



Kingston VCSE HR Training Programme - Module 2

28TH APRIL 2026

Our programme

Module 1

Module 2

Module 3

Module 4

HR and
Employment
Law Essentials

Recruitment,
onboarding,
culture and
wellbeing

Performance
management
and difficult
conversations

Policies,
procedures, HR
systems and
problem solving

The session today

- ▶ **Purpose:** To deliver a workshop giving an overview of the best practice in relation to recruitment, onboarding, culture and wellbeing
- ▶ **Process:** To deliver an interactive workshop with time for discussion and self-reflection
- ▶ **Payoff:** A cohort of delegates with an increased awareness of these areas and some tips for how to manage these

Reflection



What was useful?



What did you use?

CIPD research – 5 behavioural areas

Being open, fair
and consistent

Handling
conflict and
problems

Providing
knowledge,
clarity and
guidance

Building and
sustaining
relationships

Supporting
development

Anything specific
you want to
cover today?

Any specific
questions/issues?

Recruitment and selection

- ▶ The job description
 - ▶ what is the vacancy?
 - ▶ what do you want the role to do?
 - ▶ is it an opportunity to redefine/redesign the role?
 - ▶ what skills and expertise do you want?
- ▶ Get sign off including the salary
- ▶ Where and how are you going to advertise? This is working for you?
- ▶ Every vacancy is a PR opportunity!
- ▶ How do you screen and select?
- ▶ Review all applicants and reply to them all – what are your criteria?
 - ▶ What is essential v desirable?

Recruitment and selection

- ▶ What is your process?
 - ▶ Who will interview?
 - ▶ How many stages?
 - ▶ How can we make it more reliable?

- ▶ Create an interview guide document – an outline of the process and the questions. Why?

In the interview

Make them feel comfortable – you'll get a better performance, no weird questions....

- ▶ Tell them what's going to happen
- ▶ Standard questions (where is our office? RTW and reasonable adjustments.....)
- ▶ Review the CV
- ▶ Specific questions (STAR concept)
- ▶ They can ask questions at the end

STAR question concept...aligned to the skills you need

Competency based interviewing.....

Let's do this now...

- ▶ S = situation
- ▶ T = task
- ▶ A = action
- ▶ R = result

Recruitment and selection

- ▶ Wait for your preferred candidate to accept
- ▶ Give constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates – you may want to hire them in the future
- ▶ Remember the PR opportunity!
- ▶ You want every candidate to want the job and work with you even if you would never hire them!

Legal documents

- ▶ Contract of employment – must have it before they start work
- ▶ Offer letter as well
- ▶ Notice of where the handbook and policies are
- ▶ DBS check process
- ▶ Referencing process – need the candidates approval
- ▶ Must check their right to work – verbally during the interview and then physically

Onboarding

Where have you
worked where
onboarding was awful?
Why was it awful?

Where was good? Why
was it good?

Onboarding...what do you include?

Use an induction checklist – let's create one now

- ▶ Desk
- ▶ IT log on – systems and access
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ Key people
- ▶ Induction presentation
 - ▶ History
 - ▶ Purpose
 - ▶ Values
- ▶ Timetable for first 2 weeks – key meetings

Onboarding...what do you include?

- ▶ How do you do things here?
- ▶ Can they bring their own mug?
- ▶ Is tea and coffee supplied?
- ▶ What do people do for lunch?
- ▶ What are some of the quirks of working here?
- ▶ What are some of the short cuts to get things done?
- ▶ What's going to make them feel comfortable quickly – better performance!

Onboarding,
culture and
well being

Communication is key

1:1's are essential

Work through the job
description

Set SMART objectives

Before the 1:1 meeting

Ensure that 1 to 1's are a given. Good times, bad times, 1 to 1's will continue as planned.

Make your expectations clear. Make sure everybody understands what they need to do and how to do it.

Ensure 1 to 1's have an agenda. Share it. Or have them take charge of it.

Explain what both parties stand to gain: growth, regular check-ins, your support...

During the meeting

Always start with a check-in: How are things? Be personal. Build trust by first sharing how you feel.

