

Workplace Anxiety Workbook

Managing Anxiety at Work with Confidence

Created by Safe Haven Connect CIC

Welcome

Feeling anxious at work is more common than many people realise.

Whether you're worried about deadlines, speaking in meetings, dealing with difficult situations, starting a new job or simply feeling overwhelmed by your workload, workplace anxiety can affect your confidence, wellbeing and daily life.

Experiencing anxiety doesn't mean you're weak or incapable. It means your mind and body are responding to pressure in a way that deserves understanding and support.

The good news is that workplace anxiety can be managed. By understanding your triggers, learning practical coping strategies and building confidence over time, you can reduce anxiety and feel more in control.

This workbook has been designed to help you understand workplace anxiety and develop practical tools that you can use every day.

Remember...

> "Courage isn't the absence of anxiety—it's taking one step forward despite it."

What You'll Learn

Throughout this workbook you'll explore:

♥ Understanding workplace anxiety

♥ Recognising anxiety triggers

♥ Understanding the connection between thoughts, feelings and behaviours

- ♥ Building confidence at work
- ♥ Managing difficult conversations
- ♥ Practical calming techniques
- ♥ Reducing overthinking
- ♥ Creating a personal workplace wellbeing plan
- ♥ Knowing when to ask for support
- ♥ Building long-term confidence

Before You Begin

This workbook is designed to help you understand your own experiences with workplace anxiety.

There are no right or wrong answers.

Take your time with each activity and remember that improving confidence and reducing anxiety is a gradual process.

Every small step you take is progress.

A Thought to Remember

> "You don't have to eliminate anxiety to move forward—you only need to take the next step."

Module 1 – Understanding Workplace Anxiety

Workplace anxiety is a feeling of worry, nervousness or fear related to your job or working environment.

It may happen before work, during your shift or even after you've finished for the day.

Everyone experiences some anxiety from time to time. However, when these feelings become frequent or begin affecting your wellbeing, confidence or ability to enjoy your work, it's important to recognise them and develop healthy ways to cope.

Workplace anxiety can affect anyone, regardless of their job role, experience or profession.

Understanding your anxiety is the first step towards managing it effectively.

Module 1 – Understanding Workplace Anxiety

Workplace anxiety can develop for many different reasons. It may be linked to heavy workloads, difficult situations, fear of making mistakes or uncertainty about the future.

Some people experience anxiety occasionally, while others may notice it affecting them more regularly.

Recognising the signs early can help you take positive steps to support your wellbeing.

Common Signs of Workplace Anxiety

Tick any that you have experienced recently.

Emotional Signs

- ☐ Feeling nervous before work
- ☐ Constant worrying
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed
- ☐ Irritability
- ☐ Feeling on edge
- ☐ Low confidence
- ☐ Fear of making mistakes
- ☐ Feeling emotionally drained

Physical Signs

- ☐ Racing heart
- ☐ Sweating
- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Muscle tension
- ☐ Upset stomach
- ☐ Difficulty sleeping
- ☐ Feeling tired
- ☐ Shaking or trembling

Behavioural Signs

- ☐ Avoiding certain tasks
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating
- ☐ Calling in sick
- ☐ Putting work off
- ☐ Overchecking your work
- ☐ Avoiding meetings
- ☐ Staying late because you don't feel you've done enough
- ☐ Difficulty switching off after work

Reflection Exercise

Think about your recent experiences at work.

When do I usually feel most anxious?

What situations increase my anxiety?

How does anxiety affect my work and wellbeing?

Understanding the Anxiety Cycle

Workplace anxiety often follows a cycle.

Situation

A stressful event happens.

↓

Thoughts

"What if I get this wrong?"

↓

Feelings

Anxious, worried or overwhelmed.

↓

Physical Reactions

Fast heartbeat, tense muscles, sweating.



Behaviour

Avoiding the task or overthinking.



Outcome

Anxiety temporarily reduces but often returns stronger next time.

Understanding this cycle can help you begin breaking it.

Activity – My Workplace Anxiety Triggers

Tick any situations that increase your anxiety.

- ☐ Speaking in meetings
- ☐ Difficult conversations
- ☐ Heavy workload
- ☐ Deadlines
- ☐ Starting a new job
- ☐ Fear of making mistakes
- ☐ Phone calls
- ☐ Conflict with colleagues
- ☐ Performance reviews
- ☐ Staff shortages
- ☐ Working under pressure
- ☐ Other:

Remember

Experiencing workplace anxiety does not mean you are incapable or failing.

It means your mind and body are responding to pressure.

With understanding, support and practical strategies, workplace anxiety can become much more manageable.

Key Takeaway

> Recognising your anxiety is the first step towards managing it. Awareness creates the opportunity for positive change.

Module Summary

Workplace anxiety is common and can affect anyone. By recognising the emotional, physical and behavioural signs, understanding your anxiety cycle and identifying your personal triggers, you can begin developing healthier ways to cope and build confidence at work.

