

A woman with dark curly hair and glasses is looking thoughtfully to the right. A hand is in the foreground, slightly out of focus, as if she is about to touch it. The background is a soft, neutral tone. The image is overlaid with a large, multi-colored geometric shape in shades of pink, purple, and yellow.

THE LEAD ICON



HANDLING ALL TYPES OF EMOTIONS

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For some, emotions can take a toll on our day. Some may disengage from their work and some may miss work altogether. Engagement impacts a wide variety of important business outcomes—making a solid case for addressing emotions at work.

Burying emotions hurts engagement, but so does being in a toxic environment. When the people around you are frequently and openly expressing negative emotions, it can have a damaging effect on employee engagement.

When left unchecked, employee emotions can have a serious impact on the workplace. Make sure you understand each of these unique emotions and strive to find the right balance of supporting and preventing them at work.

Emotions & Work in Post Pandemic and Recession Era

Post-pandemic workplaces are witnessing high levels of trauma. This situation is causing issues for companies as they are needing to spend time and resources on helping employees through the trauma. Leaders can take steps with HR and medical professionals to show employees how valued they are and ease the trauma of post COVID-19.



The pandemic has left most of us traumatised in one way or another, and the impact of that trauma is showing up in stress levels, resignations, anger, and lost productivity. While leaders at work should not be expected to become counsellors, they can take some simple steps to help their team members feel valued and connected, move forward in their careers, and improve their morale, well-being, and productivity.

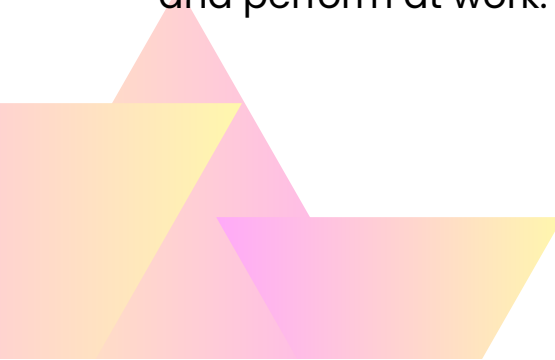
In addition, many large companies are retrenching staff causing an increase in fear with employees if they were to lose their jobs during these difficult times. Almost four in five US employees fear losing their job during the recession, pointing to a high level of anxiety among workers amid increasing talk of an economic downturn. Millennials lead the generational groups with job-security worries. Sixty percent of millennials who were employed during the 2008 recession said they "felt anxious about job security," or that "the fear of being laid off is often in the back of their minds."

That's according to a recent survey from staffing company Insight Global, which also found that 54% of workers would take a pay cut if it meant staying employed.

How to Regain Your Confidence After Someone Puts You Down

"You alone are enough. You have nothing to prove to anyone." ~
Maya Angelou

Distress, anxiety, work avoidance, lowered productivity, and taking more sick days: Workplace bullying and discrimination can have a significant impact on employees' mental health and how you feel and perform at work.



Working with rude, arrogant or otherwise unpleasant colleagues can lower job satisfaction, especially if their negativity is directed at you. Don't take the behaviour too personally, and make an effort to work things out with your colleague or boss and attempt to heal the workplace conflict.


Mastering the art of responding to criticism like a pro is linked to higher job satisfaction. It's also the cornerstone of building trust in any relationship. You may be tempted to lash out and give the person that put you down a piece of your mind.

Before you say something you'll regret, pause. Don't panic. Practice being aware of your emotional reaction. Then, buy yourself time to calm down and gain distance from the comments by saying something like "Thanks, I appreciate you sharing your thoughts". By doing so, you use your empathy skills to achieve two things: (1) you make the person feel heard and (2) you gain control of your emotional response so that you respond respectfully.

After you've given yourself some space to process what's been said, you're ready to evaluate the feedback objectively. Keep in mind that criticism is a reflection of one person's opinions and beliefs, including their fears. For example, your family may be critical of your career choices when in fact they're just worried about you. Do your best to de-personalize their comments and assume positive intent. Find a growth opportunity within the criticism by asking for specific examples about where you could improve or what you could do differently next time and then chose if you want to do it or not.

Uncooperative or Critical Employees

From time to time we all have to deal with overly-critical and toxic coworkers, clients, supervisors and other "nay-sayers" in the workplace. Criticism shows up in a number of different ways. It can be blatant and very public, such as someone pointing out your budget errors in a staff meeting or making fun of your idea for a new ad campaign.



It can also be sneaky and snarky, such as the co-worker who critiques your latest project in the coffee room—when you're not even present to defend yourself.


You'll need two things to cope with criticism effectively: assertiveness and self-confidence.

