



Supporting Employee Care & Morale During COVID

Build a Culture that Supports Wellness: create opportunities for regular check-ins with your team members. In a recent Harvard Business Review study, nearly 40% of employees worldwide said that no one at their company had asked them if they were doing okay — and those respondents were 38% more likely than others to say that their mental health had declined since the pandemic outbreak. Go beyond a simple “How are you?” and ask specific questions about how team members are doing. Actively listen, demonstrate compassion, and ask how you can best support your team members during this time.

Offer Flexibility and Be Inclusive: Now more than ever, employees may be dealing with competing priorities like at-home childcare, caregiving responsibilities, social isolation, personal health concerns, and more. Offer flexibility where you are able to – encourage employees to leverage times when they can be most productive, offer flexible hours where you can, and encourage your team members to take mental health days when needed...or better yet, before they're needed!

Model Good Behavior: Are you working 12 hour days regularly and sending emails during off hours? Has it been six months since you've taken a vacation day? You can't take care of others if you aren't taking care of yourself. Nonprofit leaders are often so focused on the wellbeing of their team and their community work that they forget to take care of themselves. Share that you're going on a walk in the middle of the day, taking regular lunch breaks, limiting your own off hours screen time, or using a few vacation days to just relax so that you don't burn out. Your team will follow suit!

Get Creative! Here are some creative and fun ideas for supporting positive staff morale:

- **Celebrate Everything:** Did the team accomplish a milestone? Is it someone's birthday? Celebrate all things, big and small. Pro tip: Leverage celebratory Zoom backgrounds!
- **“No Meeting Fridays”:** Clear a day or afternoon of the week where team members can focus on dedicated time to tying up projects or plan for the coming week.
- **Weekly Lunch:** Host a weekly virtual lunch with your team where work talk is off limits! Share staff talents, pet pictures, discuss an article together.
- **Add Competitive Spirit:** Start a fitness challenge among your office to promote healthy movement or host a trivia game. Announce the winner at next month's staff meeting!
- **Wellness Wednesdays:** Have team members share one strategy each week that they are leveraging to take care of themselves. [Share this handout of wellness strategies.](#)

Is your organization pursuing a creative strategy to support staff wellness or morale?

Are there trainings or ways the Collaborative can strengthen your efforts?

Please share your stories and ideas with us (email them to colleen.cadman@jeffersonrf.org.)

We'd love to feature your stories and successes in our Collaborative E-Newsletter!