Next Module

Module 2 – Understanding Your Anxiety Triggers and Breaking the Cycle

Module 2 – Understanding Your Anxiety Triggers and Breaking the Cycle

Anxiety can sometimes feel as though it appears without warning, but it is often triggered by particular situations, thoughts or experiences.

By recognising what triggers your anxiety, you can begin to respond in healthier ways instead of feeling controlled by it.

Remember:

> "You can't always control what happens around you, but you can learn healthier ways to respond."

Common Workplace Anxiety Triggers

Tick any that regularly affect you.

- ☐ Heavy workload
- ☐ Tight deadlines
- ☐ Staff shortages
- ☐ Speaking in meetings
- ☐ Public speaking
- ☐ Difficult conversations
- ☐ Fear of making mistakes
- ☐ Being criticised
- ☐ Starting a new role
- ☐ Learning new skills
- ☐ Conflict with colleagues
- ☐ Difficult customers or clients
- ☐ Performance reviews
- ☐ Job insecurity
- ☐ Returning to work after time off
- ☐ Other:

Understanding Your Thoughts

Our thoughts have a powerful influence on how we feel.

During periods of anxiety we often expect the worst, even when there is little evidence that it will happen.

Examples include:

✗ "I'm going to make a mistake."

✗ "Everyone will think I'm not good enough."

✗ "I'll never cope."

✗ "If I ask for help, people will think I'm weak."

These thoughts can increase anxiety and make situations feel even more overwhelming.

Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts

Try replacing anxious thoughts with more balanced ones.

Instead of:

✗ "I'm going to fail."

Try:

♥ "I'll do my best, and that's enough."

Instead of:

✗ "Everyone is judging me."

Try:

♥ "Most people are focused on their own work."

Instead of:

✗ "I can't cope."

Try:

♥ "I've managed difficult situations before, and I can take this one step at a time."

Reflection Exercise

Think about a recent situation that made you anxious at work.

What happened?

What thoughts went through your mind?

Were those thoughts facts or assumptions?

What could be a more balanced way of thinking?

Breaking the Anxiety Cycle

When anxiety appears, try these simple steps.

1. Pause

Stop for a moment and notice how you're feeling.

2. Breathe

Take slow, steady breaths for one minute.

3. Notice Your Thoughts

Ask yourself:

"Is this thought completely true?"

4. Focus on What You Can Control

Choose one small action you can take.

5. Keep Moving Forward

Remember that confidence grows through action, not avoidance.

Activity – My Personal Coping Plan

When I notice anxiety, I will...

☐ Take slow breaths.

☐ Take a short break.

☐ Talk to someone I trust.

- ☐ Challenge negative thoughts.
- ☐ Break my task into smaller steps.
- ☐ Go for a short walk.
- ☐ Drink some water.
- ☐ Remind myself that I don't need to be perfect.
- ☐ Ask for support if needed.

Other:

Remember

Avoiding situations may reduce anxiety temporarily, but it often strengthens anxiety over time.

Taking small, manageable steps helps build confidence and shows your brain that you can cope.

Key Takeaway

> Anxiety grows when we believe every worried thought. Confidence grows when we question those thoughts and take one small step forward.

Module Summary

Workplace anxiety often begins with unhelpful thoughts and avoidance. By recognising your triggers, challenging anxious thinking and taking small, positive actions, you can gradually break the anxiety cycle and feel more confident at work.

Next Module

Module 3 – Building Confidence and Managing Anxiety at Work

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Confidence at work doesn't mean never feeling anxious. It means believing in your ability to manage challenges, learn from experiences and continue moving forward—even when situations feel uncomfortable.

Confidence grows through practice, not perfection.

Every conversation, task and challenge you face helps build your experience and resilience.

Remember:

> "Confidence is built one small step at a time."

Building Confidence Through Small Steps

When anxiety feels overwhelming, break larger tasks into smaller, manageable steps.

Instead of thinking:

"I have to do everything today."

Try asking yourself:

"What's the next small step I can take?"

Small successes help build confidence over time.

Recognising Your Strengths

Everyone has strengths, even if anxiety sometimes makes them difficult to see.

Tick the strengths you already have.

- ☐ Kind
- ☐ Reliable
- ☐ Honest
- ☐ Hard-working
- ☐ Compassionate
- ☐ Patient
- ☐ Good listener
- ☐ Calm under pressure
- ☐ Organised
- ☐ Helpful
- ☐ Problem solver
- ☐ Willing to learn
- ☐ Team player
- ☐ Resilient
- ☐ Other:

Reflection Exercise

Think about a time you handled a difficult situation at work.

What happened?

What did you do well?

What did you learn?

How can that experience help you in the future?

Preparing for Difficult Situations

If certain situations make you anxious, preparing beforehand can help.

Examples include:

- ✓ Writing notes before meetings.
- ✓ Practising difficult conversations.
- ✓ Arriving a few minutes early.
- ✓ Breaking projects into smaller tasks.
- ✓ Asking questions if you're unsure.
- ✓ Giving yourself enough time to complete tasks.

