

3 management styles and how they can affect employee mental health

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With the month of October dedicated to raising awareness on mental health, looking at employee mental health should be prioritised in organisations. A lot of employees spend an average of 40 hours a week at work, which is a considerably long time, therefore, the environment they work in and the people they work with, especially their leaders should have a positive impact on their mental health.



Source: nappy from [Pexels](#)

We will explore the different main types of management styles in an organisation and the effect they have on employee's mental health.

What is a management style?

A management style is an approach a leader or manager takes to delegate and manage their team – this includes their communication, plans and decisions. A management style is important because of the impact it has on performance. It influences the team member's self-esteem and their results. It also plays a role in making sure that the employee feels valued in the organisation.

Types of management styles and their effect on employee's mental health

Autocratic management style

This management style is a top-down approach with one-way communication from the manager to employees. This management style is controlling and power dominated, where management makes all workplace decisions. Employees are often closely monitored and limited as they work and perform. Their work is dictated and are punished when it is not done. They are micro-managed and their performance is not trusted.

They feel dissatisfaction and they also start to resent work and their managers. They do not engage in the workplace which leads to lack of innovation and professional development. The Autocratic management style causes stress, burnout and fear amongst employees- which is a negative impact on mental health.

Democratic management style

This management style is a collaborative approach, where employees have a say in the decision-making process. Communication is two-way from top-down to bottom-up and teamwork is encouraged.

This style encourages and builds trust between the team and management. Employees can voice out opinions, ideas and can solve problems. This encourages growth and high productivity from the subordinates which has a positive impact on mental health.

Laissez faire management style

This management style is a hands-off approach. The manager trusts the employees to do their work or perform without supervision. Employees handle decision making and problem solving. The manager is there at the delegation and delivery stage; however, in between workers have the freedom to do their work and only ask managers for help when its required.

Employees are often satisfied with their job which makes room for innovation and leadership from the team. Problem solving and team work increase as they have the space to handle their work, therefore, this management style has a positive impact on mental health.

Mental health awareness

The mental health of employees is vital to the organisation's performance and productivity rates and managers have a huge impact on employees' mental health.

Mental health awareness should also happen in workplaces. Organisational leaders or managers should know the role they play in ensuring that all their teams and employees are in a good and positive state of mental health.

What can leaders do to improve the mental health of employees in the workplace?

Have a mental health support plan – an organisation and its leaders should have resources to help with mental health. Quarterly counselling session can be offered to employees, weekly meditation or mindfulness sessions can be offered, as well as mental health leave days can be incorporated in the policies. Leaders can invest more in mental health training for staff members.

Regular check-ins – leaders can have regular check-ins with their team members. The check-in can be formal and informal support, where both the workers and the manager can openly communicate about how they feel and what they

need help with.

Open communication policy - leaders need to have an open communication policy, where their team members are free to share ideas, opinions or even their disagreements. This will help promote a culture of connection, support and teamwork.

Assessments of stress levels, burnout and mental health state – leaders can assess their employee's mental health every time they have performance reviews and surveys can be done to evaluate and explore the mental health state of workers in the organisation.

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