



RECOGNIZING MENTAL HEALTH RED FLAGS



Today, we're going to talk about something that might not be as obvious as a broken tool or a missing hard hat, but it's just as important for safety on the job: recognizing mental health red flags.

WHY MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS ON THE JOB

Most of us think about safety in terms of physical hazards—falling, getting hit by something, or using equipment the wrong way. But mental health is just as crucial when it comes to staying safe on the job.

When someone is struggling mentally, it can impact their focus, reaction time, and even their decision-making. And in a high-risk environment like ours, that can lead to serious accidents.

WHAT ARE MENTAL HEALTH RED FLAGS?

Mental health red flags are signs that someone might be struggling more than usual. These can show up in different ways, and it's important to know what to look out for—not just for yourself, but for your coworkers too.

Here are some common red flags you might notice on the job:

- **Changes in Behavior** - for example, someone who's usually talkative suddenly becomes quiet, a calm person starts snapping or getting irritated over small things, someone who's always on time starts showing up late or missing shifts without explanation.
- **Loss of Focus or Concentration**- for example, repeating mistakes they don't usually make, having trouble following instructions., zoning out or looking like they're "not all there."
- **Physical Signs**- for example, looking constantly tired, like they haven't slept, noticeable weight loss or gain, complaining about frequent headaches or stomach issues (stress can show up in our bodies).
- **Substance Use** - for example, drinking more than usual after work, or showing up hungover, smelling like alcohol on the job, using substances to cope, which can affect their ability to work safely.
- **Social Withdrawal** - for example, avoiding breaks or meals with the crew, keeping their head down, not making eye contact, isolating themselves from the rest of the team.
- **Talking About Feeling Hopeless or Trapped** - for example, making comments like "I can't do this anymore" or "What's the point?", joking about things that are actually concerning, like not wanting to be around anymore, talking about being overwhelmed or feeling like they can't handle things.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU NOTICE THESE RED FLAGS?

If you notice someone showing these signs, don't just brush it off. Here's what you can do:

- **Check In with Them** and remember, you don't have to have all the answers—sometimes just listening can make a big difference.
- **Encourage Them to Take a Break**
- **Know and Share Resources** resources are available and free! Use the QR code to access a wide variety available to share or use yourself.
- **Speak Up if You're Worried**

And remember - Take Care of Yourself too

This isn't just about looking out for others. You've got to watch out for yourself, too. If you're feeling any of these red flags in your own life, take it seriously. It's okay to reach out for help, whether that's talking to a friend, a supervisor, or using available resources.

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Mental Health
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