

Næringslivets sikkerhets- råd

Leadership Guideline

The war in Ukraine





Forord

Ivaretagelse av personell i forbindelse med krigen i Ukraina

Mange av NSRs medlemsvirksomheter har personell fra Ukraina eller Russland eller med en form for tilknytning til disse landene eller nærområdene.

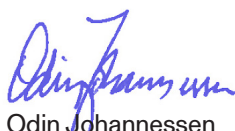


Gjennom artikler i media og henvendelser til NSR er det tydelig at det finnes ansatte som synes situasjonen er utfordrende og at det er vanskelig å snakke med kollegaer om det som skjer. NSR oppfordrer sine medlemmer til å holde en åpen kommunikasjon i egen virksomhet slik at ingen berørte føler seg stigmatisert. I tillegg anbefales det at både HR, ledere og kollegaer har høy bevissthet rundt ivaretagelse av ansatte og sørger for at de som har behov for det, får ekstra tett og god oppfølging i en vanskelig tid.

Allerede eksisterende og kjente ordninger som kollegastøtte, bedriftshelsetjeneste, medarbeider-samtale eller andre former for dialog kan være en god måte for å vise omsorg og gi råd.

En stor takk til psykolog Brynjar Gunnarskog i Aktimed Helse som har utarbeidet og delt veilederen.

Oslo, mars 2022


Odin Johannessen
Direktør



Leadership Guideline

The war in Ukraine:

How to follow up employees from
Ukraine and Russia, and other
affected employees

AKTIMED  **Helse**



The war in Ukraine has many victims

It is important to understand that the war in Ukraine has implications for many people, obviously for the Ukrainian people, but also for other nationalities, such as Russia and Belarus. All employees in the Aker family, regardless of nationality, should be met with respect and understanding. The descriptions of the different challenges and reactions from employees you may meet, as stated below, are based on conversations that Aker Care personnel have had with managers and employees from different countries so far during the first weeks of the war. At page 4-7, there will be given some tips and advices on how you as manager can support your employees, either they are from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus or other countries.

Ukrainian employees

Ukrainian employees are undoubtedly highly affected by the war. To experience that your country is bombed and invaded by another country is definitely hard, creating a lot of reactions, such as shock, sorrow, grief, aggression and uncertainty. Below are some perceptions and reactions that you need to consider among your Ukrainian employees.

- Male employees who are worried of being sent to war as soldiers if they travel to Ukraine
- Employees who want to travel to Ukraine to take part of the war
- Employees who want to travel to the border of Ukraine/ a neighbour country to meet/ support family members/ friends
- Employees who have lost contact with family members in Ukraine and are uncertain about their well-being
- Employees who have lost their family home in bombing
- Employees who have lost family members or friends and are in grief
- Employees who are worried and uncertain, and have safety critical tasks at work
- Employees who are angry at Russian people in general, since they represent an aggressive nation
- Employees who have family members in both Ukraine and Russia/ Belarus, and have conflicting views regarding the war



Russian employees

Many Russian employees feel that they have been involved in an unwanted war. They can feel blame for something they can not be blamed for. They may worry that other people will perceive them as “bad” just because they are Russian native. They can have challenges and problems on their own, family members in Russia can have troubling times as an effect of the sanctions, but they feel they can not “complain” or talk about this since Russia started the war. Below are some perceptions and reactions that you need to consider among your Russian employees.

- Employees who feel they are representing the “bad” country which is responsible for starting a war, and experience blame and shame
- Employees who do not want to go to work or other social gatherings to avoid being perceived as a scapegoat. This may also happen with their children, avoiding school and social arrangements with peers
- Employees who are worried about the sanctions and the consequences for their own families in Russia
- Employees who feel that they can not talk to others about their own worries or uncertainties; they feel that they are not “allowed” to do so because they are not the victims (they are the “abuser”)
- Employees who are against the war and feel that they should say it openly/ in social media, but are afraid of sanctions from the Russian government, either to themselves or to their families in Russia. They can feel a pressure/ expectation from others to openly disagree with Putin, but this may lead to more worries for the safety of family members
- Employees who have family members/ friends who are soldiers in the Russian army. They can also experience grief if any family member/ friend is killed in the war (and where they may feel that they are not “allowed” to show this grief)
- Employees who perceive that family members or friends in Russia are supporting the war based on fundamental different information they receive from the Russian government and the Russian media
- Employees who have family members in both Ukraine and Russia/ Belarus, and have conflicting views regarding the war
- Employees who do not agree with Putin and the war, but are not satisfied with how the western and european countries are sanctioning Russia
- Employees who agree with Putin and are not satisfied with how the western and european countries are involving themselves and supporting Ukraine (probably a few, but need to be considered).



