

Disclosure of mental health at work



Work
Life
Tools

If you have a mental health condition, sharing this information with your employer can help you get the support you need to stay well at work.

Disclosure of mental health at work

The stigma around mental health conditions can prevent a person from getting the support and treatment they need, especially in the workplace. While you are not legally obliged to disclose a mental health condition, sharing this information with your employer can benefit you in terms of getting the support you need to stay well at work.

If your mental health condition is classified as a disability, then your employer has a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to put reasonable adjustments in place to ensure you are not disadvantaged in relation to someone who doesn't have a disability.



Choose the right time and the right person to share with

It is important to choose the right time and the right person to speak to; this could be a manager or an HR representative. You might want to first practice having the conversation with a trusted colleague or friend. Ask for a private meeting where you will not be interrupted or overheard and where there is sufficient time for you to talk about the challenges you might experience and what support you might need.

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Prepare for the meeting

Before the meeting, decide what information you are comfortable sharing about your mental health and what you want to keep private. Consider creating a **Wellbeing Action Plan** prior to the meeting to outline any adjustments or additional support you may need in the workplace eg, flexible working arrangements or quiet working space. Think about the role you do and how this will help you to perform at your best.

You can find more guidance and advice on what reasonable adjustments are and how to prepare for the meeting on the **ACAS website**.

Set boundaries for yourself

Establish clear boundaries at work and when you're not at work. These could include:

- Planning (and taking) regular breaks.
- Using the 50-minute meeting model so you are not rushing from one meeting to the next.
- Being clear about your availability – making use of your email signature to let others know your working hours.
- Pausing your email inbox or turning off notifications for set periods, if possible.
- Silencing your WhatsApp groups.
- Making sure you take your annual leave and not feeling guilty about taking time off.

Use assertive communication

Choose assertive language you are comfortable using to establish boundaries:

- "I'm not able to help you with that right now, but I can do...."
- "I'm not working at that time; I will be back... "

Adjust boundaries as needed

Boundaries are not barriers or restrictions. Be open to adjusting them as your circumstances change or you work out what works well for you. Boundaries are flexible and can be adapted to suit your needs in line with the business needs.



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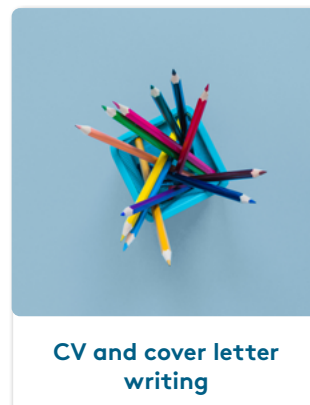
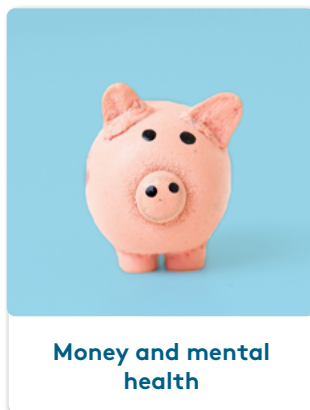
Seek support

Don't hesitate to seek support from colleagues, friends or mental health support professionals if you are struggling with your mental health and need extra guidance on how to manage this in your workplace.

Mental health charity **Mind** has some great resources on how to tell your employer about your disability.



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