Managing for Mental Wellbeing in the Tech Industry

Dr Michelle O’Sullivan
What to Expect

1. Learn about the impact of mental ill-health in the workplace
2. Tips for managing employee mental ill-health and occupational psychosocial factors
3. Tools and where to get help
When you’re working at your **best**

**THOUGHTS**
- It was an accident
- I can trust them
- They are trying their best
- I’m competent
- This will pass
- I got this
- It will work out

**FEELINGS**
- Motivated
- In the zone
- Strong

**BEHAVIOURS**
- Said ‘yes’
- Problem solving
- Eating well
- Helped others
- Collaborated
- Challenge appropriately
- Boundaries
- Meeting deadlines

**PHYSICAL REACTIONS**
- Sleeping well
- Energised
When you’ve been **struggling** at work

**THOUGHTS**
- I’m worthless
- I can’t trust them
- I can’t do this
- They’re out to get me
- I’m a failure
- This is never going to end

**FEELINGS**
- Sad
- Anxious
- Exhausted
- Irritable
- Hopeless
- Unmotivated

**BEHAVIOURS**
- Eating?
- Going out more/less
- Overworking? Underworking?

**PHYSICAL REACTIONS**
- Heart racing
- Sweating
- Numb
- Aches and pains
- Stomach problems

- Sleeping?

Withdrawn

Overworking? Underworking?
What is Mental Wellbeing?

- Realising own achievements and abilities
- Coping with normal stresses of life
- Working productively and fruitfully
- Making a contribution to the community
Mental health spectrum

healthy → coping → struggling → unwell

© Centre for Mental Health 2017 www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk
How many of the tech workforce have symptoms of a common mental health condition in any given week?

- 1 in 7
- 1 in 4
- 1 in 3
What % of people are comfortable talking to their employer about their mental health?

69% 40%
Why Should You Care About Mental Health as an Employer?
Managing for Mental Wellbeing

02 March 2020

@DrMichelleOS
Bored, under-valued, under-stimulated

Comfort

Stretch

Strain

Crisis

Low

High

Minimum

Average

Maximum

Level of Pressure

Figure 1. The effects of pressure on performance

Fatigue, poor judgement and decision making

Exhaustion, serious health problems, burnout
What Makes Up Workplace Wellbeing

- Support
- Relationships
- Control
- Role
- Demands
- Change

Workplace Wellbeing
Mind’s Wellness Action Plan

- Impact of mental health on performance
  - What keeps someone well at work
  - Workplace triggers
  - Early warning signs
- Steps for the line manager to take
- Steps for the individual to take
- Support measures and workplace adjustments
Support Available

➢ EAP provider
➢ Occupational Health
➢ Local GP

➢ Local IAPT Service
➢ Able futures
➢ Samaritans

➢ Mind Infoline
   0300 123 3393 (or text 86463)
What to do next?

- Assess psychosocial risks
- Make a plan that includes management of workplace risks
- Train your line managers on managing mental wellbeing
- Get a senior leader champion - storytelling
Thank you

Email: michelle.o’sullivan@rssb.co.uk
www.linkedin.com/in/dr-michelle
@DrMichelleOS