

Tips for Managers

The High Cost of Anxiety in the Workplace



Anxiety has dramatically increased in recent years, becoming one of the top mental health issues affecting American workers today.

[An analysis of more than 300,000 cases](#) found 24% of people who reached out for mental health assistance did so for help with anxiety. [Another study](#) reports 80% of workers surveyed routinely experience “productivity anxiety,” a feeling of being overwhelmed by a never-ending to-do list and fear of failing. The strain of anxiety in the workplace is even more widespread than many realize, impacting both workers and organizations.

Common Causes. For some it might be high work demands, tight deadlines, meeting with clients, giving presentations, or working directly with senior leaders. For others, it may be responsibilities beyond their skillset, extra-long work hours, job insecurity, fear of being laid off, or interpersonal conflicts with coworkers.

Symptoms. You may not even realize someone you work with is suffering from anxiety. Since no two people are alike, the cause of anxiety varies from person to person. Red flags could include an unusual number of missed days of work, undue worry, mood swings, drop in performance, and reduced job satisfaction. Physical complaints could include sweating, headaches, nausea, and insomnia.

Impact. Leaves of absence for mental health issues are up a whopping 300% from 2017 to 2023. Moreover, workers suffering from anxiety are more likely to leave their jobs, contributing to the financial burden of staff turnover. The American Institute of Stress reports that the cumulative impact of absenteeism, turnover, and decreased productivity costs employers more than \$300 billion annually.

What You Can Do

Here are a few strategies to support your team and foster a positive work environment.

→ **Cultivate a Supportive Culture.**

Create an atmosphere where workers feel comfortable discussing their mental health. Integrate wellbeing discussions during one-on-one meetings.

→ **Normalize anxiety** as a common condition and encourage your team to get help when needed. Please remind them that **Concern** is here 24/7. For information about self-help resources or consulting with a counselor, call **800-344-4222** or go to employees.concernhealth.com

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What You Can Do *continued*

- **Promote Rest and Wellbeing.** Encourage regular mini-breaks throughout the day to help workers give their minds a rest, and 30-minute lunchtime walks. Exercise, even in short bursts, is a great way to reduce anxiety.
- **Strengthen Connections.** Promote Concern's Observe, Chat, Connect (OCC) program, designed to strengthen connections among team members and promote emotional well-being at work. Start by sharing a short [animated video](#) that includes program details.

Sources: [Webmd](#). *How to Deal with Anxiety at Work*; [Forbes](#). *Employees Report Productivity Anxiety and Lower Wellbeing*; [Society for Human Resources Management](#) (SHRM). *Anxiety is Now the Top Mental Health Issue in the Workplace*

Other Strategies

- **Visit eM Life** for expert-guided mindfulness sessions such as: Skills to Thrive in Anxious Times and Mindfully Managing Anxiety Series. (First-time visitors will need to create a no cost eM Life login through Concern's Digital Hub.)
- **Consider scheduling a live Webinar**
 - Recognizing a Colleague in Need
 - Strategies for Managing Multiple Priorities
 - How to Avoid Running on EmptyTo schedule, contact your Account Executive or send an email to Concern's Training Coordinator theresa_gilmour@concernhealth.com
- **Connect with other leaders and managers** to learn how they are handling anxiety within their teams

Anxiety may not feel good, but it is normal. If you or someone on your team finds that anxiety is overwhelming and is interfering with everyday life, you can contact us for help and support.

Call: 800.344.4222
employees.concernhealth.com