

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF SELFCARE IN THE WORK PLACE**

**Self-care** involves prioritizing your own health and wellbeing, setting boundaries and putting yourself at the top of your care list.

For example, if you have a stressful day at work, you may want to curl up with a good book at night to take your mind off things. If you sit at your desk all day, self-care might involve a 30-minute walk outside in the middle of the workday. If you're loaded with too much work, self-care can even mean saying no to helping someone else with another project. Everyone has unique workplace stressors and needs, so what constitutes effective self-care for you may look different for your colleagues.

Here are a few examples of what self-care at work could look like:

- Staying hydrated and packing a healthy lunch and snack
- Adding items to your desk that spark joy
- Setting limits on the number of new projects or tasks you take on per day
- Engaging in the workplace community – whether that's in person or virtual
- Setting small goals for yourself throughout the day outside of your to-do list
- Taking advantage of your lunch break by going for a walk or spending time on an activity you enjoy

## **Benefits of Self-Care in the Workplace**

### **1. Improved productivity**

Implementing self-care practices in the workplace can help improve productivity. Employees who feel physically and emotionally well are more likely to focus on tasks and complete them efficiently.

When employees are healthy and well-rested, they are more productive and engaged in their work. Studies have shown that employees who prioritize self-care take fewer sick days and are more focused and productive at work. Additionally, when employees are engaged in their work, they are more likely to be motivated and committed to their job.

For example, stress can have physical effects on your body, such as high blood pressure, headaches, upset stomach, chest pain and sleep disruption. These health issues can be minor distractions or be severe enough to cause employees to miss work altogether, reducing productivity. Physical self-care techniques, such as regular wellness screenings, exercise, healthy eating, proper sleep and relaxation techniques, can help employees stay physically healthy and ready to work.

Workplace stressors can also cause emotional and mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, burnout, disengagement and lack of focus – all of which often lead to reduced productivity in the workplace. Mental and emotional self-care techniques allow employees and business leaders to press a reset button and address these issues before they start to have a financial impact on your organization.

## 2. Reduced stress levels

Self-care practices can help reduce stress levels among employees. High levels of stress can lead to burnout, which can have detrimental effects on an individual's health and performance.

The following are ways to manage stress and enhance high level performance for individual:

- **Good self-care:** Taking care of yourself will help maintain your physical, emotional, and mental reserves to prevent and manage stress. This includes regular sleep, exercise, relaxation, and eating well.
- **Evaluate your priorities:** There are so many amazing activities to engage in at Amherst, but if you try to do everything, you may spread yourself too thin to really reap value from the activities you're engaged in. What is most important to you? Imagine yourself 5-10 years in the future, looking back. Will you wish you invested more in academics? Developing friendships? Co-curricular activities?
- **Consider doing less:** Try to leave yourself some down time to relax and replenish. Before taking on additional responsibility, take some time to think about whether it is going to contribute to or detract from your overall well-being. Are the benefits worth the potential stress?
- **Practice setting limits:** It can be tough to say "no" to others, or to limit yourself from doing everything, even if you know it might be better for you in the long run. Rather than automatically saying "yes" to new responsibilities, consider changing your default response to, "Let me think about it" or "I'll get back to you" to buy yourself some time to consider the impact of the decision.
- **Work hard, play well:** Working hard is draining, and you deserve to relax and let loose. Choose activities that will help you unwind, have fun, *and refuel*.

### **3. Increased job satisfaction**

Self-care practices can help improve job satisfaction. Employees who feel supported and valued by their employers are more likely to be engaged in their work, leading to better overall job satisfaction.

Balancing managing daily tasks and encouraging employee self-management can increase the trust between the employees and the company. This can also strengthen the relationships within the office and increase individual happiness in the workplace because of the trust you show. Also, allowing employees to manage themselves to an extent can improve their work performance because it can increase their confidence and productivity

### **4. Reduced healthcare costs**

Investing in employee wellness through self-care practices can help reduce healthcare costs for employers. Employees who practice self-care are less likely to suffer from chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension, which can be costly to treat.

When employees prioritize self-care, they are more likely to be healthy and well-rested. This, in turn, can reduce the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Engaging in stress-reducing activities like meditation or yoga can also improve mental health and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Employers who prioritize employee well-being can also benefit financially. When employees are healthy, they are less likely to need medical treatment, which can help reduce healthcare costs. Additionally, when employees are healthy and engaged in their work, they are less likely to experience burnout, which can lead to increased turnover and higher costs associated with recruiting and training new employees.

### **5. Attract and retain top talent**

Employers who prioritize employee wellness through self-care practices are more likely to attract and retain top talent. Employees are looking for employers who prioritize their well-being, and offering self-care resources can be a valuable recruiting tool.

Employees who feel supported in their self-care efforts are more likely to stay with their employer long-term. This is because they feel valued and cared for, which leads to increased job satisfaction and loyalty. Employers who prioritize employee well-being are more likely to attract and retain top talent.

Self-care is an essential aspect of employee wellness. Implementing effective self-care strategies in the workplace can lead to improved productivity, reduced stress levels, increased job satisfaction, reduced healthcare costs, and attract and retain top talent.

Corporate Health & Wellness Association offers the Certified Corporate Wellness Specialist program, which is the leading training and certification program for individuals in corporate well-being. This program can help individuals learn how to implement effective wellness strategies that can benefit employees and employers.

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