Preparation often reduces uncertainty and builds confidence.

Managing Anxiety During the Working Day

If anxiety begins to increase:

- ☐ Pause for a moment.
- ☐ Focus on your breathing.
- ☐ Relax your shoulders and jaw.
- ☐ Drink some water.
- ☐ Take a short walk if possible.
- ☐ Challenge anxious thoughts.
- ☐ Focus on one task at a time.
- ☐ Ask for support if needed.

Small actions can help prevent anxiety from becoming overwhelming.

Activity – My Confidence Plan

Complete the following.

One situation I would like to feel more confident in:

One small step I can take this week:

One strength I will remind myself of:

One positive thought I will practise:

One person who encourages me:

Celebrating Progress

Confidence grows when you notice your achievements.

Write down three things you've done well recently.

Achievement 1

Achievement 2

Achievement 3

Remember, every achievement counts—no matter how small.

Remember

You don't have to feel confident before taking action.

Often, confidence develops because you were willing to take the first step despite feeling anxious.

Key Takeaway

> Confidence isn't about never feeling anxious—it's about trusting yourself to cope, learn and keep moving forward.

Module Summary

Building confidence at work takes time and practice. By recognising your strengths, preparing for challenging situations, celebrating your progress and taking small, manageable steps, you can gradually reduce workplace anxiety and feel more capable in your role.

Next Module

Module 4 – Creating Your Personal Workplace Wellbeing Plan

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Managing workplace anxiety is an ongoing journey. There will be good days and more challenging days, and that's completely normal.

The aim isn't to remove anxiety completely—it's to develop the confidence, skills and support that help you manage it more effectively.

Creating a personal wellbeing plan can help you recognise early warning signs, protect your mental health and maintain a healthier work-life balance.

Remember:

> "Looking after your mental wellbeing is just as important as completing your workload."

Recognising Your Early Warning Signs

Tick any signs that usually tell you your anxiety is increasing.

☐ Overthinking

- ☐ Difficulty sleeping
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed
- ☐ Racing thoughts
- ☐ Increased irritability
- ☐ Constant worrying
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating
- ☐ Feeling emotionally drained
- ☐ Avoiding tasks
- ☐ Loss of confidence
- ☐ Physical tension
- ☐ Feeling tearful
- ☐ Other:

My Workplace Wellbeing Checklist

Tick the habits you'd like to build.

- ☐ Take regular breaks.
- ☐ Stay hydrated.
- ☐ Eat regular meals.
- ☐ Get enough sleep.
- ☐ Exercise regularly.
- ☐ Leave work on time where possible.
- ☐ Ask for support when needed.

- ☐ Speak kindly to myself.
- ☐ Take annual leave.
- ☐ Spend time doing things I enjoy.
- ☐ Make time for family and friends.
- ☐ Practise breathing or mindfulness.

My Personal Wellbeing Plan

My biggest workplace challenge is:

One thing that helps me stay calm is:

One healthy habit I will practise every day:

One workplace boundary I will protect:

One person I can talk to when I'm struggling:

My Confidence Goals

This month I will:

- ☐ Speak up when I need help.

- ☐ Challenge anxious thoughts.
- ☐ Celebrate my achievements.
- ☐ Focus on progress instead of perfection.
- ☐ Take one step outside my comfort zone.
- ☐ Practise self-care every day.
- ☐ Reduce overthinking.
- ☐ Be kinder to myself.
- ☐ Remember that mistakes are part of learning.

Looking Back

Take a few moments to reflect.

What have I learned about myself?

Which coping strategy has helped me the most?

What workplace strength am I most proud of?

What promise do I want to make to myself?

Final Thoughts

Workplace anxiety can sometimes make you doubt yourself, but it does not define your ability, your potential or your worth.

Every challenge you face and every small step you take helps build resilience and confidence.

Be patient with yourself, celebrate your progress and remember that asking for support is a sign of strength.

You deserve to feel supported, respected and confident in your workplace.

> "You don't have to be fearless to succeed. You only need the courage to take the next step."

Congratulations!

Well done on completing the Workplace Anxiety Workbook.

We hope this workbook has helped you better understand workplace anxiety and given you practical tools to manage it with greater confidence.

Remember that progress takes time. Keep practising the strategies you've learned, revisit this workbook whenever you need it and don't be afraid to reach out for support when you need it.

About Safe Haven Connect CIC

Safe Haven Connect CIC is dedicated to improving mental health and wellbeing through free educational resources, self-help workbooks, peer support and community initiatives.

Our mission is to make mental health support more accessible, reduce stigma and help people build happier, healthier lives.

Explore more free workbooks and wellbeing resources at:

 www.safehavenconnect.org

Safe Haven Connect CIC

Building stronger communities through connection, support and wellbeing.

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If you are experiencing severe emotional distress, thoughts of self-harm or suicide, or believe you or someone else is at immediate risk of harm, contact your local emergency services or your local mental health crisis service immediately.

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