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5 Minutes for Business

Mentally Healthy Workplaces: The Best Investment Your Business Can Make

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Every week, nearly 500,000 Canadians miss work due to mental health problems or illnesses, costing the economy in excess of \$51-billion annually. In order to remain competitive, businesses need to focus inwards and begin investing in and improving how they navigate mental health in their workplace.

With most adults spending more of their waking hours at work and with one in five Canadians experiencing a mental health problem or illness, addressing the issue of mental health at work is vitally important for all people in Canada—especially employers. Mentally healthy workforces perform better and create opportunities that allow for inclusive growth for all sections of society.

The steps to building a more mentally healthy workplace are simple—small changes lead to a larger impact over time. The first step is to decimate the stigma surrounding mental health problems and illnesses. Businesses can create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognized and valued.

It is not only socially responsible for businesses to prioritize a mentally healthy workplace, but also fiscally responsible, all while promoting employee retention. As the leading cause of short and long-term disability in Canada, mental health takes a substantial toll on Canadian workplaces. The longer an employee is absent from work, the higher chance there is for an unsuccessful integration back into the workplace.

Businesses must prioritize adopting best practices for workplace mental health in order to mitigate the risk of losing their employees, a low employee turnover heightens a business' financial performance over time.

Additionally, a workplace that champions good mental health makes employees more productive and assists in the recruitment of new workers.

Promoting workplace mental health is also important for risk management. Psychological health and safety in the workplace is a factor that many employers can be held legally responsible for. Implementing mental health policies, in addition to assessing, controlling and/or eliminating any mental health risks in the workplace, would reduce the possibility of businesses being liable to claims. Mentally healthy workplaces can be achieved through fostering a positive culture, promoting employee mental well-being, preventing harm to employee mental health and supporting people with mental health problems and illnesses.

Our economy cannot afford to leave anyone behind, which is why as the voice of Canadian business, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is leading the way in ensuring their workplace allows all individuals to benefit from a healthy and inclusive environment. The Chamber is moving from goal to action by implementing the Mental Health Commission of Canada's [National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.](#)

For more information, please contact:
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