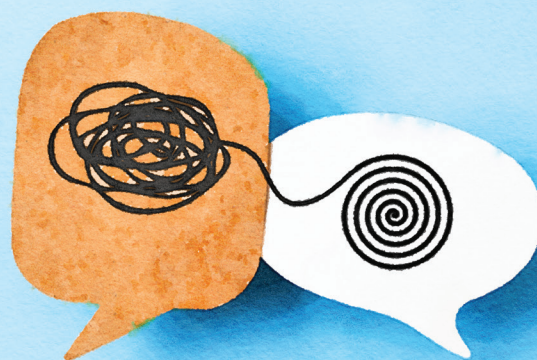


The Role of
Managers in

CRISIS INTERVENTION



- Stay calm and grounded
- Ask open-ended questions
- Create a safe space
- Take all concerns seriously
- Know your resources
- Make the connection easier
- Respect privacy
- Act when necessary
- Follow up thoughtfully

How to Help
and What to Do



How to Help and What to Do

As a manager, you are a crucial support system for your team's emotional well-being, especially in times of crisis. When an employee expresses distress, such as suicidal thoughts or concerning behaviors, your response can make a significant difference in their path toward safety and healing.

While you are not expected to be a mental health expert, you are in a position to recognize warning signs, respond with compassion, and guide employees toward professional help.

Approaching a Crisis Situation

When an employee is in distress — whether they're exhibiting signs of being overwhelmed, having a panic attack, facing a personal loss, or displaying concerning behaviors — it's important to respond with care and clarity:



STAY CALM AND GROUNDED

Your ability to remain steady in the moment helps create a sense of safety. Let the employee know you're available and ready to listen without judgment. Speak calmly and avoid making assumptions about the situation.

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Encourage the employee to share their experience without pressuring them. Ask open-ended questions like, "How can I best support you right now?" or "What do you feel you need right now?"



CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Offer privacy if possible and ensure the employee feels heard and supported. Use active listening and avoid minimizing their feelings. Statements like "I'm here for you" or "You're not alone in this" go a long way.

TAKE ALL CONCERNS SERIOUSLY

Whether an employee is facing a mental health challenge, a family crisis, or another issue, demonstrate that you take their situation seriously and are willing to help. Also, keep in mind that even vague or indirect mentions of suicidal thoughts should be treated as serious. Don't assume someone is "just venting."





How to Help and What to Do

(Continued)

Connecting Employees to Professional Help

Once you've assessed the urgency, the next step is helping your employee access appropriate support:

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

Familiarize yourself with your organization's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), human resources (HR) contacts, mental health support options, and community resources. Share these proactively with your team and in the moment as needed with individual employees.

MAKE THE CONNECTION EASIER

Let the employee know you're happy to help connect them with resources. You might say: "Would you like me to help you reach out to our EAP or someone in HR who can provide more support?" or "Would it help if we made the call together?"

RESPECT PRIVACY BUT ACT WHEN NECESSARY

While it's important to respect confidentiality, if there's an immediate safety concern (e.g., threats of harm to self or others), call 911 or follow your workplace emergency protocol. Stay with the employee until help arrives, if possible.

FOLLOW UP THOUGHTFULLY

After the initial crisis, check in with the employee. A simple "How are you doing?" or "I'm thinking of you—let me know how I can support you" can provide reassurance and reduce stigma.

Crisis intervention starts with presence, empathy, and knowing when to involve the right professionals. By taking compassionate and informed action, you can make a real difference in someone's life, even in their darkest moment. Also, keep in mind that the EAP is a resource for you as a manager, too. Call us any time to schedule a management consultation and let us help support you during an employee and workplace crisis.

Additional Resources

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (available 24/7): Dial 988 or visit 988lifeline.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): SAMHSA.gov

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): NAMI.org



LIVE
Webinar

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION FOR MANAGERS

Tailored for managers, this webinar outlines tools and resources to identify suicide warning signs and implement workplace prevention programs. Topics include myths and statistics about suicide, when to intervene, and how to get immediate help from within your organization and emergency providers. You'll leave this session better equipped to navigate delicate conversations and guide employees to the help and support they need.

**Wednesday,
September 24, 2025
1-2 p.m. E.T.**

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