

Mental Health in Construction



NW Construction Consumer Council
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Presenter:

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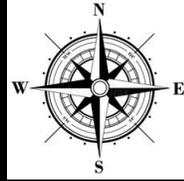
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Dennis Dashiell, MSW

✓ **Critical Incident Debriefing / Mgt**

- Industry
- Emergency Responders
- Health Care

✓ **30 yr Mental Health Professional**

- EAP
- Private Practice
- VA
- Hospital
- Community MH

✓ **Organizational Development Leader**

- Executive Coaching
- Leadership Development
- HR-Allied Interventions
- Team Building
- Cohort Training Series
- Climate & Conflict Assessment
- Unionized Employer Expert
- Employee Experience/Engagement

✓ **Grieving Father**



Mental Health in Construction

The Reality

64%

Report Anxiety or
Depression in the
Past 12 Months

45%

Feel Stigma or
Shame
Discussing mental
health

4x Higher
Suicide Risk
Compared to
general population

Mental Health in Construction

- Only 61% of employees believe mental health services are available where they work (despite 80% of workplaces saying they are available).
- 44% used professional mental health services or support programs in 2025 — up from 34% in 2024.
- 37% said they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment at work because of seeking mental health services or support.
- 91% of construction workers said they would be willing to support another construction worker who was experiencing depression
- Construction industry's suicide deaths exceed fatal workplace injuries by over 5:1.
- It is important to address the "tough it out" culture and make conversations about health & wellbeing part of an overall growth mindset culture.

Shayne Dinkle –
Survivor's Story
PSA

<https://youtu.be/X1U1eApDC5Y>



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE



AGC
THE CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

Table Discussions

Raise of Hands “Know now or have known someone...”

What would you personally and professionally want to do for Shayne?

Do you think attitudes about MH are changing?

Normalization vs. Stigma in Construction Mental Health

Signs of Progress

- Increased participation in mental health programs 44%
- More employers discussing mental health in safety meetings
- Industry campaigns focused on suicide prevention and awareness
- Leadership training on mental health is expanding

Ongoing Barriers

- Nearly half of workers still report stigma or shame 45%
- Fear of job consequences remains a concern (37% report unfair treatment)
- Generational and Cultural norms of “toughness” discourage vulnerability

Bottom Line

- Conversations are increasing
- Stigma remains significant
- The Industry is in transition...

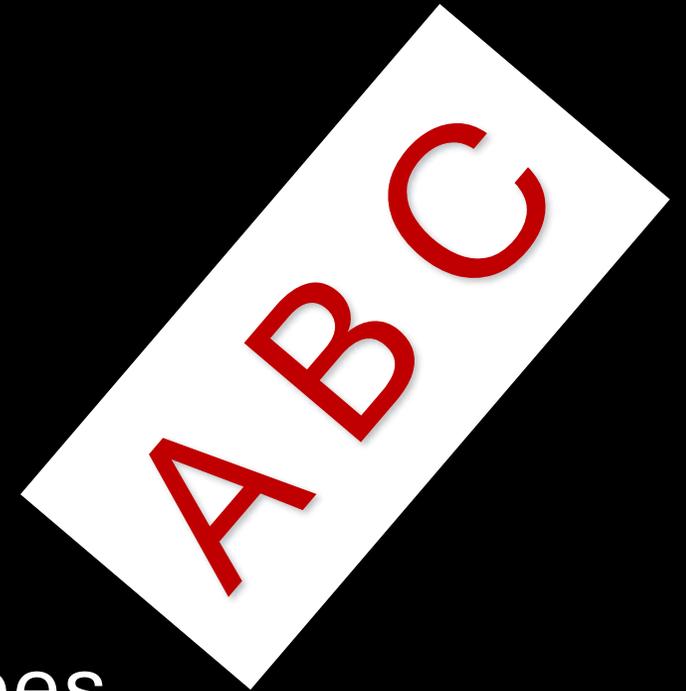


You can NOT just delegate this to HR!!!

