

RUOk? Day Guide: Enhancing Workplace Mental Health Support



Reading time:
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This RUOk? Day, Thursday 8 September, MIPS is proud to acknowledge this national day of action dedicated to reminding us all that any day is the day to ask someone you live with, work with, are friends with or who you see struggling "Are you okay?"

The team at RUOk? have put together a number of great resources that can be accessed on their website, here are a couple of tips that may help you when offering to help a colleague.

[ALEC's guide to asking R U OK? at Work](#) from R U OK? on Vimeo.

In the workplace

Creating a culture where people can feel confident is essential to asking and answering this simple yet important question. Besides a legal responsibility of providing a safe and healthy workplace, these conversations can make a real difference to colleagues going through a tough time.



1. Ask



2. Listen



**3. Encourage
action**



4. Check in

Would you say something?

If you'd say something, then you're the type of person to ask 'Are you okay?'

So if you think something's worrying a workmate, start a conversation to see if they're ok.

If they're not, all you need to do is listen, and then help them think about what can be done to make life easier.

Step 1: Ask R U OK?

- Find a private or relaxed place and ask them how they're going.
- Help them open up by asking questions like "What's been happening?" or "How you travelling?"
- If they say they're fine but your gut says they're not, mention specific things that have made you concerned for them. You could say: "I've noticed that you seem really tired lately" or "You seem less chatty than usual. How are you going?"

Step 2: Listen; don't judge

- If a workmate says they're not ok, take what they say seriously.
- Don't rush the conversation or jump to conclusions.
- Give them some time to think and don't rush in with solutions.
- Respect what they say and what they're experiencing.
- Encourage them to explain by asking "How are you feeling about that?" or "How long have you felt that way?"

Step 3: Explore next steps

- Once they've opened up, encourage them to take action – to do something that might make the load a bit lighter.
- You could ask what you can do to help.
- You could also help them think about what has helped them in the past – or encourage them to make some time to do the things they enjoy.
- If they say they've been struggling for more than 2 weeks, then it's a good idea to suggest seeing a professional, such as a doctor, a psychologist, or a counsellor.

Step 4: Make time to check in

- Agree to meet up again with them soon to see how they're doing.
- What else can I do to encourage these conversations?
- Reach everyone: Be sure to schedule enough meetings so everyone hears the message.
- Keep creating opportunities to get to know each other: Whether it's a BBQ, a squash match or a drink after work, it's really important to build a sense of mateship in the workplace.
- Share real, inspiring stories: One of the best ways to convince people of the importance of conversations is to share examples of how a conversation made a difference. Encourage a staff member to share their experiences.
- Promote the experts: The truth is, some conversations are too big for workmates to handle alone. Remind colleagues that they can always call on experts for additional support (and promote an Employee Assistance Program if you have one).

You can find more resources on MIPS' [Are you okay?](#) page.

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