

HR Insiders Observations About Workforce Mental Health



HR Insider readers seeing signs of increased mental health concerns in January

Over the past two weeks, we asked our HR Insider readers about the state of mental health in their workforce over the month of January. The final results are in, but the poll data changed drastically over the course of two weeks.

On the last day of January we asked you:

"Regarding January 2014 have you observed an increase in mental health related concerns, signs or reports among your workforce?"

1. No noticeable increases over an average month
2. Some signs of increases compared to the average month
3. Maybe but I am not certain it is real or just perception
4. Really unable to gauge

What we learned

During the first days after the release of the poll 67% of readers quickly selected the option '*some signs of increases compared to the average month*'. Over the full first week of February, the percentage of readers who selected this response remained consistently in the mid 60 percent range. The option '*No noticeable increases over an average month*' lingered at only 5-7% and the other two responses hovered between 10-15%.

Do perceptions change with time and distance?

As we moved into the second week of February, results began to shift. There was a slight dip in the percentage of readers who selected '*some signs of increases compared to the average month*', averaging 57% in week 2. There was a corresponding gain in the other response categories.

Final Results: 50% of readers observe increasing mental health concerns in January

Although still noticeably higher, by mid-February only 50% of respondents indicated they believed they noticed an increase in mental health concerns in the month of January. By mid-February 12% indicated they were unable to gauge, and 19% were not

certain, indicating they thought they noticed increases by responding '*Maybe, I am not certain it is real or just perception*'; 19% indicated they saw '*no noticeable changes*'.