



EXCELLENCE
CANADA

improving performance, recognizing excellence • améliorer le rendement, reconnaître l'excellence

Manager Support Guide

WELLNESS DESIGNED FOR YOU

Practical tips for leading supportive, respectful, and inclusive wellness conversations at work.



Purpose Of This Guide

Strong leadership means listening well, responding with respect, and supporting people in meaningful ways.

This guide helps managers support employee wellbeing through simple, respectful conversations, check-ins, and supportive responses with confidence.

It is intended to help leaders create supportive and inclusive wellness conversations and to make it easier to respond in a calm, respectful, and helpful way.



What this guide covers

- ☐ Leading supportive wellness conversations
- ☐ Short talking points and check-in questions
- ☐ Handling conversations respectfully
- ☐ Quick reference for managers

Leading Supportive Wellness Conversations

Supportive wellness conversations start with empathy, privacy, and respect. Managers should approach these discussions in ways that are flexible and inclusive, so employees feel supported rather than pressured.

🌻 Good practice for managers

- Choose a private and appropriate setting for the conversation.
- Begin with care and observation, not judgment;

For example: "I wanted to check in and see how you're doing."

- Listen without interrupting or rushing to fix the situation.
- Use respectful people's first language where appropriate and mirror the employee's preferred words for their experience.
- Avoid assumptions about stress, home life, health, identity, culture, disability, or what support someone may need.
- Respect comfort levels; employees may want to share a lot, a little, or nothing at all.
- Focus on what support is possible at work, including flexibility, workload discussions, and available wellness resources.



Short talking points and check-in questions

☀ Starting lines

- I wanted to check in and see how things are going.
- I'm here to support you if you want to talk.
- You do not need to share anything personal, but I wanted to make space for a conversation.

☀ Check-in questions

- How are things feeling for you right now?
- Is anything making work feel more difficult lately?
- What would be most helpful for you right now?
- Would it help to look at priorities or supports together?

☀ Supportive responses

- Thank you for sharing that.
- I appreciate you telling me.
- We can look at options together.
- You do not have to figure this out alone.



Handling conversations respectfully

When someone shares a concern, respond with privacy, empathy, and no judgment.

Thank the employee for sharing, avoid minimizing their experience, and guide them toward the right supports when appropriate.

Do not pressure them to disclose more than they want to share, and do not assume you know what they need before asking.

Helpful mindset

A supportive conversation is not an investigation. It is a chance to show care, reduce pressure, and help the employee feel seen, respected, and informed about available options.



Quick reference for managers

- Start with a calm and respectful check-in.
- Choose a private and appropriate setting.
- Listen more than you speak.
- Use open-ended questions.
- Avoid assumptions and stay nonjudgmental.
- Respect privacy and comfort levels.
- Keep the tone supportive, not corrective.
- Acknowledge what the employee shares.
- Focus on what support is possible at work.
- Offer flexibility where appropriate.
- Connect the employee with the right support if needed.
- Follow up in a respectful and timely way.



