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## How to manage and reduce absence in your business

### Why managing and reducing absence is important

The bottom line is that absence costs you A LOT of money. In 2020, absence cost UK business owners approx. £7bn. Can you believe it?

While colds and flus are unavoidable and it's expected for your employees to take the odd day off here and there, it is important to keep a close eye on how much absence could be costing your business.

### How can you calculate the cost to your business? You need to think about the knock-on effect.

Well, not only is their salary still being paid, but this causes a resourcing issue for you, their workload often falls on the shoulders of their colleagues, which can lead to decreased productivity, missed deadlines and possible disruptions to client relationships.



### How you can track absence

The easiest way for you to keep a close eye on absence is to track it using HR software like Breathe. Software like this allows you to automatically record, monitor and report on trends; giving you all of the insights you need to understand how much of an issue absence is for your business.

### How you can understand the cause of absence in your business

Carrying out return-to-work interviews is the easiest way for you to understand why employees are taking time off from work. In some cases, these interviews can be enough to make people think twice about pulling a sickie.

### How to take action to reduce absence

This will, of course, depend on why there is absence in your business. But those businesses that pay closer attention to the health and wellbeing of their teams typically see reduced absence rates than those who don't.

For more information about managing absence, please get in touch

## LATEST NEWS

### Are you still paying men more than women?

Despite all the buzz about closing the gender pay gap, it seems like we're still stuck in the age of pay inequality.

The latest from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is that a whopping 78% of full-time job roles in the UK have a gender pay gap in favour of our male counterparts. Four out of five occupations are still suffering unequal pay.

Around 30% of these roles are paying men at least 10% more per hour, while another 32% are handing out 5% to 9% more to the gents. We're not talking loose change here; we're talking thousands of pounds of difference over a year.

Over 12.9 million people are clocking in full-time, with women earning 92p for every pound earned by men. Not cool! And it gets worse. Even in the biggest job roles women are still earning less.

It turns out a huge 86% of job roles dominated by men are paying them more. And even in jobs where men and women are equally represented, like medical practitioners and sales assistants, the pay gap is alive and kicking.

Is this something your business is guilty of? Hopefully not.

### Being hungry doesn't just put us in a bad mood

Lunchboxes at the ready – new data revealed that 25% of UK workers confess to being less productive when they're hangry at work.

Yep, it turns out those mid-morning tummy rumbles are more than just a minor inconvenience.

How do you crack the code to office productivity? The perfect recipe is mixing equal parts time management, focus, health, wellbeing and motivation. And make sure your team take those breaks to stay fed and hydrated!

**80% of employees feel anxious about attending day-to-day meetings. And that includes managers. In fact, 25% of people say their last 4-5 meetings have been of no value to them at all.**

## How to spot the signs of sexual abuse and violence

### From the 5th to the 11th of this month, it's Sexual Abuse and Violence Awareness Week.

We have had to help business owners in the past support staff who have sadly been affected by sexual abuse and violence, which is why it's important for us to raise awareness of this and help you spot the signs in employees who may be dealing with this.

Because your intervention could be life saving.

#### Sudden changes in behaviour

If an employee who's usually outgoing and vibrant suddenly becomes withdrawn, anxious, or overly reserved, it might be a red flag. Pay attention to these shifts; they might indicate challenges beyond work stress.

#### Frequent unexplained absences

While we all need a duvet day now and then, consistent unexplained absences could be a sign of deeper struggles. If you notice a team member frequently missing work without clear reasons, it's time to explore if there's more to the story.

#### Visible signs of distress

Observe physical signs like unexplained injuries, changes in appearance or visible signs of distress. A sudden decline in personal grooming or an employee consistently wearing clothing that conceals their body could be an indicator.

#### Unusual interactions

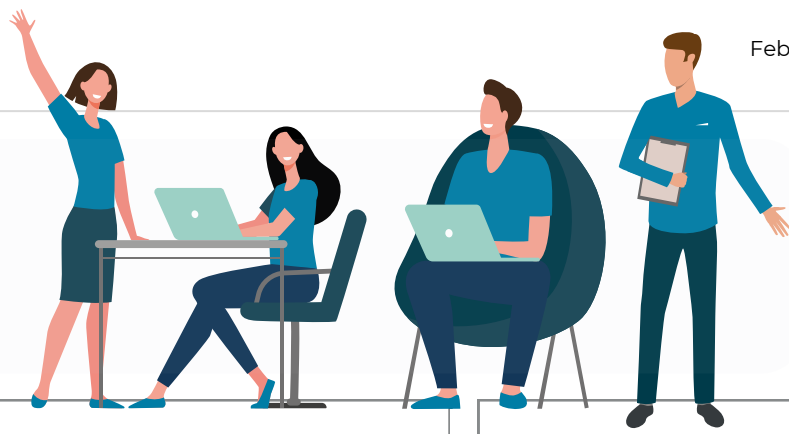
Pay attention to how an employee interacts with others. Do they seem overly defensive or on edge? Unexplained tensions or conflicts with colleagues might indicate external pressures affecting their wellbeing.

#### Emotional outbursts

Uncharacteristic emotional outbursts, whether anger or extreme sadness, can be an indication of underlying issues. While everyone has their moments, consistent emotional instability might require a compassionate conversation.

It's not the easiest subject to tackle, but it's one of huge importance. If you have a situation that you need help with, please contact us and we'll offer our advice in the strictest of confidence.

# Q&A



## We were supposed to have a new starter, but I want to withdraw the offer, can I?

If an unconditional offer has already been accepted, you could be in breach of contract. You would need to serve appropriate notice and ensure your reasons aren't discriminatory.



## Can an individual come back to work once they have received retirement benefits?

Yes. You can continue to work while still receiving a pension. It's important to make sure any employee receiving a pension while working is on the right tax code though.



## Do I need to provide a prayer room for my employees?

No, but you should comply with any request to allow them to use a quiet space to pray, if it doesn't disrupt the business or other staff.



# Let's talk on the phone

Here are three questions for you:

- Do you currently have an HR consultant?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you with them?

If the answer isn't "I'm so delighted I could print 1,000 flyers to spread the word about them", let's jump on a video call.

You know just how important it is to get proactive, responsive HR support. That's what we do and we do it well.

We offer a pay-as-you-go and retainer services with no long tie-in period.



**YOUR HR EXPERT**