



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada



PROTECTING YOUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH

“The time I spend trying to support my team as best I can takes a toll on me, too. Sometimes I feel like I’m drawing from an empty well.”

1

Recognize when your plate is too full

Sometimes managers don't feel entitled to raise concerns over their own workload. If you're consistently working overtime, struggling to remember the dates and details of your projects, or frequently feeling anxious when you think about work, **you may be taking on too much.**

Even if the quality of your work hasn't declined, your mental health may have.

- Changes in sleep, mood, appetite, or motivation could indicate that you're performing at an unsustainable pace.

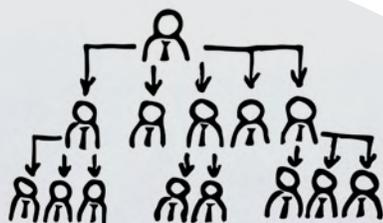
2

Have an honest conversation with your supervisor

Just as you hope your team would approach you with workload concerns, you shouldn't hesitate to do so with your own supervisor.

Since upper management isn't typically as involved in the details of day-to-day work, they may not realize how much you have on your plate. In a virtual setting, back-to-back video calls and the extra time and effort required to manage a remote team may mean you need to hand off some of your work to someone else.

Be honest with your supervisor about how you are feeling and how they can best support you.



3 Use your vacation time

Too often, managers feel compelled to work harder and longer than anyone else on their team. In truth, one of **the most important things you can do as a leader is to be a model for achieving work-life balance and protecting mental wellness.**

Take time to disconnect, recharge, and focus on the people and hobbies that mean the most to you – whether that involves taking a trip or spending a week at home in your PJs. When you're on vacation, give yourself permission to let your mind rest and turn toward things other than work.

4 Set clear boundaries

Chances are your job doesn't require you to be on call 24-7. So don't be! **Set clear limits to protect your time and mental wellness**, such as blocking off an hour for lunch in your calendar (and actually eating lunch), silencing call or chat alerts during concentrated working periods, or committing to not checking emails on evenings and weekends. Once you've developed a list that works for you, tell the rest of your team so everyone knows what to expect. You may even want to encourage them to do the same thing.

If you're finding it difficult to establish which boundaries are right for you, email the [MHCC workplace team](#) to learn about webinars on this topic.

5 Don't forget to delegate

Part of managing a team is **learning to delegate certain tasks and responsibilities.** The more effectively you can loosen up on the reins, the easier it'll be for you to take a step back when you need to, whether that's turning your attention to other projects or taking some well-deserved time off.

Remember, just because a colleague takes a different approach doesn't mean your own way of doing things won't lead to a positive outcome. **By learning to let go of some control, you'll demonstrate trust, empower your team, and most importantly, take some of the weight off your shoulders.**

6 Use the resources available to you

Managers can be excellent at encouraging others to use resources. So why not use them yourself? Not only can organizational benefits help you maintain your well-being, employee assistance programs and professional associations may offer managers coaching and other resources to help you get through stressful situations. And don't forget about community resources such as [Wellness Together Canada](#).



For more information, visit mentalhealthcommission.ca/covid19/



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Financial contribution from

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