Culture & Change Mgt Leadership

Primary Roles of Sponsors/Leaders

- Participate **Actively** and visibly throughout the project
- **Build** a coalition of sponsorship and manage resistance
- **Communicate** directly with employees

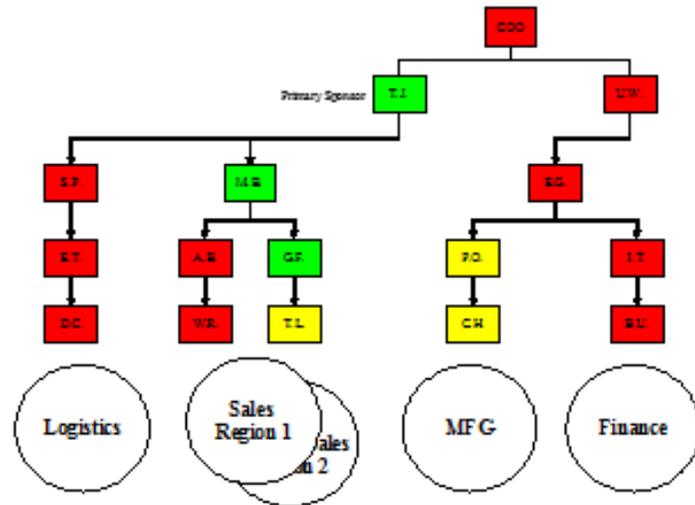


1. Participate **actively** and visibly

- Sponsorship is more than signing the check and “kicking the initiative out the door”
- Examples include:
 - Set expectations and establish clear objectives for the project
 - Hold the team accountable for results
 - Attend frequent project review meetings and actively review progress



