

Swiss School of Business Research

**Enhancing Employee Well-being and Client Interactions: A Holistic HR Approach to
Integrating Psychological Support for Employees at Hair Lounge**

Capstone Project Report

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Wednesday 6th November 2024

Words Count: 9183

Executive Summary

Hair Lounge, an established and distinguished hair salon known for its innovation and sustainability, has recognised the need to integrate psychological support into its Human Resources Strategy to enhance employee well-being and client interactions, introducing a new working process into the business. Hair Lounge aims to create a nurturing work environment that prioritises the welfare of both staff and clients and effectively manages the emotional demands placed upon its employees.

The report delves into the extended role of emotional labour at Hair Lounge, highlighting the emotional dynamics between staff and clients. It emphasises the impact of emotional exhaustion on employee performance and advocates for the integration of psychological support initiatives to mitigate burnout and enhance well-being.

The proposed protocol for managing client disclosures at Hair Lounge introduces a Traffic Light System, categorising disclosures into green, yellow, and red lights with specific guidelines for addressing client disclosures, emphasising the significance of client confidentiality and data protection.

Additionally, the report outlines a strategic proposal to integrate mental health support within the salon's operational framework, recognising the post-pandemic impact on employee well-being and the necessity of self-care culture.

The report emphasises the importance of continuous professional development in psychology and client support and underscores the cultural shift and change management required to effectively implement the psychological support initiatives, introducing a new working process into the business.

Key Objectives

- Leadership Commitment: Emphasise strong support and commitment from salon leadership to drive the successful implementation of psychological support initiatives and promote a culture of well-being.
- Comprehensive Training: Provide thorough and tailored training programs for salon staff to equip them with the psychological tools necessary to handle emotionally intense client interactions and recognise signs of emotional exhaustion.
- Robust Confidentiality Protocols: Implement stringent confidentiality protocols to safeguard client information and ensure compliance with data protection laws, building trust and ensuring discreet handling of personal disclosures.
- Integration of Mental Health Support: Seamlessly integrate mental health support initiatives into the operational framework, leveraging existing resources such as healthcare plans and external counselling services to provide comprehensive support for employees.
- Change Management and Communication: Proactively manage the cultural shift by effectively communicating the rationale for the change, anticipating potential resistance, and encouraging active participation in mental health initiatives.
- Continuous Evaluation and Improvement: Establish a framework for continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of psychological support measures and mechanisms for ongoing improvement based on feedback and evolving needs.

By prioritising the well-being of its employees and embracing innovative approaches to client care, Hair Lounge positions itself as a trailblazing salon committed to fostering a resilient, empathetic, and sustainable work environment.

In conclusion, Hair Lounge's proactive integration of psychological support measures not only underscores its commitment to sustainability and innovation but also positions the salon as a paragon of resilience and empathetic workplace culture within the hair salon industry.

1.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Key Objectives.....	2
1. Mission Statement	7
2. The Extended Role of Emotional Labour: Understanding Emotional Labour at Hair Lounge.....	8
2.1 Emotional Dynamics Between Staff and Clients	8
2.2 Impact of Emotional Exhaustion on Performance	9
Table 1: The Impact of Emotional Labour on the Daily Professional Engagement of Hair Lounge Personnel.	11
Graph 1: Correlation Between Emotional Labor and Burnout in Hair Salon Staff.	12
2.3 Understanding and Managing Emotional Labour: Insights from Research at Hair Lounge.....	12
Figure 1: Triangle model of emotional labour.	14
Table 2: Research Methods, Data Collection, and Findings in Managing Emotional Labour	15
3. Evaluating Hair Lounge's Current HR Approach to Employee Well-being Support	15
3.1 Recognising the Need for Enhanced Mental Health Support	16
3.2 Addressing the Impact of Client-Related Emotional Labor on Staff Well-being	16
3.3 Enhancing Emotional Well-Being in the Annual Appraisal Process	17
3.4 Rationale for the Proposed Integration	17
3.5 Expected Impact and Benefits	17

4. Proposal: 6 Key Initiatives for Enhancing Mental Health and Wellbeing Support at Hair Lounge	18
Initiative 1: Introduction of Emotional Wellbeing Assessment in Staff Appraisals at Hair Lounge.....	18
Initiative 2: Enhancing Staff Well-Being: Implementing an Emotional Recovery Program at Hair Lounge	20
Initiative 3: Upgrading the Healthcare Package Initiative, Integration of a Healthcare EAP, and Financial Considerations	21
Graph 2: Employee Well-being Before and After Psychological Support	23
Initiative 4: Managing Client Disclosures in the Hair Salon Setting: Implementation of the Traffic Light System at Hair Lounge	23
Initiative 5: Tailored Emotional Resilience Training	26
Initiative 6: Continued Professional Development in Psychology and Client Support at Hair Lounge	28
5. Linking Empowerment to Sustainability and Innovation in the Context of Hair Lounge.....	29
5.1 Empowerment as a Catalyst for Cultural Change	29
5.2 Strategic Linkages to Sustainability and Trichology Integration at Hair Lounge	31
5.3 Autonomy and Innovation in Proposed Initiatives	31
5.4 Change Management and Cultural Shift at Hair Lounge	33
6. Impact of COVID-19 on Integrating Psychological Support at Hair Lounge	34
6.1 Prevalence of Emotional Distress	34

