

Third of UK workers considering job switch on 'most depressing' day

Monday marked Blue Monday: the day that has been dubbed the most depressing day of the year. It was during that 24-hour period that workers are supposed to feel dispirited, gloomy and disengaged.

With the New Year buzz starting to wear off and people readying themselves to properly kick-start 2020, some employees across the UK are considering their current roles and thinking of jumping ships.

New research from HR tech firm Hibob has revealed that more than a third (35%) of UK employees have considered changing jobs after the Christmas break, with over one in ten (13%) actually going through with the decision.

The research, which polled 1,000 UK workers, found that 45% of 18 to 24-year-olds have considered switching jobs, which could be down to a lack of productivity. This suggests that employers should increase efforts to engage and retain them.

Yet, it isn't just this age demographic that are feeling less productive at work during January, and especially around Blue Monday. 44% of the overall UK workforce admitted to feeling less productive during the first month of the year – and this could sway their decision to leave current roles.

Measuring how employees feel about their productivity and work environment is key to determining what needs to be changed and what support is needed, but what have employers currently got in place?

45% said that sentiment was indicated via 1-2-1 meetings, while 35% took employee surveys. Shockingly, 14% said that their employers had nothing in place to measure sentiment.

Employers should consider employee mental health

With Blue Monday dubbed the most depressive day of the year, it is crucial that employers turn their attention to mental health at work and employee wellbeing.

The 'depressive state' associated with Blue Monday may make today more of a struggle for some workers, but research has found that mental health is far from restricted to the January Blues.

Recent Statistics from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) revealed that stress, anxiety or depression now account for more than half (57%) of all workdays lost to ill health.

Additionally, 300,000 people with long-term mental health problems lose their jobs each year, and at a much higher rate than those with physical conditions.

Dr Syed Zakir Abbas, Chief Medical Officer at Unum UK, said that minimising the stigma around mental health is crucial. “[A] better understanding of the benefits of early support could be contributing to more employees using our services – particularly younger men – which is a very positive development and one of the reasons for us expanding our support through the mental health pathway.”

What are employers doing to support mental health at work?

John Lewis Partnership recently produced a new leaflet to signpost the various support services available to employees. “It’s not just about reactive support,” she explained, “it’s about proactive support as well.”

The scope of resources available to employees includes access to the mental health and wellbeing app, Unmind; a mental health awareness workshop for line managers; a support line for employees to seek advice on issues such as dispute resolution and opportunities to be referred to a counselling service.

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Sophie Parrot

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