

OHM

“Occupational health management is a matter for the boss.”

Heinz Frötscher and his team at the zum Eibach old people’s and nursing home look after the well-being of the residents. As the manager of the home, he also takes care of his employees. In this interview he explains how he does that, and why it is a matter for the boss.

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Mr Frötscher, your residents’ well-being takes top priority. But how do you look after your employees?

That’s actually an integral part of our strategy: we spend time in our customers’ “living rooms”, so keeping our employees satisfied is what it’s all about. Because if you’re not happy, you can’t help make the people here feel better. For me as the manager of the home, that means above all keeping my eyes open.

Occupational health management is therefore a matter for the boss?

Absolutely. Only if it is clear that their line managers are 100% behind it, and not just paying lip service to it, will employees take it seriously. Of course you can treat occupational health management as being of secondary importance, but then its success will be secondary as

well, and not much will come of it.

So what do you actually aim to achieve with it?

On the one hand it’s all about the health of my employees, naturally, but there are also business interests involved. Look, when you are paying salaries to the tune of almost six million francs and are only able to reduce health-related absences by one percent, that’s going to have a big effect on your P&L. Besides, we can’t put off our work: if someone’s absent, someone else has to step in – 365 days a year.

How have you been able to reduce absences?

With absence management. It starts with keeping an eye on things, and ends with serious discussions about getting back to work. It’s a proven method. Success is a product of being open with

your staff and treating them fairly and honestly. If you can manage that, then your employees will cooperate as well.

You had a situation in which, Swiss Life provided Care Management. How did that come about?

It’s something you encounter quite often in the care industry: an older employee with health problems, who was no longer able to perform her job properly and was anxious about her financial security and wanted somehow to keep working until retirement. But everyone could see that wouldn’t work. At first we actually thought of terminating her employment contract. But I didn’t think that was fair – after all, we all get older, maybe there will come a time when we can’t perform as well ourselves. Nevertheless something had to be done, and so we hit on the idea of Care Management.



Heinz Frötscher, manager of “zum Eibach” retirement home, backs his words with deeds.

How did that work?

We got all of the people involved around a table, the way I had been wanting to for a long time: our people, Swiss Life, Aviga, our insurance broker and somebody from the temporary disability insurers. With Care Management the employee also got the chance to talk about her anxieties in a neutral setting and to confront them properly. In the end it was about reducing her anxieties and

finding a solution for the future together with everyone involved. And it worked: today that employee is working again, with a reduced workload, and her problems are no longer bothering her.

Can you imagine using Care Management again?

Of course. You get cases like that all the time. In future it will be standard procedure to use Care Management in these situations. ▲

A home for ageing people

Since December 2014, the zum Eibach old people’s and nursing home has been housed in a new building in Gelterkinden, where it is able to meet all of the demands of a thoroughly modern retirement home. Manager Heinz Frötscher and his 100 employees care for 84 residents. The home has been at full occupancy for about a year.

www.zumeibach.ch

Occupational health management and Care Management:

Swiss Life provides Care Management in close collaboration with Aviga AG (www.aviga.ch), a neutral partner. Solutions are developed by means of active case management and coordination between internal and external specialist units so as to keep employees at the workplace. Superiors receive support for their management of employees in difficult circumstances, e.g. health problems, conflicts and psychosocial stresses, while employees receive professional advice depending on the problem.

Make an appointment for a situation analysis, free of charge. For additional information call the hotline on **0800 873 875** or send an e-mail inquiry to bgm@swisslife.ch.

Healthy employees are good for business

“Designing the work environment so that it promotes health, and developing a corresponding corporate culture, helps employees keep their jobs. Care Management offers affected persons in difficult circumstances coordinated, needs-based assistance. The aim is to avoid disability by intervening early and taking the strain off line managers and employees. In this way, identification with the company and productivity and value creation can be strengthened and promoted”, says Maurus Huber, Head of Claims and Business Services for Corporate Clients.

On **7 June 2016** Swiss Life will be holding the “Good health – Good business” event, devoted to occupational health management in companies. Register at www.swisslife.ch/bgm. The number of participants is limited.