

CULTURAL COMPETENCY CORNER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF
RISE SERVICES, INC.

Dear Rise Employee:

In this edition of the Cultural Competency Corner, we will discuss mental health and its implications in the workplace. Additionally, we will share ways that organizations and their members can be more inclusive and encouraging of people diagnosed with a mental health disorder. We want this insight to add to the collaborative spirit that exists at RISE. We hope you enjoy this edition.



**Steven Hunter,
Diversity Officer**

RISE CORPORATE VALUES



1 in 4 Americans suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder. Minority populations are less likely to receive diagnosis for their behavioral health issues and have less access to mental health services.

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This newsletter is designed with you in mind. If you have content ideas, cultural events, or cultural celebrations to share, please forward them to Steven Hunter for consideration.

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER

According to the US Department of Labor (2020) close to 1 of 4 American workers suffer from some type of mental health disorder. Mental health disorders are wide-ranging and include anxiety, depression, eating disorders, addictive behavior, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

Having steady and rewarding work provides a sense of stability and purpose for employees suffering from mental health disorders. It also improves overall wellbeing. Therefore, it is imperative that businesses and organizations understand how to cultivate inclusive cultures for people with mental health issues.

Mental Health Disorders in the Workplace

It is important to understand individuals with mental health issues are hard-working and dedicated employees. And like all other employees, there may be times when their work performance wanes. In times of distress, employees with mental health disorders may exhibit:

- lowered productivity
- decreased accuracy
- missed deadlines
- changes in behavior
- loss of focus or concentration
- increased absenteeism

Prevailing attitudes about mental health disorders make it difficult for employees to come forward and admit their need for support or services. Individuals who experience mental health issues may feel shame, be insecure, or otherwise uncomfortable discussing their situation.

These attitudes are beginning to change in the workplace. SHRM (2020) reports that 62% of Millennial employees are more likely to openly discuss their mental health and subsequent needs than other generations.

Organizational Support for Mental Health Disorders

To make meaningful progress for employees with mental health disorders, companies and organization members can do very specific things:

1. Talk to employees from the mental health community and learn what aspects of the workplace are concerning. And work with representative groups to address the issues.
2. Address structural support for the employee with mental health disorders. Ensure the HR policies and practices are inclusive and prevent barriers to success.
3. Have zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior. Make certain there are specific policies against harassment and discrimination. All employees should be held to these expectations and should understand the consequences of inappropriate behavior.
4. Provide regular training and opportunities to engage with, and learn from other employees. Diversity, equity, and inclusion training on mental health issues is a great way to build rapport and understanding.
5. Treat everyone with dignity and respect. It is important to recognize that at a basic level all employees want the same thing. They want to know that they matter.

