

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT INTERVENTION AND EMPLOYEE EMOTIONS

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BACKGROUND

Military veterans comprise nearly 6% of the U.S. civilian workforce; this number is estimated to grow with over 4 million people serving post-9/11. Military veterans bring diverse experiences, perspectives, and strong skills to the workplace. Successful transition to the civilian workplace is critical to the well-being of employees who have sacrificed for the benefit of the country.

While many veterans transition seamlessly, some may need greater support, such as the subset of post-9/11 veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms (PTSD). The workplace is an effective context for interventions demonstrated to improve psychological health and the work-family interface, especially for higher-stressed employees.

This study examined the effectiveness of a supervisor support training (SST) intervention tailored to support military veterans who have transitioned to the civilian workplace.

RESEARCH CONDUCTED

Daily Internet Study (DIS) included 144 veterans (91% men) to participate in a 32-day daily diary at baseline and following the intervention, 6 months post-baseline. Participants were employed by 35 organizations, which were randomized to intervention or wait-list control.

DIS designed to complement the veteran employee study which comprised three components:

- One-hour computer-based supervisor intervention (baseline, 6-months, and 9-months)
- Two-week supervisor behavior tracking
- Supplementary activities that provide engagement opportunity

RESULTS

The training significantly improved well-being facets including improvements in calm emotions (i.e., feeling more relaxed) at follow-up.

Average positive emotions, which included happiness, were increased among veterans who did not screen positive for PTSD (i.e., most veterans in our study; 83%).

Veterans with positive PTSD screens benefitted from enhanced supervisor support resulting in a reduction of negative emotions (including sad, angry, lonely, ashamed, guilty), providing supportive evidence for supervisor mental health awareness training.

IMPORTANCE

Our supervisor support training represents an evidence-based program that improves employee positive emotions.

Summary based on the following paper:

Mohr, C.D., Hammer, L.B., Brady, J., Perry, M. & Bodner, T. (2021, February 13). *Can Supervisor Support Improve Daily Employee Well-being? Evidence of Supervisor Training Effectiveness in a Study of Veteran Employee Moods.* *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology.* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/joop.12342>

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