

Resource #7: Think/Pair/Share in the Workplace



Sometimes, one of the best practices to work through stress, conflict, or deliverables is to collaborate with co-workers and teammates. As we continue to consider tips and strategies to preventatively reduce stress and burnout, employers and employees can both be valuable in providing opportunities for collaboration and sharing. The hope, by using the think/pair/share model, is that by thinking, pairing and sharing on various topics that arise, be they challenges, gaps, or needs, potential conflict and stressors will be diffused as the team comes together and open communication is achieved between staff. Think/Pair/Share is a collaborative learning strategy most often used in schools, however easily adaptable into any team/groups setting.

THINK	PAIR	SHARE
<p>An employer, manager, employee, or guest speaker can offer a prompt, such as an article, project, task, gap, or an idea for the team to consider. Individuals are given some time to reflect on the prompt to establish their own thoughts, feelings, and some feedback on the topic.</p>	<p>Individuals are given the opportunity to choose a partner, a team or can be assigned to a partner or group for the purpose of discussing the topic in a safe, open, and meaningful way. This practice allows for individuals to be heard and validated by a smaller audience, offering a stress-free opportunity to be heard and to listen. As teammates discuss, new ideas are considered, and notes can be made on some of the key points brought forward to address the prompt task more collectively.</p>	<p>Given that everyone has now been exposed to the thoughts of other co-workers, there is a broader understanding of different perspectives from around the workplace community. Staff are invited to come together to share key ideas that were brought forward in the pairing exercise, in front of the whole team/staff. There can be opportunities for affirmations or questions, but the employer is encouraged to keep the space free of judgment and negativity, instead valuing every person's input and ideas.</p>

Activities such as these are powerful tools to offer problem-solving and a way to address gaps, needs, challenges, or hopeful growth areas for the team to address. Think/Pair/Share is a great tool as it has merit with small start-ups, medium sized businesses and thriving corporations and offers a meaningful way to include all staff in conversations to be heard, validated, and appreciated.