



Template for CEOs: Identifying People Risks

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Risk Area 1:

Capacity & Productivity – Is Your Team Overloaded?

This section helps you catch early signs of overload and identify potential bottlenecks to productivity across your organization.

How do productivity and mental health connect?



Mental health is a core driver of cognitive performance — and directly affects both productivity and innovation. Companies that don't actively support mental health **risk productivity losses of up to 25%**.

Questions for HR

- How often have overtime, weekend work, or postponed leave been required over the past three months just to keep day-to-day operations running?
- For which teams do we see an increase in errors or missed deadlines compared to last year?
- Are declining customer satisfaction scores or growing ticket backlogs pointing to overload?
- Which areas are reporting more frequent signals of exhaustion, sleep issues, or work-related health complaints?
- Where are short-term absences and sick days clustering?
- What do engagement surveys or pulse checks reveal about excessive workloads or recovery time?

Everything CEOs Need to Know About Mental Health in the Workplace

[Read the Article](#)



Green Flags

Signs of healthy capacity and productivity levels

- Work quality is high and project feedback is consistently positive.
- Deadlines are met more often than not.
- Absence rates are stable and unremarkable.
- Issues are raised early in meetings — without fear of consequences.
- Team members willingly take on responsibility and stretch assignments.
- Vacations are planned and taken reliably.

Warning Signs

Action needed

- Key projects keep getting pushed back.
- Error rates are creeping up.
- One-on-ones increasingly surface signs of burnout, sleep problems, or stress-related physical symptoms.
- Absenteeism is on a long-term upward trend — especially for mental health-related reasons.
- Cynical comments are becoming more common, survey scores on workload, energy, or recovery are sliding.
- Phrases like "I can't get it done without overtime" or "I can't take my vacation right now" are becoming the norm.

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- Identify root causes: which projects, priorities, or dependencies are generating the most pressure?
- Define priorities clearly and build projects and deadlines around realistic timelines.
- Equip managers to spot overload early and address it with empathy — through training or workshops.
- Provide immediate relief where needed, such as temporary workload reductions or external support.
- Take a preventive approach: build psychological safety, foster open communication, and introduce (or make more visible) mental health resources.
- Use feedback conversations and workplace risk assessments to catch stress early.

Risk Area 2:

Turnover – Are Your Key Roles Secure?

This section helps you recognize the early warning signs of high turnover risk — [and take action](#) before it becomes a business problem.

How do turnover and mental health connect?

Turnover rates [can drop by up to 60%](#) when companies invest meaningfully in mental health support.

Erfahre mehr dazu

Questions for HR

- Which teams have turnover rates that significantly exceed the company average or relevant market benchmarks?
- What reasons do employees repeatedly give in exit interviews or offboarding conversations?
- Which roles and teams are currently business-critical — in terms of institutional knowledge, revenue, or processes — and how stable is coverage there?
- In which positions would losing one person meaningfully disrupt operations?
- Where are top performers showing signs of withdrawal, declining output, or lower engagement than before?
- How many critical roles have internal successors or a talent pipeline in place?
- Which skill sets or profiles are especially hard to recruit — and what's the risk if those people walk?

Green Flags

- Overall turnover is moderate and in line with [market benchmarks](#).
- Most departures are expected and unrelated to company culture or structure.
- Business-critical roles are clearly identified, documented, and regularly reviewed.
- The majority of those roles have internal successors or talent formally in the pipeline.

Warning Signs

Action needed

- Critical roles have been refilled multiple times or left vacant for extended periods in the last 12–24 months.
- Exit interviews keep surfacing the same themes: lack of development, management issues, toxic culture, or chronic overload.
- Strategic functions are dependent on single individuals with no documented handover or backup plans.
- Engagement scores or eNPS have dropped noticeably — particularly among experienced team members.
- There are growing signs that high performers are actively exploring the market or entertaining offers.

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- Run targeted stay interviews with people in key roles to understand their motivations, frustrations, and needs — before they decide to leave.
- Establish clear career paths and development plans for critical roles and high-potential talent,
- Benchmark compensation and growth opportunities against market standards and ensure perceived fairness within teams.
- Build a [culture](#) where people feel like they genuinely belong: transparent communication, real involvement, and consistently acting on feedback.
- Build talent pools for hard-to-replace profiles and invest in their development.
- Offer coaching, development programs, and [1:1 sessions with experts](#) to support both professional and personal growth.

