



Support the Wellbeing of 40+ Employees at Work

Work ability is a balance between job demands and an individual's resources. Supporting it in the workplace requires systematic and holistic management. It is particularly important to proactively support the continued employment of middle-aged workers. Make use of research-based recommendations in work ability management at your workplace.

1

INCREASE EMPLOYEES' INFLUENCE OVER THEIR WORK

- Where work tasks allow, improve employees' opportunities to influence their working hours, including shift scheduling, start and end times, breaks, and the planning of holidays and time off.
- Provide opportunities for learning at work and for developing employees' skills.
- Engage employees in decision-making concerning their work, such as setting goals, choosing work methods, and planning schedules.

2

REDUCE JOB DEMANDS

- Keep workloads at a reasonable level.
- Reduce physically demanding tasks.
- Clarify job tasks and the division of responsibilities.
- Help employees prioritize their work.
- Minimize interruptions and the need to handle multiple tasks simultaneously.

3

ENHANCE THE REWARDS OF WORK

- Provide recognition and appreciation for employees' work.
- Compensate employees for the time and expertise they invest in their work. Offer adequate financial rewards, including salary and employee benefits.
- Increase the meaningfulness and sense of purpose of work. Ask employees which aspects and experiences they find meaningful and worthwhile in their work and develop the work together with them.



SEE THE FURTHER READING SECTION AT THE END OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS!

4

SUPPORT MENTAL WELL-BEING AT WORK

Mental health symptoms reduce work ability and increase the risk of exiting working life. Symptoms can affect concentration, decision-making, motivation, and social interaction at work. Prolonged symptoms also impair sleep and recovery from work.

- Create a psychologically safe and open work climate where workload, concerns and conflicts can be discussed openly. Address issues early together.
- Strengthen supervisors' competence in recognizing stress and initiate early discussions about it.
- Set workloads, goals and time pressures realistically.
- Increase employees' decision-making authority over their own work.
- Create clear roles, responsibilities and expectations in the workplace and within teams.



REMEMBER! Health and lifestyle factors always influence employees' work ability and their ability to remain at work. Encourage especially 40+ employees to adopt healthy lifestyles as part of onboarding, managerial practices and occupational health collaboration. Also make it easier to choose healthy lifestyles in leisure time.

- Provide shower and changing facilities for employees who commute by active means.
- Integrate movement into everyday work: height-adjustable desks and active breaks encourage employees to get out of their chairs.
- Increase physical activity during the workday by organizing walking meetings and encourage physical activity in leisure time through campaigns.
- Take the nature of work into account: employees in sedentary work need physical activity that boosts metabolism and strengthens the musculo-skeletal system. Employees in physically demanding work benefit from exercise that improves physical capacity and compensates for one-sided physical strain.
- Provide opportunities to recover from work during the work shift.
- Support smoke-free lifestyles and moderate alcohol use: offer peer support and collaborate with occupational health services.



OUR EXPERTS

Rahman Shiri, Chief Researcher, rahman.shiri@ttl.fi, +358 30 474 2998

Eija Haukka, Senior Researcher, eija.haukka@ttl.fi, +358 30 474 2656

Joonas Poutanen, Researcher, joonas.poutanen@ttl.fi, +358 30 474 3203

Mikko Härmä, Research professor, mikko.harma@ttl.fi, +358 30 474 2729



READ MORE

Ideas for managing work ability

- **Successful work ability management promotes employee wellbeing and work engagement (in Finnish)**
ttl.fi/oppimateriaalit/strateginen-tyokykyjohtaminen/tyokykyjohtaminen-mita-ja-miksi
- **Job accommodation Support Work Ability**
ttl.fi/en/learning-materials/mind-and-job-accommodation
- **Well-designed working hours (in Finnish)** reduce job strain and promote recovery from work
ttl.fi/teemat/tyohyvinvointi-ja-tyokyky/tyoaika/vuorotyö/tyoaikojen-arvioinnin-liikennevalomalli

Tips for promoting health and physical activity at work

- **Off we go! Health at workplaces**
ttl.fi/en/off-we-go-health-at-workplaces
- **Mental Health Toolkit:** The Exercise According to Work Tool
ttl.fi/en/themes/well-being-at-work-and-work-ability/work-and-mental-health/mental-health-toolkit/exercise-according-to-work
- **Get Working-Age Adults Moving (in Finnish)**
ttl.fi/tyoikaisten-treenikassi

Tools for Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace

- **Meaning of Work Barometer:** survey tool for individuals and communities, that helps individuals reflect on the meaning of their work through their own experiences
ttl.fi/en/themes/well-being-at-work-and-work-ability/work-and-mental-health/mental-health-toolkit/meaning-of-work-barometer-survey-tool-for-individuals-and-communities
- **Mental Health Toolkit:** Substance Abuse Programme Tool
ttl.fi/en/themes/well-being-at-work-and-work-ability/work-and-mental-health/mental-health-toolkit/substance-abuse-programme-tool?pk_vid=1776937442413684
- **Supporting mental health at work** material provides supervisors with tools for promoting mental health in the workplace
ttl.fi/en/learning-materials/supporting-mental-health-at-work