Employees from Belarus

Many of the descriptions of employees from Russia can also be relevant for employees from Belarus. Even though Russia and Putin is the main accountable for the war, the Belarus government has declared support to Russia. It is important to see the employees from Belarus and meet them with the same understanding as with the Russian employees.

Norwegian employees / other nationalities

Many people in other countries have strong reactions related to the war, and you should also be aware of reactions from Norwegian employees/ other nationalities. Below are some perceptions and reactions that you need to consider.

- Employees who are worried about a possible escalation of the war to their own country, such as Norway, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania
- Employees who are worried about a possible nuclear war
- Employees who are angry at Russia/ Russian people, which can affect Russian colleagues
- Employees who have family members/ friends from Ukraine, Russia/ Belarus
- Employees who have children who are stressed/ worried and do not want to go to school

How to support your employees as leader/ manager

1. Be proactive and assess your employees nationality and situation

First of all, it is important that you assess your employees nationality, family situation, work situation, available human network and their housing situation (do they live alone?). This assessment should give you an overview of the employees who need attention and follow up from your side. Find out where your employees from Ukraine have families and what part of the country/ what city they live or grew up and have bonds to.

2. Be updated on the war and help to sort out information/ facts

Information is care! If you show your employees that you are occupied with the war and how it may affect your employees, they will perceive that you care about them and their situation. Use some minutes every morning to get yourself updated about the war and the possible impact on your employees.

You need to be aware that there is an information overload out there, both in media and through social channels, and not all of the information is confirmed as facts.

3. Encourage to talk about worrying thoughts, uncertainties, reactions and emotions

Worrying thoughts activates the body and will lead to restlessness, tension, sleep problems and fatigue. Many people try to handle worrying thoughts instrumentally, which means that they try to avoid thinking by doing tasks or activities. This is not necessarily negative, but can be negative if they do not talk to others about this at all. The worrying thoughts can be reinforced when they are not doing anything, as lying in bed trying to sleep. Talking to others about worrying thoughts will often be a relief, it can uncover important things to deal with and will guide managers/ colleagues in how they can give support.

A good way of starting an open dialogue is to confirm (instead of asking) how the employees probably perceive the war and its consequences: "This must be difficult for you, you must be really worried about your family back home"

Employees from Russia have reported that they feel it is difficult to talk about their own worries and reactions since they feel they are part of the "abusing" country. It is important that Russian employees perceive that their situation is seen and understood, and that their worries and concerns are taken seriously. Use confirmative communication to start a dialogue: "This must be difficult for you and your family back home".

Be a role model as manager, talk about your own thoughts and reactions of the war and its implications.



4. Be supportive and available

Show that you are there for your employees! Communicate that whenever they need support, either practical or emotional, they can call/ talk to you. If you can't help them at the moment, show that you actively seek other possibilities for support. Support can be divided in 5 categories:

- Practical Support
- Social Support
- Emotional Support
- Economic Support
- Medical Support

5. Encourage support from colleagues/ friends/ family members

Encourage employees to seek support from colleagues if they are worried. Still, the most important thing to do is to encourage other employees (who necessarily are not personally affected by the war themselves) to actively support employees who are having a tough time. Encourage them to give their colleague an extra call, invite them for a meal, an activity or a chat.

6. Reduce workload if necessary

Some employees may feel that it is difficult to manage all the tasks at work and that this leads to more stress, since they feel they are lagging behind. Have a dialogue with your employees about their workload and reduce the workload when necessary or suitable. Some employees may need time off to deal with family matters or to manage a difficult and emotional period.

7. Assess employees with safety critical tasks

Some employees are doing tasks that are safety critical. When people are worrying about other things, like the consequences of the war, and at the same time need to conduct tasks at work, this may lead to less focus and concentration on their tasks. They can also have had a tough night with little or disturbed sleep, which also may affect their daily work. It is important that you have an open and honest dialogue with your employees about this, and that you involve them in how to deal with this so no one gets hurt or anything gets damaged. In some work environments there may be many people that are affected by the war. In such environments it is important to enhance the number of quality checks and try to conduct critical tasks in pair/ as a team.

As manager, you should ask yourself the following question:

"If the employee (a given person) should do a human error/ mistake, what may the consequences be"?

If the consequences may be severe, you need to conduct a quality check of the employee (see questions below).

A tip is to start the working day with a 10 minutes briefing and "check" of the employees mental readiness for doing their tasks. Ask open questions (cannot be answered with "yes" or "no"). Questions to be asked may be:

- How was your sleep last night?
- How do you feel about your workload today?
- How do you ensure that you are focused on managing the risks?
- Who will you ask to have a quality check of your preparations?
- Who can you involve and get support from when executing the most critical parts of the task?

You may consider replacements if the consequences of a human error is severe and when you cannot manage the risks with measures like "pairing", quality checks or similar.



Notater





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