

Building wellness into your business

Sickness can have a crippling ripple effect on your team, taking a significant toll on wellbeing and your bottom line.

Each fortnight, we've been sharing the secrets of effective absence management, helping you foster a healthier, more engaging work environment, battle the bugs (and the bunking off), and stay productive even when absenteeism takes you by surprise.

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

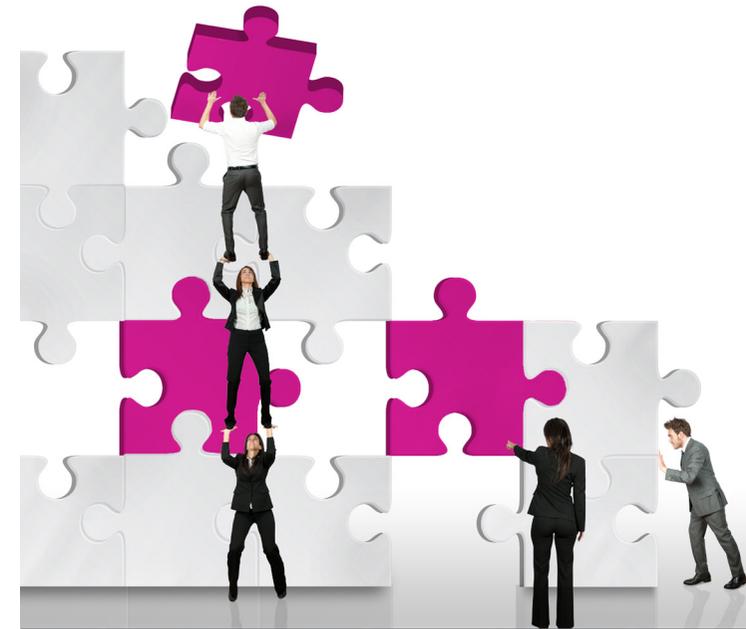
About us

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.

LEFT HOLDING THE FORT

Helping healthy employees deal with absence



To find out **which industry gets most annoyed** when colleagues call in sick, visit our website. 

OFFICE-ANGELS.COM



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

officeangels
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

ABSENCE AFFECTS EVERYONE

When illness punches holes in your headcount, it's not just poorly employees who suffer. While their colleagues stay put on the sofa, healthy workers are left to pick up the slack, landed with leftover deadlines and double the pressure.

But what's the alternative?

Sharing desk space with sneezing colleagues and counting the hours till you catch it too?

With the help of research experts Opinion Matters, we asked over 1,000 UK office staff how they really feel about absence – and the results show wellness isn't faring well at work. Forty per cent feel uncomfortable taking time off when ill, and almost one fifth (19%) believe they could never call in sick. Employees aged between 16-24 feel guiltiest about taking leave and expect older colleagues to share their no-nonsense work ethic.

{ **40% feel uncomfortable**
taking time off when ill }
}

But this misplaced loyalty is not only spreading germs but breeding longer-term absence. Seventy-one per cent of workers told us going to work when poorly resulted in a lengthier recovery period or extended time off further down the line.

How do businesses break the unhealthy cycle?

A HARD PILL TO SWALLOW

While 20% of workers surveyed had been sent home from work when ill, the majority of managers appear more focused on business than employee wellbeing. Workers' biggest concern (50%) surrounding sickness is returning to an overwhelming to-do list, implying a structure is not in place to support unwell employees (or the teams productivity) and important tasks aren't delegated during their absence. But, tellingly, one quarter (25%) stress about their boss believing they're bunking off.

Even if the pressure to pitch up is all in employees' heads, creating a come-to-work-at-all-costs culture could significantly damage performance, profit and staff perception of your company.

Almost 40% of workers feel sorry for colleagues who feel compelled to attend work when poorly and think it reflects badly on the organisation. What's more, over half (56%) wish ill employees would stay at home to avoid spreading sickness to others.

But won't work rates take a nosedive during those days off?

Apparently not.

Almost half (44%) of employees, particularly those in professional services and IT & Telecoms, check emails and do work from their sickbeds, and almost a third (31%) believe that being at home when ill speeds up recovery time, so they're back to business sooner.

A HEALTHIER APPROACH TO ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

Encouraging your team to take time off when ill could, in fact, mean they're firing on all cylinders much faster. But don't forget healthy employees need your support too, particularly if they're hit with a heftier workload. Here's how to keep everyone on side:

Lay the groundwork in advance. Regular team meetings and transparent workloads help you maintain business as usual, even in the face of unexpected absence. Encouraging a buddy system of shared responsibilities means there are natural successors for sick colleagues, ready to pick up on pressing deadlines.

Set clear priorities. When you're an employee down, take stock of your team's current workload to identify important deliverables and reassign tasks accordingly. If possible, put minor projects on hold until you're back to full capacity. Make sure remaining staff fully understand their new objectives and timelines, and how they fit in within their existing to-do lists.

Say thank you. If someone's putting in the hours to cover for a colleague, don't let it go unnoticed. Show your appreciation with a sincere thank you, a small gift, an afternoon off (when you can spare them) – or simply by pitching in to get the job done.

Keep talent on tap. When your headcount takes a hit, a trusted recruitment partner can fill vital skills gaps at very short notice to help you maintain business as usual, and could supply a permanent addition to your team to tackle the issue long-term.