

Best Mental Health in the Workplace Strategy: LARGE

Winner

Helping Our People to Thrive at Work, Capital One

This award recognises a workplace with more than 750 employees that has implemented an exceptional mental health strategy, demonstrating an inclusive, preventive and supportive approach to wellbeing

Capital One was established in 1996, and from day one its mission has been to “do the right thing” on issues such as vulnerability and fairer finance. The same principle drives the company’s internal culture. Capital One works hard to break down the stigma associated with mental health issues and promote understanding. Over the past few years, Capital One has nurtured a thriving and inclusive culture that helps everyone to succeed and has a positive impact on associate wellbeing.

In January 2020, the company introduced its proactive roadmap and three-year plan Thrive at Work. Using associate-led insights, the team defined key areas to support mental health within the organisation, laying the guidelines for how the company will develop its inclusive, preventative and supportive strategy.

The strategy aims to: foster a culture that supports mental wellbeing and enables associates to build personal resilience, encourage open conversations; make support available for managers; create and promote good working conditions; and ensure a healthy work-life balance. Among managers, it aims to improve the monitoring of associates’ mental health.

Capital One’s biggest objective for the strategy is to keep conversations about mental health going. It uses various



channels to achieve this, including a talking mental health guide and homepages with signposting to benefits. Mental Health Awareness Week and other mental health days are celebrated and messaging is incorporated into internal communications. Associate-led blog posts tackle issues such as autism, suicide awareness and gender dysphoria.

The business resource group/employee network Mind your Mind was formed by a former associate with lived experience of

Capital One’s Talking About Mental Health guide offers tips for leaders

Highly Commended

EMCOR UK

Shortlisted

→ Havas Group UK

→ MediaCom

mental health issues. MYM holds monthly peer support sessions where people share experiences. An open channel on the messaging platform Slack facilitates sharing of tips, resources and supportive messages – something which proved invaluable during the pandemic.

Managers are supported through links with the Mind Your Mind group and Rethink charity. Mental health and resilience training for all is run by Aviva, while sessions on topics such as burnout and stress are provided by Capital One's benefit provider Perks at Work.

Achievements

Despite the challenges of the past year, the company has seen a positive shift. A total of 163 managers attended mental health awareness sessions, while 26 associates trained as Mental Health First Aiders. During the Mental Health Awareness Week campaign, most respondents attended three or more events and 86% said they improved their understanding of mental health resources. Contacts with the employee assistance programme increased by 40% between the second half of 2019 and the second half of 2020. Use of the company-provided private medical insurance rose from 75% to 80.75%, while the membership of the Mind Your Mind group rose by 60%, with a 50% hike in attendance at drop-in sessions.

Partnerships have been established with This Can Happen, NSPCC, Inclusive Companies and Nottingham University, featuring regular participation in round tables and sharing of knowledge.

Over the last 12 months, the "Thrive at Work" programme and "Be You" campaign have embedded a culture of inclusivity and understanding of mental health. ■

Judges' comments



Clearly thought-through and comprehensive strategy. Clear, measurable targets and targeted actions.



Execution via a variety of lenses – storytelling, peer support, training, external support via EAP, apps and pathways. Having a MH charity also drives engagement and understanding on the topic, which is great. Collaboration across other networks really helps with the intersectionality in mental health.



Excellent summary of uptake of services – would benefit from further deep dive into the insights and how this will help shape future strategy