Risk Area 3:

Absenteeism, Burnout & Mental Health — How Is Your Team Really Doing?

Mentally driven absences are often a direct reflection of how sustainably work is organized — and how safe employees feel. This section helps you recognize patterns early.

Questions for HR

- How have absence rates trended over the past twelve months — company-wide, by department, and compared to prior years?
- Where are you seeing clusters of short-term sick leave or recurring absences that could indicate stress or exhaustion?
- Which areas are showing signals like fatigue, declining performance, withdrawal, or rising error rates?
- What is employee survey feedback telling you about stress, mental health, and work-life balance?
- Do your managers have the knowledge and tools to recognize and appropriately address mental health struggles?
- What mental health and resilience resources currently exist — and how much are they actually being used?

Green Flags

- Absence rates are stable or declining and in line with industry norms.
- Stress-related short-term sick leave is rare.
- Mental health resources are known, easy to access, and actually used.
- Employees report in surveys that they feel comfortable discussing stress, mistakes, and problems openly with their manager.

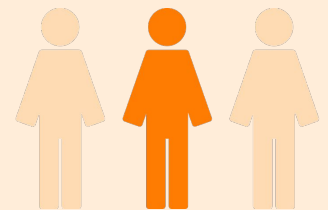
Warning Signs

Action needed

- Absences are rising sharply — especially in specific teams or roles.
- Short-term sick leave with vague diagnoses is recurring.
- Signs of chronic fatigue, sleep issues, or difficulty concentrating are becoming more visible.
- Cynicism, emotional detachment, and social withdrawal are increasingly noticeable at work.
- Previously engaged employees are experiencing performance drops.
- Mental health resources are barely used, despite clear signs of stress throughout the organization.

Absences due to mental illness are on the rise.

Burnout-related absences **have increased by 33%** over the past five years.



Quelle: kkh.de

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- Actively strengthen prevention through flexible working models, clear boundaries outside of working hours, and structured recovery formats.
- Introduce offerings like health days, workshops, or digital mental health platforms.
- Deliberately build psychological safety so that employees feel comfortable raising concerns before things escalate.
- Systematically gather feedback to understand why existing resources aren't being used — and what would be more appealing.
- Train managers specifically so they can recognize mental strain, address it sensitively, and support their teams responsibly.
- Provide access to sessions with qualified psychologists as a go-to resource for mental health challenges.

Risk Area 4:

Change Readiness & Resilience — Is Your Team Prepared?

This section helps you gauge how resilient your team really is — and whether change fatigue, resistance, or overwhelm have already taken hold.



Questions for HR

- How clearly do employees in affected areas understand what is changing and why it matters?
- How confident do teams feel about their ability to deliver on upcoming changes — given their current skills, resources, and bandwidth?
- How well-equipped are your managers to explain changes, hold space for difficult questions, and work constructively with pushback?
- What signs of resilience are you seeing — teams that stay solution-focused amid change, learn together, and support each other?
- Where are the blind spots in your communication — and who feels left out or informed too late?

Green Flags

- Feedback and questions about changes are mostly constructive ("How do we make this work?") rather than fundamentally resistant.
- Energy levels remain high even amid multiple or complex new initiatives.
- Employees report having the information, training, and resources they need to navigate change well.
- Key metrics like customer satisfaction, quality, or turnover in critical areas remain stable or improve.

Warning Signs

Action needed

- Growing cynicism toward new initiatives — phrases like "We've done this before" or "This won't stick either" are becoming common.
- Visible change fatigue: dropping motivation, going through the motions, noticeably lower participation in workshops or feedback formats.
- Rising absences in the most heavily affected areas, with more stress- or burnout-related sick leave.
- More complaints in meetings — but also increasingly resigned or apathetic reactions.

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- Create space for honest conversations where concerns, fears, and open questions can be raised and genuinely heard.
- Celebrate progress deliberately — even small wins deserve recognition.
- Actively bring in critical voices and treat resistance as valuable signal rather than noise.
- Provide targeted learning opportunities that build both the technical and personal skills needed to navigate change.
- Strengthen managers in their role as change leaders and invest in their change management capabilities so they can offer direction and a sense of stability.
- Bring in external experts to provide structured support throughout change processes.

Risk Area 5:

Leadership — Are Your Managers Effective?

This section helps you systematically assess the quality of leadership across your organization.

