

The A-Z of mental health in the workplace



We have a responsibility to support our automotive people with their mental health. After all, they are the people who keep our industry running day after day.

If you've decided your company needs to improve its approach to mental health but aren't sure where to start, this A-Z is a great way to start discussions about the subject in your workplace.

Here are 26 different ways to take the topic seriously and act to show your commitment to mental health and wellbeing in your company.

A – Act:

Act: take action to protect the mental health of your workforce by directing people to [Ben's website](#) and sharing our resources. [Contact us directly](#) to discuss how we can work together to improve mental wellbeing in your workplace

B – Ben:

Ben is here for automotive industry individuals and employers. You can [promote Ben in your workplace](#) so your people know where to turn and also give your managers a basic grounding in workplace mental issues. A good starting point is BenTraining; go to www.ben.org.uk/bentraining to find out more

C – Champion:

Appoint a mental health champion (or champions) for your organisation. Better still, become that champion as someone needs to take ownership

D – Directors:

Directors should 'be the change'. Demonstrate accountability by appointing a health and wellbeing leader at Board level. Give them clear responsibilities and the authority to improve transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

E – Empower:

Empower everyone in your business to do more and talk more about mental health. Managers should develop the appropriate skills within their teams, and encourage them to seek support when managing staff with mental health issues. Work with Ben and take advantage of our workplace initiatives such as [Ben's mental health masterclasses in Coping with stress and Work, Life, Balance](#)

F – Flexible working options:

Review them, because they can be a great help to colleagues with poor mental health and, indeed, to help others proactively look after their mental health. Flexible working can also give your business a competitive advantage

G – Giving:

Organisations such as Ben can give you advice and support about mental health and your company can consider giving back, through one-off donations and gifts in kind. You can also encourage your teams to give back by giving time, such as through fundraising events or simple random acts of kindness. This can be a great addition to your CSR strategy and is positive PR too. Visit www.ben.org.uk/backingben for more ideas and inspiration

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H – Home or away:

Support colleagues to stay at work or return to work when they are dealing with mental health issues, phasing their return to the workplace if necessary

I – In-house help:

This isn't just about ensuring tailored mental health support is available, but also signposting where help is available, including to Ben's support services. As an automotive employer, you can refer an employee to Ben via our [fast-track employee referral process](#) when they need additional free and confidential support. In-house support can also include clinical and digital assistance, occupational health programmes or NHS services

J – Joint approach:

Join forces with Ben as we provide a wealth of mental health information and support for businesses. You can direct your employees to Ben's website where they can find preventative support for their [mental health](#) and [other key health and wellbeing issues](#)

K – Kick-start your commitment today:

Get in touch with Ben today and see how we can partner with you to support your employees with their mental health

L – Legals:

Know your legal obligations to consider reasonable workplace adjustments under the Equality Act (2010)

M – Mindfulness:

Encouraging employees to practice mindfulness is a good way of helping them to de-stress and proactively support their mental health

N – Normalise:

Challenge your workplace to normalise conversations around mental health. Seek volunteers who can lead by example, raise awareness and promote positive messaging about mental health

O – Openness:

Encourage an open approach to mental health from the recruitment process onwards, at regular intervals and not necessarily only when colleagues are struggling with wellbeing

P – Prevention is better than cure:

Create a work environment that promotes mental health, backed by a plan that promotes good mental health. As part of this, you can encourage your employees to sign up to receive preventative support from Ben to help them live and work well, via email www.ben.org.uk/signup. You can also take advantage of our workplace wellbeing programme, [BenAtWork](#)

Q – Q&A:

Seek employee feedback with informal and formal mechanisms to understand where gaps exist. Be clear about when you will report back with findings and actions

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R – React and respond to trauma in the workplace:

To respond to traumatic incidents in the workplace, we offer a **Critical Response Service** to help employers support their employees. This is specialist support offered when an unexpected or traumatic incident occurs in the workplace. Examples include the death of a customer or colleague, a serious injury in the workplace, a physical or psychological threat, or another incident where the circumstances are so unusual or distressing that employees need support to cope

S – Safe space:

HR and any specialist support functions should proactively engage with employees to show they have a safe space in which to discuss mental health. If your HR team need support with this, they can turn to Ben

T – Training:

This is so important. Train all managers in their duty of care relating to mental health, improve their mental health literacy, help them to be aware of mental health warning signs and support their continuous skill development. This is where BenTraining comes in - visit www.ben.org.uk/Ben4Business to find out more

U – Understand:

Seek to understand what your employees are going through, check in with them regularly, ask how they are and consider how any pressures they have at work and home may be affecting their mental health

V – Visibility:

Don't be afraid to show that your organisation takes mental health seriously. For example, offer Ben's free **BenatWork sessions** on mental health topics to demonstrate your

commitment to good mental health in the workplace

W – Workplace:

It sounds obvious but when's the last time you checked how good the working conditions you provide really are? Working conditions can have a big impact on mental health

X – X-chromosomes and Y-chromosomes:

Men are less inclined to seek help for mental health issues, especially if they are working in a 'macho' environment. In a male-dominated sector, this means managers must be particularly alert for such issues and be ready to step in

Y – Young and not-so-young:

Ben's research shows major differences in how varying age groups reach out for support. Over-55s prefer traditional channels such as phone (81%) and email (75%),

while online chat is preferred by 78% of 16 to 34-year-olds. Have help channels that reflect your workforce

Z – Zero tolerance:

Make it clear to everyone that stigmatising or abusing colleagues with poor mental health will not be tolerated. Your team deserves to be treated with dignity and respect

Find out more

Are you ready to support the mental health of your workforce? Then let's look at what we can do together to address the mental health of your workforce.

Contact us via

www.ben.org.uk/ben4business