

EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEADERSHIP QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

TEAM SUPPORT



PROMOTE RESILIENCE Through Team Cohesion



We all manage stress better when we feel supported.

Leaders set the tone of how teams treat each other. Monitor your own stress levels closely to ensure you provide a great example.

Encourage natural supports: Pay attention to where your team informally connects like carpool, walks, watercooler chats or coffee runs.

BUILD A TEAM IDENTITY AROUND CARING FOR EACH OTHER TO PROTECT AGAINST STRESS.

Foster peer support by encouraging team members to check in with & care for each other. Take note & thank them when they do.

Negativity, gossip & toxicity quickly erode team morale & trust. **Address issues/conflicts promptly, privately & with compassion.**

Help the team monitor stress levels by posting visual tools like the Stress Continuum in break rooms, bulletin boards & bathrooms.



RECOGNIZE & ADDRESS STRESS EARLY



THRIVING

- calm & focused
- good sense of humour
- taking things in stride
- productive & motivated



SURVIVING

- displaced sarcasm
- impatient/irritable
- forgetful/procrastination
- inconsistent performance



STRUGGLING

- angry/negative/cynical
- poor performance/decisions
- overwork/exhaustion
- overwhelm/anxiousness



IN CRISIS

- outbursts/aggression
- depressed mood, humorless
- low/no productivity
- exhaustion/absenteeism

DAILY BRIEFING TIPS Incorporate Predictability



Team routines & rituals build a sense of cohesion & organization into a chaotic environment. Start & end of shift huddles help to create structure through predictable information cycles.

CONNECT



- Include daily practical wellness tips to build their toolkit and keep team care and self care front of mind.
- Encourage humour, a "joke of the day" (even a bad one) creates levity and makes people smile.

INFORM



- Acknowledge challenges, reinforce the importance of rest, remind them to disconnect from work (news, social media) to reconnect with themselves and loved ones.
- Reduce uncertainty. Keep your team informed about changing tasks, risks, & progress. White board & visuals reminders of roles, duties & tasks helps avoid misunderstandings and keeps everyone on the same page.

INSPIRE & MOTIVATE



- Connect to sense of purpose by sharing meaningful feedback from evacuees.
- Remind them how their work contributes to the bigger picture.
- Start & end on a positive note by sharing uplifting stories, expressing gratitude, and celebrating small wins.

ENCOURAGE CONSCIOUS TRANSITIONS



MINDFULLY DISCONNECT WITH OFF-DUTY RITUALS

A quick walk, removing a vest, lanyard or headset can mentally mark the end of work & shift the mind to rest.

Responding to personnel SHOWING STRONG EMOTION



- 1 Suggest a "walk and talk"- This can help diffuse the energy from strong emotions. Bring water to drink.
- 2 Look for the feelings beneath the words. **Acknowledge & validate** emotions, "It makes sense that you feel that way, I would feel the same".
- 3 **Listen without interrupting.** Ask questions. Encourage them to "go on" in order to get the whole picture.
- 4 **Avoid offering solutions** if someone is showing strong emotion-just listen.
- 5 Reassure them you are there to assist. **Ask what they need from you.**
- 6 **Focus on the practical** things in your control to offer (breaks, days off, connection to other support).



FOSTER A CULTURE OF APPRECIATION

Regular gratitude & recognition encourages & help people feel valued. This can mitigate the effects of stress & boost overall team morale.

- ✓ Take 3 min 2x/shift to observe your team & recognize great work. Set a timer to remind you. Give positive feedback in the moment.
- ✓ Show appreciation for ideas. This encourages creative solutions & builds psychological safety.
- ✓ Make recognition specific and personal by telling them exactly what impressed you.
- ✓ Acknowledge effort, not just outcomes.
- ✓ Make a point to notice and thank those who encourage & care for their colleagues.

THOSE WHO FEEL
APPRECIATED
ALWAYS DO
MORE THAN IS
EXPECTED.

PROMOTE & MODEL GOOD RESPONSE PRACTICES



The energy & sense of purpose in this work makes it hard to step away. You will need to do more than just encourage breaks. People need time, permission & space to take a break. Make a point to give all 3 & regularly review each element during long activations.



TIME

Set team standards: Maximum time between breaks & minimum duration, but trust your people to monitor their time. Encourage use of timers as break reminders.



PERMISSION

Remind them to take breaks. When your team sees you take breaks, your words and actions align and they will be more likely to take theirs.



SPACE

Encourage breaks away from the work site. Ideally, outside or at least separate from the main workspace. Designate quiet spaces, beyond social break rooms for reflection or rest.

9 STRATEGIES FOR LEADING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



Practical tips for leading with strength & compassion under pressure.

Get to know your team-let them get to know you: Connect on a human level to build the trust & understanding that helps you communicate in stressful times. The better you know them, the easier it is to spot stress.

Model healthy behaviours: Take breaks, name your emotions and openly manage your stress.

Lean on your own supports: Seek connection with your peers, mentors, & support networks. Leadership can be lonely.

Stay Adaptable & Open-Minded: Embrace flexibility & encourage your team to adapt as needed. Lead by example in maintaining a solution-focused mindset during uncertainty.

Be human: Admit when you're wrong or when you don't know. Each emergency is different, everyone gets stressed & nobody is perfect. You don't have to be either.

Check in with each of your people: They may be personally impacted by the emergency or supporting someone who is. Ask them about impacts & how they are doing.

Check in as a group often: Schedule brief but informal group check-ins specifically to ask about well-being and assess their stress level. Problem solve together to improve wellness.

Be inclusive: Seek out quiet team members to ensure all perspectives are included. This leads to better decisions & proves that all opinions are valued.

Delegate tasks: Value the expertise of your team. Trust them with responsibilities to motivate & avoid burnout. The best leaders create other leaders.