Ask about morale: How is your work life? How is your motivation? Can you cope with your current workload?

Discuss the objectives: What is planned? Where are we now?

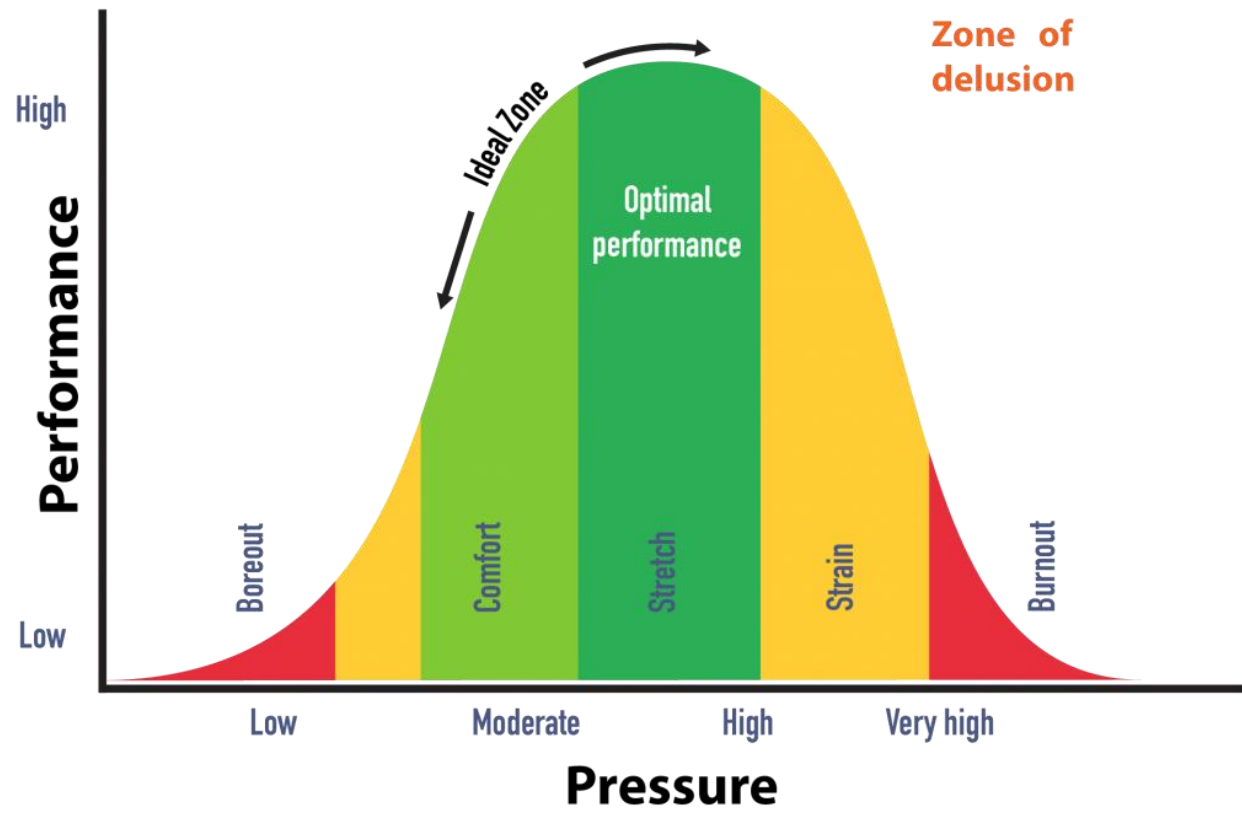
Request roadblocks: What is going well? Discuss challenges. Let them come up with solutions first. Commit to solving them together.

Give feedback: Hold your people accountable by giving feedback.

Recognise and celebrate wins: Be supportive and complementary.

Ensure follow-up: Have your people create an action list and share it with you. Review in every meeting. Also take notes yourself.

Ask their feedback: How can you help them? How are you doing as a manager?



Comfort,
stretch
and
panic

SMART Objectives

Create some
SMART
objectives
for yourself
and your
team...