6.2 Adaptation to Virtual Platforms	35
6.3 Recognition of Pandemic-Induced Stress	36
6.4 Enhanced Emphasis on Self-Care	37
6.5 Updated Client Confidentiality Protocols	38
7. Risk Analysis and Mitigation Strategies for Psychological Support Integration	39
Risk 1: Employee Resistance to Change	40
Risk 2: Confidentiality Breaches	42
Risk 3: Overwhelmed Staff and Increased Workload	43
Conclusion.....	44
Appendix.....	45
Document A: Hair Lounge Emotional Wellbeing Assessment Form	45
Document B: Hair Lounge HR Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule	47
Document C: WPA Company Policy Mental Health/Wellbeing Cover Outline	48
Document D: Hair Lounge Proposed Emotional Resilience Training Schedule	49
Bibliography.....	49

Enhancing Employee Well-being and Client Interactions: A Holistic HR Approach to Integrating Psychological Support for Employees at Hair Lounge

1. Mission Statement

Hair Lounge is embarking on a transformative journey by introducing a completely new working process that aligns with our dedication to innovation, sustainability, and the holistic well-being of our employees and clients. Our mission is to proactively integrate organisational psychological support into our Human Resources Strategy, elevating employee well-being and enhancing client interactions. Recognising the substantial psychological demands imposed on our staff due to the prevalence of emotional labour in hair salon settings, we are committed to cultivating an empathetic and nurturing work environment.

In alignment with our dedication to sustainability, this strategic initiative extends our care principles and accountability to our workforce, emphasising mental health as a fundamental determinant of operational success. Building upon our leadership in embracing sustainable practices advocated by the Green Salon Collective and our plans to incorporate Trichology services, we aim to address the emotional needs of our staff as part of a comprehensive well-being approach.

Furthermore, in response to the evolving post-COVID-19 business landscape, where the psychological impact on employees is increasingly acknowledged, we seek to integrate

psychological support into our HR strategy. By doing so, we not only ensure the mental resilience of our employees but also elevate the calibre of client interactions, fostering a more empathetic, sustainable, and productive work environment.

2. The Extended Role of Emotional Labour: Understanding Emotional Labour at Hair Lounge

2.1 Emotional Dynamics Between Staff and Clients

In the distinctive environment of Hair Lounge, the interaction dynamics between staff and clients frequently surpass conventional service provider-customer relationships, stemming from longstanding customer loyalty to the salon. Clients frequently share deeply personal narratives encompassing family, professional, and emotional experiences. In the course of their duties, salon stylists not only craft hair but also engage as empathetic listeners to these oral narratives. While fostering a strong emotional bond between stylists and clients can yield positive outcomes, it concurrently presents potential risks to the well-being of salon staff. A comprehensive understanding and effective management of the emotional demands placed upon the staff are essential to safeguard their physical and emotional health and to ensure the sustained efficacy and future resilience of the business (Harness et al., 2020).

Emotional labour is the intricate process of managing one's emotions and expressions to meet the emotional demands inherent in a particular occupation (Harness et al., 2020). At Hair Lounge, stylists operate within a deeply emotional environment, as clients frequently confide in them, sharing personal challenges and experiences. These disclosures not only intensify the personal connection between the client and the stylist but also impose additional emotional demands on the salon team. The interplay between professional obligations and personal emotions in this context can potentially lead to burnout if not effectively managed (Chen et al., 2022).

2.2 Impact of Emotional Exhaustion on Performance

Due to the close and intimate nature of interactions with clients, hairdressers consistently engage in emotional labour, resulting in experiences of burnout, stress, and fatigue at the end of each working day (Harness et al., 2020). Despite the potentially lower level of formal connection in the hairdressing industry, emotional labour emerges as a significant and pervasive factor, given the substantial amount of time that Hair Lounge personnel dedicate to client interactions. Furthermore, the emotional investment required is compounded by the expectation from clients that stylists not only listen to their concerns but also provide them with comfort and solace.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of how emotional labour profoundly influences the daily experiences of Hair Lounge employees and its subsequent impact on their performance, the table below delineates the key dimensions of emotional labour and its implications for staff well-being and effectiveness.

Key Aspect	Description	Impact on Employees	Example Situation
Emotional Engagement	Stylists engage with clients personally, often listening to personal challenges and offering empathy.	Emotional exhaustion and burnout	A client discusses a recent family issue during a hair appointment.
Emotional Bonding	The relationship between stylist and client frequently intensifies, fostering an emotional bond beyond a typical customer-service interaction.	Difficulty establishing boundaries.	A client consistently divulges marital difficulties to their hairstylist.

