

Introduction

This toolbox talk is about how you can support your team through the COVID-19 lockdown and how to make the most of the time away from site. During the lockdown, it's important that as a country we stay home to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and save lives. We're all in this together, and we are going to need one another in the months to come, as we try to move forward.

So how can you support your team during this difficult time? Here are some simple ideas to think about:

Ways to support your team during the lockdown

› Keep in contact with your workers

Just as we are encouraged to maintain contact with our family, don't forget that your workers are your family too. Arrange group video calls with them if possible or send them a quick text message to see how they are coping. A simple phone call and a "how'ya doing?" can make a huge difference.

› Keep them involved and ask for their input:

Keep your workers in the loop. Sharing even the simplest task with your team can help take the load off your shoulders and could help make your team feel valuable and help reduce stress levels.

› Thank your team for their efforts:

Don't forget to thank your team for their efforts, for their contribution and for the important tasks that they have recently done, such as isolating and securing the work site before closing off.

› Ask for help:

There's no doubt this is a stressful time – don't be afraid to ask for help and encourage your team to do the same. If you're unsure how to broach the topic, take a look at our free pocket guide on how to have a conversation about mental health. The Mental Health Foundation also have a page dedicated to getting through the lockdown, with tips to help you get through, a FAQ page and a 24 hour hotline to connect with a trained counsellor - simply free call or text 1737.



MANAGING YOUR TEAM THROUGH THE LOCKDOWN

Lastly, use some of this available time to prepare and create a good solid foundation for your business in the months to come. Some ideas on how to do this include:

› **Have a documented plan for the work you will do:**

Be clear on what needs to be done. Determine whether you have the right process, the right equipment and the right people for the job. Make sure everyone knows their role in the job process and they know when to ask for help.

› **Understand the potential weak points in upcoming work and put measures in place to reduce downtime:**

No plan is perfect, but the more time we spend on understanding the weak points, the more time we can spend on the job and the less time we spend pausing the work.

› **Monitor and adjust plans and progress as needed:**

Monitor your work and try to fix problems before they become too serious. “Tweaking” the process as faults are found is a lot easier and a lot more cost effective than stopping the job and taking the time to rethink everything over from scratch.

› **Work with your team to build resilience through these difficult times:**

What we are going to need is a team that can get on with it, a team that is capable of doing the job when things run smoothly and when things change. It’s not only about skill though, it’s about attitude and willingness to push forward through difficult times. Develop your people and work with them to build their innovation and creativity skills, so that the job can continue, and you as the business leader can focus on future work if needed.

For more ideas on how to stay on top of health and safety during the lockdown, download our free checklist from www.sitesafe.org.nz.

For more information about COVID-19 visit covid19.govt.nz