression associated with news updates and employee mental health is a priority for any company.

Every workforce will have a range of different expectations. Some workers may be looking for understanding or flexibility, with others looking for employers to provide a channel for employees to contribute humanitarian assistance. At the same time, others may be looking for employers to implement a more practical solution with tools to help them manage their emotions.

Create a psychologically safe work environment:

Encourage constructive conversations about real-world issues affecting employees, rather than focusing solely on the events reported on the news. It can be helpful to set clear time limits and boundaries beforehand in terms of being respectful of other people and their opinions. Actively acknowledging that there are likely to be multiple different points of view. Discouraging misinformation and providing good sources of information to reduce the risk of discrimination

Consider also creating specific communities for communication or encouraging connection within identity groups. Particular groups may feel most comfortable engaging when they have opportunities to process challenges that are unique to the group's shared identity. If in doubt, reach out and ask people from different communities what kind of support they need or would like at this moment.

Recognise signs of distress:

Paying more attention to the people around you and their appearance, mood or behaviour might help you to notice possible signs of distress. In the workplace this might manifest itself in a number of ways such as withdrawing from work colleagues or meetings, being late for scheduled events or general issues with timekeeping or concentration, increased conflict with colleagues, or a drop in the quality or quantity of someone's work.

If you notice these signs, check-in with the person and let them know you care. Ask for their consent to connect them with internal resources or professional mental health support to explore what might best help them.

Provide additional mental health support to managers:

For employees with friends or family in the affected areas, remind your managers to recognise an employee's need to put personal or family needs first and provide them with relevant support.

Managers can make a huge difference if they are afforded the time and space to listen and empathise with team members directly impacted by the conflict by validating their experiences

and concerns. Managers can do this with support from the organization's mental health resources or signposting them to their GP or local services if this is not available.

Remember to check in with managers, too, periodically. Ask them how you can support them while they are giving additional support to their teams during difficult times.

People will remember how their employer supported them or if this was lacking, especially in periods of crisis. It's not just those in Ukraine who need support: the country has a significant diaspora, including 20,000 Ukrainians living in the UK. There will be employees who will be impacted because they are Ukrainian, or because they are Russians who are anxious and fear reprisals, and individuals without a direct connection who are still deeply affected by the war and all its implications.

Onebright is here to support you and your team in any way we can during these unprecedented times. Please get in touch with us for mental health support for your employees.

PR & Media Enquiries

Onebright

+442077857383 ext.

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

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