

Wellbeing in the workplace,
thriving business.

Setting up a
Buddy System

Ripple&Co

Bolton
Council

Setting up a buddy system



There is excellent evidence to show that peer to peer support can have a positive impact on mental health. Much of the resilience of an organisation may lie in the social bonds between staff members rather than within individuals.

The primary role of a buddy is to take a little time to check-in with a friendly face and offer a listening ear and support when needed.



What is a buddy?



Informal support offered to your colleagues
It is the “how are you?” or a simple “how’s your day going?”



Paying attention to changes in the behaviour of your buddy



Providing a non-judgmental listening ear when your buddy needs to just share how tough their shift/day has been, and validate their experience



Encouraging your buddy to approach others for further advice and support if they seem to be persistently struggling, signposting to support when needed

A buddy is **not**:



Forming deep emotional relationships with others



Becoming someone’s therapist or counsellor



Being available 24hrs a day, becoming dependent, or overly attached



Spying on others



A substitute for good management or supervision

Tips for setting up a buddy system



There are a few things you can do to ensure the successful integration of a buddy system in your workplace, such as:

Finding your buddies

- Have a discussion at a team meeting to explore whether it is something members of the team feel they would benefit from.

Determine which employees make the best buddies

- A successful buddy system requires finding those employees that have the characteristics needed to perform their duties well. Consider interviewing potential buddies or noting when employees display those characteristics for future reference.

Manage the buddy's expectations

- Let the buddy know what to expect during the process of performing their duties. This can minimise any surprises and prepare them to overcome any challenges they might face.

Establish the system's goals

- It's helpful to establish the buddy system's goals and communicate them clearly to those assigned as buddies. This helps them understand the importance of their work and guides the decisions they make while being a buddy.

Working together

- Assign buddies in pairs if possible, considering the information people have shared. It works well if they are people who perhaps do not normally work closely together already.