



Top tips for coping in a recession

In the current economic climate it is very tempting to cut back on health and wellbeing programmes, let alone invest in new services. But there are even stronger arguments for maintaining and improving workforce health.

We believe there are a number of top tips for coping in a recession:

1) Engage with your workforce

Open and regular communication with your employees helps optimise productivity, empowering them to work creatively, tackling any difficulties that arise. Lack of communication may result in increased levels of stress and anxiety leading to low morale and poor customer service.

2) Encourage use of existing employee support services

Remind your employees about the support services available to them. If you have an EAP, work with your provider to promote the range of personal and practical support that your employees have access to.

3) Support your managers

Businesses that can maintain high morale will be better placed to survive in what will become an increasingly competitive environment. It is important to ensure that your managers are suitably supported and trained to effectively deal with people management issues, such as delivering difficult news or mitigating the impact of change.

4) Know your numbers

It's an old adage that you can't manage what you don't count and yet a surprising number of organisations do not have accurate and reliable data on their workforce. Identifying sickness absence hotspots and associated costs is a prime example and a good place to start.

5) Ask difficult questions

Challenge the perceived status quo and ask:

- Are you doing enough to support your employees with the impact of the recession?
- How well are you communicating with your workforce?
- Are you confident in your managers' ability to effectively motivate your staff?
- Do you have an acceptable rate of sickness absence?

If the answer to any of these is no, then there is scope for improvement.

6) Review current health and wellbeing arrangements

While we believe that health and wellbeing services are vital for business and should be maintained, it does not mean that a critical eye should not be passed over them from time to time. For example:

- Are your health and wellbeing services being provided as cost effectively as possible?
- Could any improvements be made?
- Would integrating services with one provider deliver cost and service benefits?

7) Talk to the experts

AXA ICAS is one of Europe's leading providers of health and wellbeing services and currently provides support to more than 1.8 million employees worldwide. Contact us for a no obligation discussion on your current health and wellbeing arrangements.

If you would like to talk to AXA ICAS for a free without obligation discussion please call us on 0800 17 0800 or email us at info@axa-icas.com

