



## Collaboration and workplace culture

### Objective

Effects on employees' well-being at work and work ability is considered in all decision-making. Supporting work ability entails collaboration between everyone at the workplace.

### Why?

Open communication and the involvement of everyone in planning and decision-making promotes the implementation of practices that support work ability, a sense of community and a confidential atmosphere.

## Ways to develop collaboration and workplace culture

### Work together to plan practices and activities that support work ability

Regular discussions of work ability issues and the employees' participation in planning and implementation of work ability support activities (e.g. ergonomic work practices, work adaptation options) increase their commitment to joint decisions.

Employee involvement can occur in discussions during breaks and meetings, or through supervisor, employee representative, or human resources representative. You should also let people express their opinions through internal discussion forums and feedback and initiative boxes.

### Ensure that information flows and is up to date

Workplaces have different communication needs. Communication channels and practices depend on, among other things, the work to be carried out and how it is organized, and to who the communication is directed. Mutually agreed practices enable timely flow of information. It is also important to create opportunities for informal discussion and the exchange of ideas and information at the workplace.

## **Ensure that the workplace atmosphere is confidential, open and respectful by**

- respecting different opinions, asking for and offering help, listening, discussing and being present, and creating opportunities for discussion.
- Establishing shared ground rules together and making sure that everyone is aware of them.
- Provide opportunities for members of the work community to get to know each other: shared breaks, events, and networking.

## **Take equality and non-discrimination into account**

A zero-tolerance policy must be applied to discrimination, inappropriate behaviour and racism. **The Non-Discrimination Act** (in Finnish and Swedish) requires that employers with 30 employees or more regular employees to have an equality plan. Smaller workplaces should also set goals and agree on practices for matters related to equality and non-discrimination. Equality and non-discrimination can be promoted, for example, by adopting equal and non-discriminatory recruitment practices and by considering the background and prerequisites of each employee during orientation.

## **Plan measures to support work ability together with occupational health care**

Occupational health collaboration requires that both the workplace and occupational health care to be active. Occupational health collaboration is a systematic and goal-oriented activity with clear objectives based on the needs of the workplace, which are described in the occupational health care action plan. Planning is based on a workplace survey, and the activities are planned so that they apply to both individual employees and the entire work community. Preventive occupational health care services are available to all employees, and inclusion of medical care to the agreement is voluntary.

Responsibilities of occupational health care

- advice and counselling
- promotion of the functioning of the work community and activities that maintain work ability
- workplace surveys
- medical examinations according to the requirements of the work, such as logistics or night work.
- assessment of the needed level of first aid preparedness needed at the workplace (including equipment and number of people to be trained).
- monitoring how employees are coping at work and referring them to rehabilitation, if necessary.

Occupational health care expertise should be utilized, for example, in the planning of a substance abuse programme and an early intervention model.

A contact person at the workplace should be appointed to coordinate the collaboration. However, other parties, such as supervisors, may also contact occupational health care directly on work ability support issues.

## Tools

- [Workplace Resilience Toolkit \(ttl.fi\)](#)
- [Substance Abuse Programme Tool \(ttl.fi\)](#)

## Additional reading

- [Occupational health care supporting entrepreneurs | Finnish Institute of Occupational Health \(ttl.fi\)](#) (only in Finnish)
- [Work ability in a nutshell - Supporting work ability at the workplace | Suomi.fi](#)
- [Hazard identification and risk assessment | The Centre for Occupational Safety \(ttk.fi\)](#)
- [Supporting work ability at the workplace | Suomi.fi](#)

