Leaders and supervisors can take care of their staff and support team performance by prioritizing sleep for everyone.

Use the SLEEP acronym...

Set the conditions

Lead by example

Encourage sleep

Educate about sleep

Plan and prioritize

SET THE CONDITIONS

- Ensure light boxes and black out curtains are available for staff
- Designate appropriate, comfortable spaces for staff napping

Ask yourself: “Have I created a culture that supports sleep?”

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Watch your own sleep habits and make sure you are getting enough sleep
- Model appropriate caffeine use and sleep health
- Acknowledge the reality of sleep debt and fatigue during COVID-19
- Avoid sending texts or emails to staff during non-duty hours

Ask yourself: “Am I walking the walk?”

ENCourage

- Ask your staff about their sleep
- Emphasize the importance of sleep
- Allow and encourage staff to take naps when appropriate
- Talk about the importance of sleep at all levels of leadership

Ask yourself: “Am I checking in with my team about their sleep?”

EDUCATE

- Reinforce points about self-awareness, caffeine, and light
- Ensure team members know the basics of sleep health (e.g., 7-9 hrs per night)
- Encourage staff to get sleep problems checked out medically as needed
- Remember that decision-making and moral reasoning are impacted by lack of sleep
- Remind your team that good sleep helps to protect health and fend off infection

Ask yourself: “What information am I sharing about sleep?”
PLAN AND PRIORITIZE: SCHEDULING SHIFTS

- Limit staff shifts to 12 hours when possible
- Plan forward shift rotations that move with the clock
  - Shifting from day to evening, and evening to night, makes for an easier transition
- When possible, schedule shifts according to people’s chronotype
  - Put your “early birds” on the morning shift and your “night owls” on the night shift
- Don’t extend schedules for night shift workers
  - Have staff attend meetings and complete administrative tasks during their shifts
- Give team members more time to sleep after a long shift
  - The need for sleep goes up after longer periods of wakefulness

Ask yourself: “Am I scheduling my team members’ shifts effectively?”

PLAN AND PRIORITIZE: MANAGING SHIFT TRANSITIONS

- Stagger shifts by changing out some team members every 4 hours
  - This enables new team members to refresh the remaining team
- Ensure a team member who is shifting their schedule isn’t alone on the floor
  - Make sure others are around to keep them alert
- Prevent staff errors toward the end of a night shift
  - Establish additional safety protocols given the documented elevated risk in errors
- Allot time off for individuals who are significantly shifting their schedule
  - Allow a minimum of 32 hours off for those with an 8 hour change in shift time
- Check in with team members to see how their shift schedules are working for them

Ask yourself: “Are my team members handling shift changes safely?”

NIGHT SHIFT TIP: LEVERAGE ANCHOR SLEEP

- Providers who cover night shifts may want to adjust their sleep to nighttime sleeping on their days off, but this change may cause havoc with their restorative sleep
- Instead, maintain “anchor sleep”: On their days off, make sure that at least 4 hours of sleep are anchored—or match—to their typical nightshift sleeping schedule
- However, it is best to keep providers on the same schedule as long as possible, as it is difficult for them to switch from day shifts to night shifts frequently

Ask yourself: “Am I scheduling my team members’ shifts effectively?”

THIS IS A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT.

BY PRACTICING SLEEP LEADERSHIP, YOU AND YOUR TEAM CAN ADVANCE THE MISSION TO COMBAT COVID-19.