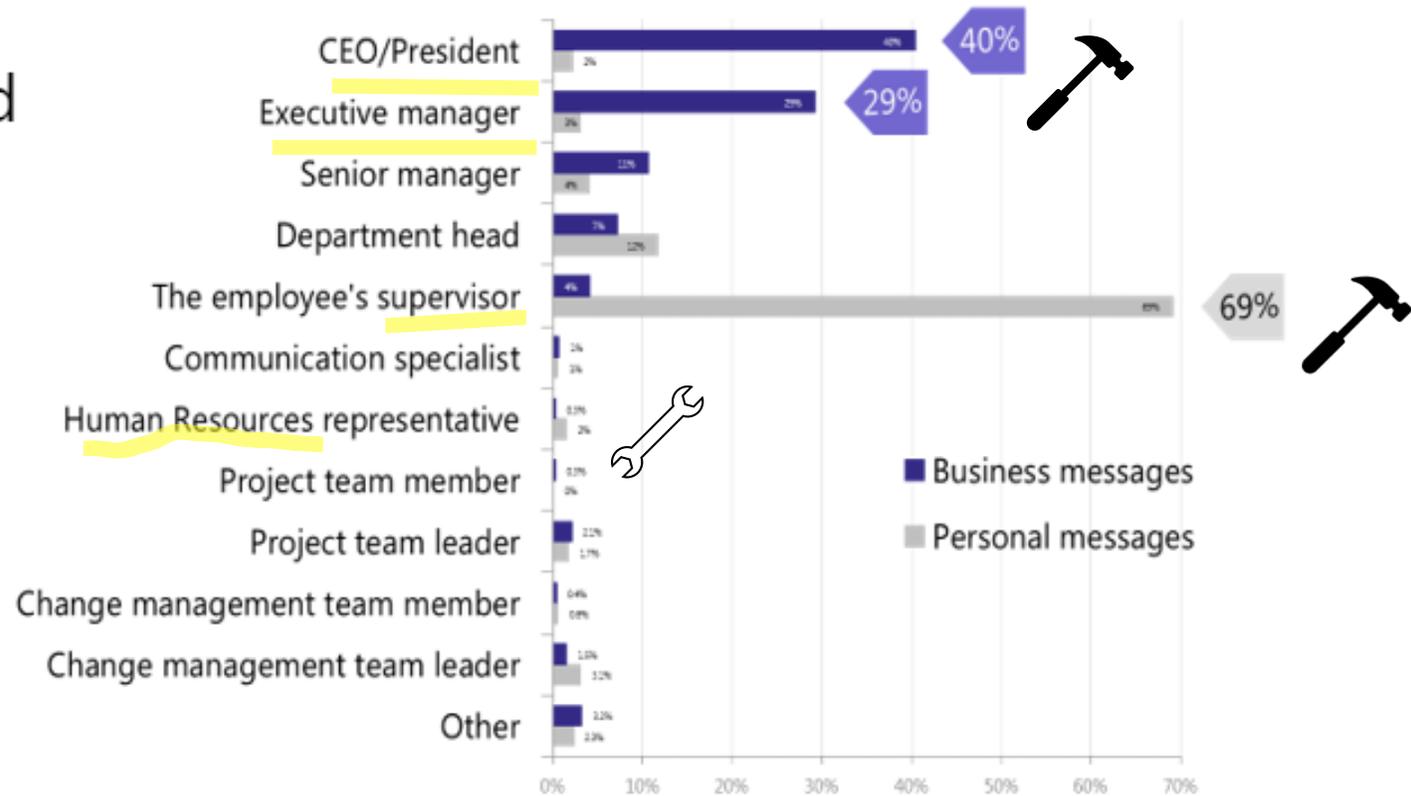
2. **Build** a coalition



- The coalition is not just an organizational chart
- The coalition is based on 'who is being impacted'
- Bottom's up approach!

3. Communicate directly

Participants identified senior business leaders as the preferred senders of messages about the business reasons for the change



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PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY
AND
MENTAL HEALTH

AS MISSION
SUSTAINABILITY

A CULTURE OF
GROWTH MINDSET



Employer Best Practices for MH in Construction

Support Systems

- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- Confidential, easy access to services
- Peer support options & committees

Training & Awareness

- Provide supervisor mental health training
- Integrate MH agenda items into standing meetings

Continuous Improvement

- Collect employee feedback
- Integrate mental health into overall safety strategy

Work Environment

- Encourage work-life balance and reasonable scheduling
- Monitor workload and reduce chronic stressors
- Address time off for treatment and self care with supportive policies

Leadership & Culture

- Model open discussion about mental health
- Promote “psychological safety”
- Take a clear stand against harassment and toxic norms

Example
Supervisor
Training

The ALGEE Action Plan:

A pproach/Assess/Assist

L isten non-judgmentally

G ive support/information

E ncourage professional help

E ncourage self-help strategies

Table Discussions

Could your top leadership communicate more about MH directly?

What kind of training would help your line staff supervisors?

What is your next action step?

Dennis' Closing Foundational Suggestions

1. Don't just delegate, but also **get expert help** to support you
2. Build the right Coalition to support your initiative
3. Hire and Promote an **EAP**
4. Hold your insurance carrier accountable for ease of access to MH
5. Promote a culture of growth mindset and psychological safety
6. Lead with authenticity and normalize getting help
7. **Train** leaders, supervisors, and team leads
 - EQ Competencies in Leadership
 - Psychological Safety & Trust
 - ALGEE Approach
 - Employee Engagement Practices
 - Critical Conversations & Accountability
 - Respect in the Workplace Training
8. Form an employee wellbeing committee and show up for them (peer “leaders”, communication, employee suggestions...)
9. Integrate MH and Psychological Safety into safety meeting agendas
10. Make an ongoing schedule for leadership communication about MH





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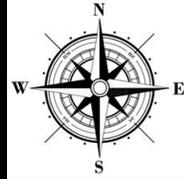
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Thank You

