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## FIGHTING THE STIGMA OF SUD

The stigma surrounding SUD makes matters worse. That's a key part of being a Recovery Friendly Workplace (RFW) – reducing negative judgments and perceptions around workers with a SUD, which can:

- Damage self esteem
- Increase stress and isolation
- Prevent people from seeking help
- Increase prejudice and discrimination
- Increase lost productivity further
- Reduce morale in the workplace

### A few facts to remember

- **Workers with SUD didn't choose the condition**
- **SUD doesn't define who and what a person is**
- **Listening is a powerful tool**
- **Using evidence-based facts is good for business and for people**
- **Research has proven that positive organizational psychology has significant benefits for employers, employees, and stakeholders**



### A FEW FACTS THAT MAY SURPRISE YOU



- People don't need to "hit bottom" before finding help
- There is no single recovery or treatment program that works for everyone
- The Affordable Care Act includes benefits for SUD treatment
- Remaining kind, compassionate, and human is the best approach
- Recovery Friendly Workplace programs are being created all over the country

### LANGUAGE MATTERS



Constructive language tends to emphasize the person, not the condition.

**Replace:** "Addict," "junkie," and "druggie" with "person with a substance use disorder" or "person in recovery."

**Replace:** "Drug abuse" with "drug use" or "substance misuse."

**Replace:** "Dirty" with "using," or "actively using."

**Replace:** "Clean" with "in recovery" or "substance-free."

**Replace:** "Medication is a crutch" with "Medication is a recovery tool" in the context of medication-assisted treatment.