



PEER SUPPORT

A WORKPLACE STRATEGY

Establishing peer support groups at work is becoming a popularized strategy for providing overall mental health support. Peer support programs can be structured with qualified employees that provide support to others because they have had shared similar experiences which allows them to meet others with compassion, empathy, and can provide a sense of hope.

Peer support programs should not be in place of seeking other professional mental health support but viewed as an additional resource strategy for workplaces. Peer support programs can be structured providing regular meetings and agendas to allow participants to share common experiences or on an open agenda format that may occur on an as needed basis.

Employees may need to discuss a difficult case that has affected them emotionally, a challenging work issue that is causing them loss of sleep, or a personal issue that is affecting their focus at work.

BENEFITS

- promote and sustain a culture of wellness
- remove barriers to inclusion
- provide support when an employee returns from a crime scene
- aid employees returning to work after a leave of absence
- overcome obstacles to productivity when times are viewed as tough



Due to the type of issues a forensic scientist deals with it can be difficult to talk about work with friends and family.

Having another professional whose history allows them to relate to what the employee is going through can provide much needed support. There is also validation in knowing that others have gone through similar experiences and that the outcome was manageable.

A peer supporter may also be able to provide the employee additional resources to help them or know when it is best to recommend they seek other types of support.