

What to Do When Someone's Not 'OK' in the Workplace



BLACK SWAN
HEALTH LTD

If you notice that an employee or colleague is not themselves or is going through a rough time, let them know they are not alone. Whether you're a Human Resources Manager, Team Leader or colleague, everyone has the ability to help by asking the simple question: "Are you okay?".

Before you ask, make sure you're prepared to respond if someone does need help. Here are some tips to keep in mind if someone is not 'OK':

- **Talk it out.** Arrange an appropriate time and place to talk and try to listen non-judgementally, as this will put you both more at ease.
- **Ask how you can help.** Find out if there's something specific that you can do to support the person. This may be as simple as helping to raise the topic with their manager or making a small office adjustment.
- **Don't pretend to be an expert.** You are not expected to 'fix' the situation or take matters into your own hands. Simply by instigating the conversation and if possible, helping the person decide on their next step, you have played an important role. If you don't know what to say or how to handle the situation, refer them onto a professional who can help.
- **Suggest further help.** If the person seems distressed or has been feeling low for some time, it's important to let them know about the professional help that they can access. Black Swan Health has a range of mental health services including individual counselling. Other supports may be your organisations EAP provider or check out the R U OK? website for a directory of more services and information.
- **Follow up on how they are going.** After your initial conversation, be sure to check-in with the person to see how they are. Ongoing contact will demonstrate your genuine care and will also help to keep them on track, or provide an opportunity for intervention if things seem to get worse.
- **Consider your own mental health.** It can be difficult to hear that someone else is not doing okay. If you feel under pressure, are unable to focus at work or otherwise affected, be sure to take time out for your own mental wellbeing and seek further help if needed.

To learn more about mental health support in the workplace and to find out how Black Swan Health's Employee Assistance Program can support your team, visit our website or contact us today:



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