Why does good leadership matter?



of team engagement is directly tied to manager behavior

Quelle: Gallup

Questions for HR

- How do managers score in employee surveys on dimensions like trust, feedback quality, and perceived support?
- Under which managers do teams consistently perform well and stay engaged — and where is the opposite true?
- Which teams have turnover rates significantly above or below the company average, and what role does leadership play?
- Where do managers appear stretched — whether due to overly large spans of control or too much time spent on day-to-day operations?
- How regularly do managers receive structured feedback from their teams — for example, through 180° or 360° formats?
- Do survey results or feedback tools reveal patterns that can be traced to specific managers?

Green Flags

- Employees report clear expectations, regular support, and genuinely useful feedback.
- Teams deliver consistently: goals are met, projects close on time, quality and error rates are stable.
- Managers score well in 180°/360° feedback and receive high marks for trust and recommendation.
- Problems, ideas, and criticism are raised early — a clear sign of [psychological safety](#).
- Managers actively engage in training, coaching, or peer formats and visibly apply what they learn.

Warning Signs

Action needed

- Engagement or eNPS scores for specific teams are notably below the company average.
- Complaints about lack of support, missing recognition, or unavailable managers are piling up.
- Conflict, frustration, cynicism, or withdrawal are noticeably increasing within certain teams.
- Teams under particular managers regularly miss goals, deadlines, or quality standards.
- Turnover in specific teams is disproportionately high, with exit interviews frequently pointing to management.
- Feedback from surveys or one-on-ones goes unacknowledged and leads to no visible change.

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- Have direct conversations with the managers involved — understand the root causes and offer genuine support.
- Deploy targeted [training and development for managers](#).
- Define clear, values-based leadership principles: what does great leadership look like here, and how do we expect people to work together?
- Enable sparring, coaching, and peer formats to foster reflection and growth.
- Establish a binding leadership program for all people managers, covering communication, feedback, coaching, prioritization, and conflict management.
- Anchor leadership quality explicitly as a performance dimension in goal-setting and incentive structures — making impact and accountability concrete.

Risk Area 6:

Conflict Management — How Is Your Team Working?

This section helps you assess whether conflicts are being handled constructively — or quietly becoming a real business risk.

Everything HR Needs to Know About Mental Health in the Workplace

[Read the Article](#)



Questions for HR

- How many conflict or complaint cases have come up in the past twelve months — and where?
- Which teams regularly get derailed in meetings or slip into unproductive debates?
- How quickly and effectively are conflicts resolved?
- How much do employees trust HR and leadership to handle sensitive issues like conflict, disrespect, or discrimination?
- What processes and points of contact exist for conflicts and how well-known are they in the team?
- What preventive measures are in place — such as training on communication, respectful conduct, or anti-harassment — and where are the gaps?

Green Flags

- Teams describe their working environment as largely trusting, respectful, and supportive.
- Differing views are addressed openly and professionally — without getting personal.
- HR sees few repeat cases; conflicts are resolved promptly and perceived as fair.
- Employees know who to turn to and report trust in both HR and their managers.
- The number of serious formal cases stays low, while participation in feedback and survey formats remains high.

Warning Signs

Action needed

- Frequent disputes and palpable tension are defining how meetings and collaboration feel.
- Communication breaks down, information gets withheld, or relevant people are left out.
- Employees avoid raising issues — out of fear of repercussions or because they've given up.
- Formal complaints related to bullying, discrimination, or harassment are increasing, and legal matters are piling up.
- Conflicts only become visible at a very late stage and land directly with HR, works council, or legal.
- Turnover is rising in specific teams, with exit interviews citing conflict or a toxic atmosphere as the reason.

What Leadership & HR Can Do Together

- In acute cases, bring in mediators or external support early to prevent escalation.
- Put clear conflict processes in place: define contact points and lay out transparent steps.
- For the most heavily affected teams, offer coaching, mediation, team workshops, or targeted conflict management content.
- Strengthen HR as a sparring partner, equipped with clear guidelines, checklists, and standards for handling conflict.
- Use anonymous feedback and reporting channels to surface tensions before they escalate.
- Articulate values and behavioral standards, communicate them consistently, and act when they're violated.

Open, honest, and regular conversations between HR and leadership are one of the most powerful levers for building a shared understanding of risk. They make it possible to course-correct early — before risks turn into real problems.

Support your employees with the leading platform for workplace mental health

nilo provides easy access to mental health support: 1:1 sessions with psychologists, self-guided exercises and tools, group formats, and workshops to strengthen your team's well-being and your company culture.



Would you like to learn more about how to improve well-being in your company?

Let's talk!