

MANAGERS IN CANADIAN SMEs NEED MENTAL-HEALTH SUPPORT



In 2023, 2,500 Canadian employees from small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were surveyed—nearly half (46%) were managers with an average age of 43; 65% of respondents identified as male, 34% as female, and 1% as non-binary.¹

Mental-health challenges are more prevalent among managers than non-managers

56% of managers have at least one mental-health problem or self-reported dependency (compared to 48% of non-managers)

22% of managers experience moderate or severe clinical insomnia (compared to 15% of non-managers)

♀ Female managers report higher levels of anxiety, exhaustion, distress and insomnia than male managers

Fear of stigma

41% of managers believe disclosing mental-health or addiction challenges could harm their careers (compared to 33% of non-managers)

Inability to detach

- Managers have more trouble detaching psychologically from work than non-managers
- Detachment is associated with less insomnia, depression, anxiety, burnout and presenteeism

Workplace risks

59% of managers say they're asked to do an excessive amount of work (compared to 39% of non-managers)

57% of managers say they receive conflicting demands at work (compared to 45% of non-managers)

67% of managers say their work is emotionally demanding (compared to 50% of non-managers)



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Consider managers when designing your action plan

Good approaches include:

- ✓ Including a section exclusively for managers in surveys on commitment, interests and needs
- ✓ Adding 'manager health' to management committee agendas
- ✓ Destigmatizing mental health across the organization
- ✓ Ensuring managers are aware of management coaching services within employee assistance programs
- ✓ Taking into account managers' reality when developing training and support programs

Seek out expertise in workplace health solutions

1. Prevention and health promotion

- Develop a health culture in the organization
- Develop organizational health policies and practices
- Set up a health committee

2. A proactive approach to workplace attendance management

- Develop guides and tools for managers and employees
- Encourage coaching in action for managers

Two job realities, one struggle

Managers and employees say they need recognition, a reasonable workload and emotional support to thrive at work. Among employees, manager recognition is the no. 1 factor contributing

to a greater sense of belonging at work. Taking care of managers' mental health is essential to promote employee health, ensuring both employee and manager success.

¹ Source: Survey of 2,500 Canadian employees at SMEs conducted in 2023 by the Relief Research Chair in Mental Health, Self-Management and Work, powered by Beneva and based at the University of Laval.