

Tips for Supporting Co-Workers While Maintaining Confidentiality

1. Respect Privacy

- Never share personal or medical information about a colleague with others, even with good intentions.
 - Avoid discussing someone's situation in public spaces, break rooms, or online platforms.
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2. Offer Support, Not Advice

- Listen actively and empathetically without judgment.
 - Provide reassurance that they are valued and supported at work.
 - Avoid offering medical advice or suggestions for treatment—encourage professional help instead.
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3. Direct to Resources

- Gently inform them about available support, such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP), HR contacts, or external treatment providers.
 - Provide contact information or materials in a confidential manner (email, private conversation).
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4. Maintain Professional Boundaries

- Support your co-worker's well-being without becoming overly involved in their personal decisions.
 - Keep interactions professional and focused on work impact if necessary.
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5. Model Discretion

- Demonstrate respectful communication and confidentiality in all interactions.
 - Encourage a workplace culture of trust and respect.
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6. Escalate When Necessary

- If workplace safety or performance is impacted, report concerns to HR or management without disclosing confidential details unnecessarily.
 - Ensure reporting follows company policies and protects the employee's privacy.
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7. Encourage a Supportive Environment

- Foster peer support while emphasizing confidentiality.
 - Promote wellness programs, team check-ins, and educational sessions about substance use or mental health.
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 **Key Reminder:** Supporting co-workers is about listening, guiding to professional resources, and maintaining privacy—never sharing personal information or making assumptions.