BREAKING THE SICKNESS CYCLE

When illness strikes your team, the knock-on effects can be significant.

Over the coming weeks, we'll talk you through the ABCs of absence, helping you build a healthier, more engaging work environment, battle the bugs (and the bunking off), and stay productive even when you're an employee down.

ⓘ **For more information, get in touch with your local Office Angels branch.**

About us

Office Angels sources talented and hardworking office professionals across every sector and region of the UK. With an extensive network of branches, we pride ourselves on being able to offer a local service with a national footprint.

We take the time to understand your business, so we're poised to deliver first-class talent when absence leaves you in the lurch. We have temporary staff ready and waiting every morning for those last minute emergencies and will supply the perfect permanent addition to your team so you can tackle the issue long-term.

To find out which UK region pulls the most sickies, visit our website:

office-angels.com

GET WELL SOONER

Why an enlightened approach to employee absence is better for business

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HOW HEALTHY IS
YOUR WORKPLACE?

With the help of research experts Opinion Matters, we took a temperature check of over 1,000 UK office workers' attitude to absenteeism.

And while 10% admitted to bunking off to spend time with family, hit the shops or wait for deliveries, the vast majority (90%) don't pull sickies.

But they do get sick – and many feel compelled to continue working, even when they're well below par. Almost three quarters (73%) believe they're not able to take enough time off to fully recover from illness, 40% say they're uncomfortable taking time off when poorly, and almost one fifth (19%) feel they could never call in sick. In fact, over a quarter (26%) told us their manager makes them feel guilty when they take time off and almost half (44%) still check their emails and do work when they are home sick.

{ ## 73% believe
they're not able to take enough time
off to fully recover from illness }

So are bosses taking care of business, rather than their employees? Whether the pressure to perform is perceived or not, clocking in when unwell doesn't just spread germs - it can also have damaging effects on workers' wellbeing, performance and wider team morale.

It's time to scrap the stigma of sick leave.

SHOW YOU CARE
WHEN IT COUNTS

Employees' biggest concern (50%) surrounding sickness is playing catch up when they're back at work.

Most staff, but particularly employees aged 16-24, worry about leaving colleagues in the lurch (29%), missing deadlines (28%) and meetings (24%),and fear being blamed for bunking off (25%). The younger the employee, the least likely they are to feel allowed to take the necessary time off to recover, and the more likely they are to feel guilty and worry about missing deadlines.

But loyalty often leads to longer-term illness. Over half of respondents said working while poorly made them 25% to 75% less productive, and 71% said they were sick for longer. So it pays to look at the bigger business picture.

Encouraging staff to bounce back at home – and helping to manage their workload when they return – can, in fact, reduce overall absence and boost engagement, loyalty and productivity.

✓ Allow employees to take the time they need to fully recover from illness.

✓ Delegate tasks among your team, so projects can continue even when you're an employee down.

✓ Make workloads visible, so you're aware of, and can deal with, looming deadlines.

✓ Have more than one person clued up on critical tasks to keep the office running smoothly

✓ Ease back-to-work pressure by shifting delivery dates where possible and helping your younger employees with prioritisation and time management.

{ ## 29% of employees
worry about leaving colleagues
in the lurch }

Prevention is better than cure
Bugs are a fact of life, but building wellbeing into your business could mean fewer sick days and happier, healthier employees. We've lined up a few top tips for starters.

- **Set clear, consistent policies.** While most workers (58%) knew they were entitled to sick leave, not everyone was aware of the full details. Make your absence policies visible and easy to understand, and train managers to explain the finer points and enforce them fairly – with the same rules for everyone.

- **Encourage wellness.** Subsidised gym memberships, a canteen stocked with healthy food, a lunchtime walking club…keeping your employees fit and active could keep illness at bay – and boost productivity and loyalty.

- **Show your softer side.** Mental health matters too. Counselling services and employee assistance programmes designed to support and guide staff through life's challenges – from bereavement to buying a house – can help keep your team, and your attendance figures, on track.

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