

Looking after yourself in times of change and uncertainty

This is intended to provide information to support you in situations of change or uncertainty.

During these times people will feel a range of differing emotions depending on their individual circumstances. It can take time to come to terms with what needs to change and we hope that the information in this leaflet will help you through this journey.

How you may feel

- anxious
- worried
- angry
- upset
- alone.

You could also feel

- happy
- motivated
- guilty.

It is okay to feel any of these emotions and you need to give yourself time to absorb what is happening. By acknowledging your feelings you will be better placed to move on to acceptance of the situation. If you are unable to reach this point it could be harmful to your health and well-being.

Uncertainty can make us feel vulnerable as it impacts on the degree of control we have over a situation. It is a good idea to calm the intensity of the emotion to allow logical and rational thought to identify what is within your control and how to deal with it.

The change process

The process of change leads you from the way things were done in the past toward the future.

- Initially many people focus on the past and want to avoid the situation or pretend it is not happening.
- Next there is a period of preoccupation wondering where they stand and how they will be affected. You may even doubt your ability to survive the change.
- After a period of adjustment, most people will be able to shift to acceptance of the change and be more positive and focused on the future. The timing is different for each person and can take several weeks or several months depending on the severity of the change.

Depending on the events and how it impacts on your personal situation you may find yourself at different stages of this process or move backwards and forwards at different times. This is to be expected, however if you don't feel you are coping with the change it is important to seek help and support.

Tips for coping with change and uncertainty

- Try and obtain solid information from trustworthy sources, don't rely on gossip.
- If you have any questions about what is changing, ask them.
- Look after yourself – this is not about being selfish but being aware of your own needs and emotions.
- Remember that most people are affected by change. Treat everyone, yourself included, with extra consideration as changes take place.
- Know your limits. You are not an endless resource for others and their difficulties and need to consider your own energy levels.
- Don't try and control the uncontrollable.
- Schedule time for activities outside the workplace to do things you enjoy e.g. spending time with friends and family, sport, relaxation. Try and leave the problems of the workplace behind when you are at home.
- Concern over work changes could be around the fear of losing your job or not succeeding if your job changes. If you feel it will help, seek out support from an appropriate source. Some of these are listed in this leaflet.

Investing in good health at work

Sources of internal support

- Line Manager
- Trade union representative

Sources of external support

- Government website
www.gov.uk
- Citizens Advice Bureau
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- National Health Service (NHS) Stress line
www.nhs.uk/creditcrunch
Tel: 0300 123 2000
- National Debt line
www.nationaldebtline.co.uk
Tel: 0808 808 4000
- Mind
www.mind.org.uk
Tel: 0300 123 3393
- Family lives
www.familylives.org.uk
Tel: 0808 800 2222
- Carers UK
www.carersuk.org
Tel: 0808 808 7777
- Relate – the relationship people
www.relate.org.uk
Tel: 0300 100 1234
- Cruse bereavement care
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
Tel: 0844 477 9400
- Samaritans
www.samaritans.org
Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Investing in good health at work

Investing in good health at work