

How to navigate work and personal spaces

By [Ahmed El Hofy](#)

24 Oct 2023

How we navigate our work and personal spaces has been altered as work dynamics change due to the rise of remote working, hybrid office structures, and post-pandemic changes, and this has profound implications for our psychological health and overall well-being.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) Ahmed El Hofy, general manager SA, Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson, examines how we navigate our work and personal spaces

As the once-clear boundaries between personal and professional lives have often become increasingly blurred, mental health, traditionally viewed as purely personal, has expanded to become a business concern.

The thread in the fabric of an individual's life has transformed into the backbone of an organisation, influencing diverse areas from productivity levels and team dynamics to the core values of a company.

When employees are burdened with challenges like stress, anxiety, or depression, their capability to remain focused, make informed decisions, and foster effective teamwork is significantly compromised.

A ripple effect

The impact of mental health challenges isn't isolated to the individual. It can have a ripple effect, impacting the larger workforce in tangible ways, and the collective environment, in turn, impacts each employee.

The World Health Organisation's 2020 study unveiled the magnitude of this intertwined relationship, disclosing that disorders like depression and anxiety result in a staggering annual \$1tn productivity loss on a global scale.

The constant exposure to high-pressure work environments can result in chronic stress. Such sustained pressure can be the precursor to a host of severe health conditions: heart diseases, diabetes, hypertension, and even a compromised immune system.

The undeniable correlation between mental and physical health magnifies the critical role mental wellness plays not just in our professional lives, but in our holistic well-being. And as we spend a large portion of our waking hours at work, the math is undeniable.



How leaders can help manage employee stress to improve performance

22 Feb 2018



A pressing necessity

Employers must actively prioritise mental health and it must integrate seamlessly into corporate policies, daily practices, and ingrained culture. Facilitating transparent and open conversations regarding mental health and associated challenges isn't merely a trend; it has become a pressing necessity.

It can pave the way for an office or work environment that creates empathy, mutual respect, and support, and where employees are recognised beyond their job titles as individuals with distinct needs and aspirations.

A supportive workplace isn't one that merely encourages open discussions. It is also one where all employees, whether a manager or an intern, can freely voice their concerns, anxieties, and suggestions without judgment or consequence.

It requires active and attentive listening from employers and leadership. It can also serve as an early tell-tale of any potential challenges within an organisation.

Companies should consider robust employee assistance programmes, provisions for mental health leave, routine wellness checks, and continuous mental health awareness campaigns.



Africa's overall well-being lower than global average as stress level rises

17 Nov 2021



A greater necessity in current times

Achieving this equilibrium between work-life balance has become an even greater necessity in current times. Whether through flexible work schedules, encouraging remote working options, or urging employees to take periodic breaks or holidays, companies are propagating the notion of rest and rejuvenation.

Mental recharge is essential for sustained productivity. Furthermore, innovations like the four-day workweek, although still in experimental phases, are indicative of a global shift towards prioritising employee wellness.

Addressing employee burnout is a critical aspect of mental health in any company and cannot be overstated. Its prevalence

has reached such concerning levels that the World Health Organization has categorically identified it as an occupational phenomenon and a mental health risk.

Organisations must consider a fresh approach to mental health. The collective well-being of employees directly impacts the profitability of an organisation. Employee mental wellness, in a twenty-first-century work environment, has become more critical than ever.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ahmed El Hbfy, general manager SA, Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>