Take the time and effort to step into the critic's moccasins and view things from their perspective instead of your own. People often criticise others because they think it makes them look better by comparison. Is the critic feeling insecure in his or her job? Hungry for attention from the boss? Instead of pushing him away with defensiveness, make him a partner in process improvement. When all else fails, politely remind the critics (or maybe just yourself if the critical one happens to be your boss) of the wise words of Frank A. Clark. "Lots of faults we think we see in others are simply the ones we expect to find there because we have them."

Cut out Negative Language

Did you know that you may be accidentally putting yourself into a bad mindset?

We are all guilty of putting ourselves down with the occasional negative remark, but a passing comment of this nature can subconsciously put your self-worth into a downward spiral. Even seemingly harmless expressions can not only affect your mental health, but also the way you see the world. Negative self-talk hurts your confidence and can impact how others perceive you. Skip the self-deprecation and focus on your strengths. Take what makes you feel unsure, and imagine it as an advantage instead of an obstacle. Your confidence will follow.



Practice How You Speak and Present Yourself

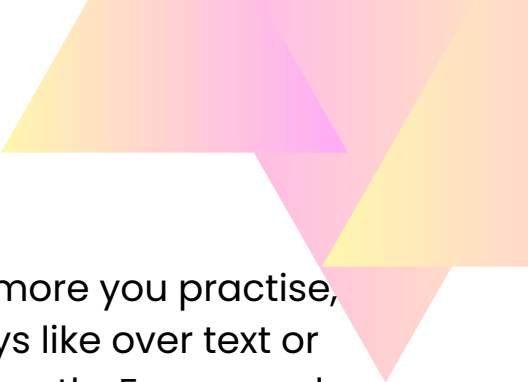
How you dress, do your hair and style yourself can impact your confidence. Many people feel their best when they look their best, especially women.

This doesn't mean you should show up in your office in a suit everyday. Clothing, makeup, shoes and accessories can be a form of self-expression and sign that you put an effort each day to look presentable for your colleagues, clients and senior managers. After all, how you present yourself in one way determines how you also represent the company you work in. Follow your office's dress code, but look for ways to incorporate your unique style, and take a few extra minutes getting ready in the morning to boost your confidence.

Did you know that your posture and tone can also display confidence? Try to maintain a healthy posture while sitting, and speak up while talking during a meeting.

Stop People Pleasing and Seeking Approval

Are you someone who goes out of your way to be helpful and kind at work? Do you consistently say yes to taking on new projects even when you are overloaded? Do you find yourself agreeing with co-workers even though you may have a very different viewpoint? If that sounds like you, you may have people-pleasing tendencies. Doing nice things for others isn't a bad thing, but when this behaviour causes you to disregard your feelings, suppress valuable opinions, and take on more responsibility than you can comfortably manage, that's a problem.



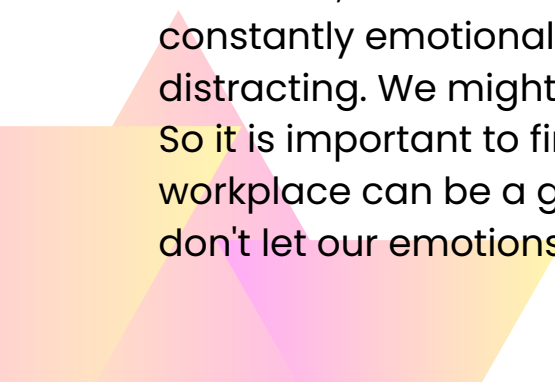
People pleasers have trouble saying no. But the more you practise, the easier it gets. Start doing it in small, easy ways like over text or chat. Rehearse responses that you can use frequently. For example, if you're too busy, you could say, "Thanks for thinking of me, but I'm really overscheduled right now." Or, if you're just not the right person, you could say, "That sounds really interesting, but I know there is someone who is a better fit for that project."

The most important thing to remember about your behaviour is to stay true to yourself. Don't agree to do something that conflicts with your priorities or makes you uncomfortable just to please someone else. Know what is right for you and stick to it. By taking this approach, people will respect you more in the long run.

Consider how your current job fits in with your life goals and whether or not the stress you are experiencing is serving a purpose. If you feel like you need to keep your current job, but are frustrated at the same time, identify people or things in your workplace that can make your daily grind less nerve-racking. For example, allocate time each day to spend time with co-workers that make you feel better. Or, consider using your lunch break to walk around the office.

Conclusion

Sometimes, it is simply impossible to hide our true feelings, but emotional reactions can actually be a strength. They can show that we are human and that we care about our work. If we didn't have emotional reactions, we might come across as cold and uninterested.



Of course, there is such a thing as too much emotion. If we are constantly emotional in the workplace, it can be disruptive and distracting. We might also come across as unstable or unreliable. So it is important to find a balance. Showing some emotion in the workplace can be a good thing, but we need to make sure that we don't let our emotions take over.