

## Lunch and Learn



45 - 60 minutes

**Key message:** 'Lunch and Learns' are a great way for people to get to know one another from different teams that don't normally interact. They are also a great learning opportunity, to learn what's important to people in and out of work. 'Lunch and Learns' help with transparency and understanding amongst colleagues, help to build communities within an organisation and foster learning, growth and development.

### Activity:

See if you can encourage colleagues to gather for a 'Lunch and Learn'. Pick a specific day for this and ensure that it happens regardless of what else is scheduled. It is good to plan this well in advance so people can schedule it in to their calendars.

For example:

- You can have mental health related topics to raise awareness and breakdown stigma
- Topics relating to work / side projects etc
- Personal interest topics that people in the organization want to present as it's something that they are interested in or a cause they care about – such as Time to Change.

### How to get started:

1. **Decide on a day or a series of days** that best suits most people within your organisation to hold the Lunch and Learn, for example Friday may not be great if that's the day everyone chooses to work from home.
2. **Decide how many Lunch and Learns to hold**, when, and how often.
3. **Find people** who would like to present and then allocate them presenting dates early on.
4. **Promote the sessions** via posters, email banners, team briefings etc. you can tools to promote with on our online tool [here](#)
5. Since Lunch and Learns are typically short (45-60 minutes), ensure learning is bite sized nuggets of information.
6. Find a relaxed setting, such as the cafeteria, lunchroom, or book a conference room. Relaxed spaces can encourage people to attend.
7. **Make sessions interactive** by using a variety of media / activities that involve the audience and promote discussion.
8. **Leave time for questions.** To save time you can have people jot their questions on a piece of paper and have someone read the questions aloud.

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# time to change

## let's end mental health discrimination

9. **Provide take aways.** This can be a list of internal or external resources, stress-reduction exercises, a copy of your mental health policy and procedures, a sheet on how to actively listen to someone in distress - whatever ties in with that particular lunch 'n learn session.
10. **Promote your next session.** Remind participants about the topic and date for the next lunch 'n learn.

### Some suggestions for mental health subjects for Lunch and Learns:

- How workplace culture ties in with mental health, and the characteristics you want encourage in your workplace culture such as trust, honesty, openness, fairness, civility and respect
- Your HR team could present your workplace's mental health policy and how the organization is putting that policy into practice
- What mental ill-health is, what risk factors at work exacerbate it, and how your workplace plans to reduce these risk factors
- What stigma is and how the organisation / mental health Champions plan to eliminate it (e.g. through the Lunch and Learns, encouraging the organisation to pay for line manager training etc.)
- Hold a session on how people can get support for themselves or their loved ones regarding mental health, both internally and externally of organisation. For example internally people have access to Employee Assistance Programmes, flexible hours etc. For external sources, you could create a list of community resources, such as local mental health practitioners, mental health organizations such as Mind or Rethink Mental Illness.
- Creative ways for people to manage their stress levels - breathing, mindfulness, exercise, yoga, etc. - with practice time built into the Lunch and Learn
- Tips on how to recognise and respond appropriately to someone in distress, including role-playing. Maybe get a Mental Health First Aider to support / deliver this session
- Bring in experts on mental health related topics to speak at the session

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