

Get ready to share

A tool for employees

Going through a tough time?
Get ready to talk to your manager
about it.

Stuff happens. Whether you're going through a breakup, having health issues, or dealing with other tough situations, personal stress doesn't necessarily go away when you're at work.

Once you know what you want share, figure out how to share it with your manager. Preparation can help you get the best possible outcome.



1. Know why you're sharing

Getting clear on why you are telling your manager will help you determine what to say and ask for.

Ask yourself:

- Is sharing part of being yourself at work?
- Is your situation impacting your performance?
- Is work causing you extra stress?
- Are you putting yourself or others at risk?
- Do you need to make changes at work?
- Do you need access to external support?

Some reasons others have shared:

- Because it's empowering to be truthful at work and be my honest self.
- Because I need some changes at work.
- I think I'm coping okay, but want them to know just in case.
- Because my situation increases risk for the team.
- To explain why I'm not performing at my best.



TIP There might be more than one reason to share.

2. Decide what to share

It's best to explain the issue clearly. You don't have to go into detail unless you want to.

Ask yourself:

- What is the situation?
- What impact does it have on you?
- What help are you getting, if any?

Examples of how others have framed their issue:

- I'm dealing with a family issue, and it's going to be particularly tough over the next few weeks.
- I have depression and am working with my doctor to get better.
- I am going through a hard time in my personal life, and it might take me a few months to get through.
- I have an ongoing health issue, which I actively manage.



TIP Use the 'Decide what to share' tool to get clear on what to share.

3. Think about what you need from them

Knowing what you need puts you in a better position to ask and receive support. It's okay if you aren't sure what you need, or if you don't need anything.

Ask yourself:

- Do you need to change your work duties?
- Do you need any time away from work, eg sick leave?
- Do you need access to support?
- Do you want them to tell anyone else?

Examples of how others have framed their need:

- I can't do any overtime for the next few weeks.
- I need some time off to visit doctors and lawyers.
- I'd like to reduce my load at work.
- I don't need you to do anything, I just wanted you to know.



TIP

Use the 'Identify what might help' resource to get ideas.

4. Think about ways to minimise the impact at work

If possible, come up with some ideas on how you or your manager might reduce possible disruptions at work. This can help remove stress on you and your workplace.

Ask yourself:

- Can any of your work be paused?
- Who else can do your duties for you?
- Can you do the work at a different time?
- Do you need extra supervision?

Examples of how others have reduced disruption:

- Getting a coworker to cover shifts.
- Extending deadlines.
- Making up time in the evening.
- Asking a teammate to check critical work.



TIP

Don't make any arrangements before talking to your manager. They will have ideas about what will work best for the business.

5. Decide the time and place to share

Choosing the time and place to share what's going on for you might make it easier for you to share, and easier for your manager to react well.

Ask yourself:

- How quickly do you need to share?
- When is your manager best able to listen?
- Are you more confident and clear in person or in writing?
- Do you want someone there with you?

Examples of how others chose to share:

- In a scheduled one-to-one meeting.
- By asking the manager for a few minutes at some stage today.
- Emailing some details, then asking for a follow-up to discuss.
- Texting to say you're having a tough time, and would like to talk.





Don't wait until the perfect moment. There won't be one.

Find five simple ways to boost your wellbeing

<https://mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/personal-wellbeing-plan>

Once you have prepared to share with your manager, you might want to consider what may help. Find out more here:

www.business.govt.nz/problem-sharing-and-solving

6. Make a plan

Now that you've thought it all through, make a plan to guide you.

I am sharing this with my manager because

I'm going to tell my manager that

If they ask for more details, I'm also willing to share that

I'm going to ask for

I am happy for them to share [this information]

with [these people]

I'm going to share with my manager by [this time, place, way]