S

SPECIFIC

Your goal is direct,
detailed, and meaningful.

M

MEASURABLE

Your goal is quantifiable to
track progress or success.

A

ATTAINABLE

Your goal is realistic and you
have the tools and/or
resources to attain it.

R

RELEVANT

Your goal aligns with your
company mission.

T

TIME-BASED

Your goal has a deadline.

Why are people absent from work?

Actual physical or mental illness

An unhealthy lifestyle

The need to care for family members

Personal emotional issues

Problems in the workplace, causing avoidance or stress-related illness

Lack of understanding of sick leave policies

Low job satisfaction and disengagement, often resulting from a low level of control over work or decision-making

Low quality of life in economic, social, and physical terms

How can you identify the problem?

Talk to your employees

Regular 1:1 meetings – ask the questions and listen

Return to work interviews

No standard solution as each person and situation is different

How can you
stop the trend
– unnecessary
sick days?

- ▶ Become aware of, and responsive to, subtle indications of employee unhappiness or tension
- ▶ Offer rewards for zero absenteeism – what do you think about this?
- ▶ Educate new hires about company policies
- ▶ Reducing physical stress
- ▶ Provide training for managers

What are some ways of managing genuine absence?

What behaviours should you show?

- ▶ Understand absence triggers and targets (4 occasions in 4 months)
- ▶ Hold return to work meetings
- ▶ Use fit notes effectively
- ▶ Have sensitive conversations
- ▶ Keep in regular contact with absent employees
- ▶ Show compassion
- ▶ Don't ignore or avoid the situation

Return to work interviews

Welcome

Welcome the employee back to work

Record

Record the reason for the absence and establish whether this reason is likely to cause further absences

Give

Give the chance to express whether any issues at work contributed to the absence

Explain

Explain continued absences may lead to disciplinary proceedings (this would only be the case with staff members who take regular sick days)

Return to work interviews

- ▶ Be prepared
- ▶ Hold them as soon as possible
- ▶ Be consistent – for everyone for everything
- ▶ Be sensitive
- ▶ Hold them in person – don't reply on email or a quick message

Other support

HR

Employee GP

EAP

Occupational Health



Other important points...

- ▶ Understand the issue – lateness, short term, long term, caring responsibilities?
- ▶ Monitor trends and keep records
- ▶ Correct use of ‘fit notes’
- ▶ What is the company policy on sick pay?
- ▶ Making ‘reasonable adjustments’ to work or equipment
- ▶ Be familiar with the disciplinary policy
- ▶ Apply some common sense

Why is your behaviour important?



Affect the team's level of engagement and their wellbeing and stress



Influence your team's exposure to organisational sources of stress or wellbeing. Act as a 'gatekeeper' to their team's view of the organisation



Have a key role in identifying and tackling people management issues in their team

To support...

Health



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graph TD; Health[Health] --> Wellbeing[Wellbeing]; Wellbeing --> Engagement[Engagement];
```

Wellbeing

Engagement

Well-being



Promoting well-being



Reduced sickness



Reduced turnover



Higher productivity

Mental Health

We are all different – who are we to judge?

What is your window on the world?



What size is your bag?



Poor mental health in the UK – report by Stribe and Deloitte

- ▶ Stress, depression, and anxiety cost the UK economy 16.4 million lost working days in 2025
- ▶ Mental ill health is the leading cause of long-term workplace absence in the UK
- ▶ It also accounts for 29% of short-term absences, making it a major driver of overall sickness absence
- ▶ Younger workers (18–24) are disproportionately affected, reporting the highest levels of stress and pressure
- ▶ Estimated to cost UK employers between £53 billion and £56 billion annually

Employers
have a duty
of care to
their
employees

- ▶ Asking someone how they are feeling may be enough to show support. If you notice changes in people, ask them.
- ▶ Do you provide access to Mental Health First Aiders?
- ▶ Does your organisation provide signposting for where to go for support?

Mental Health Action Plan

What can you take
back to your team that
will help improve
mental health
awareness?