Professional-Emotional Balance	Hairstylists must navigate the balance between emotional engagement and professional responsibilities.	Elevated mental stress.	Balancing haircare services with the management of a client's emotional distress.
Continuous Emotional Labour	In contrast to various other sectors, the hairdressing industry necessitates regular and prolonged one-on-one interactions with clients, leading to heightened emotional requirements for the personnel involved.	Fatigue and emotional burnout.	Customers consistently divulge personal struggles during each appointment over extended durations.
Empathy Requirement	Clients anticipate not solely professional service but also emotional empathy from stylists.	Vulnerability to emotional exhaustion.	Providing empathetic assistance to individuals coping with personal bereavement or psychological challenges while demonstrating adept interpersonal abilities.

Table 1: The Impact of Emotional Labour on the Daily Professional Engagement of Hair Lounge Personnel.

The influence of emotional exhaustion on the performance of staff members at Hair Lounge extends far beyond the confines of the salon chair. When employees experience emotional depletion, their ability to engage in positive and constructive interactions with clients is compromised, ultimately tarnishing the overall customer experience. Emotional exhaustion plays a moderating role in the relationship between emotional labour and the decline of both physical and mental health (Chen et al. 2022). Consequently, at Hair Lounge, such phenomena could lead to increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and high turnover rates among the staff. Furthermore, emotionally drained employees may struggle to

meet the high standards of customer service expected at a salon renowned for its commitment to delivering quality and professional services.

In this context, it is essential to recognise the substantial impact of work-based stress on employee well-being and performance. According to the UK Health and Safety Executive, over 11 million working days are lost each year due to work-based stress, highlighting the pervasive nature of this challenge within the workplace (Wagstaff, 2024). This underscores the imperative need for Hair Lounge to prioritise the implementation of comprehensive psychological support systems to mitigate the detrimental effects of work-based stress on its employees.

Drawing inspiration from Hair Lounge's commendable sustainability initiatives from collaboration with the Green Salon Collective, it is imperative to recognise emotional well-being as a long-term investment akin to energy conservation and waste management. The primary objective is to cultivate a work environment that promotes employee well-being and maximises productivity, to safeguard employees from the detrimental effects of a stressful workplace. Just as Hair Lounge has demonstrated innovative approaches to environmental conservation, the salon must also prioritise the development of strategies to preserve the emotional well-being of its employees. The subsequent graph depicts the correlation between emotional labour and levels of burnout experienced by salon staff.

The positive correlation between emotional labour and burnout rates underscores the imperative need for the implementation of effective emotional support mechanisms within the salon workplace. Therefore, by acknowledging the profound impact of emotional exhaustion on employee performance and taking proactive measures to address these challenges, Hair Lounge can foster a thriving workplace environment conducive to both employee well-being and sustained business success.



Graph 1: Correlation Between Emotional Labor and Burnout in Hair Salon Staff.

2.3 Understanding and Managing Emotional Labour: Insights from Research at Hair Lounge

Under the leadership of the proprietor, Mrs Rebecca Rathbone, Hair Lounge conducted an extensive qualitative research initiative to specifically examine the intricate challenges inherent in managing emotional labour within the unique setting of our hair salon environment. Through the meticulous application of advanced qualitative methodologies, including phenomenological interviews, observations, and reflexive data analysis, Mrs Rathbone and her team gained profound insights into the complexities of emotional labour experienced by our salon employees. This rigorous exploration, spearheaded by Mrs Rathbone, has not only shed light on the phenomena of emotion-rule dissonance (the conflict between required and true emotions) and emotional deviance (the expression of emotions that are not in line with organisational norms) within our salon but has also led to the identification and in-depth exploration of specific strategies, namely “deep acting” and “surface acting,” utilised by our employees to effectively navigate and mitigate emotional deviance.

While emotional labour is important for maintaining service quality, our findings have also revealed that it can have significant negative effects on our employees over time, leading to mental and physical health issues and negative job attitudes. Additionally, our research has shown that emotional labour can deplete cognitive resources, which in turn affects cognitive performance during client interactions. The intentional regulation of emotions may result in a depletion of cognitive resources, potentially reducing performance in other areas and affecting the overall well-being of our employees. Employees often face difficulties when the expectations for emotional expression clash with their actual emotions. This can lead to what we refer to as emotion-rule dissonance and emotional deviance. To address these issues, our employees engage in what we term emotional labour, which involves efforts to manage their expressed and experienced emotions. Deep acting involves modifying the experienced emotion by reappraising the provoking elements in situations, while surface acting aims to align expressed emotions with desired emotional expressions through hiding, amplifying, or feigning the expression of emotions. As a result, the comprehensive research carried out by Mrs Rebecca Rathbone and her team at Hair Lounge offers valuable and actionable insights for both scholarly discourse and practical implications in the effective management of emotional labour within our salon setting.

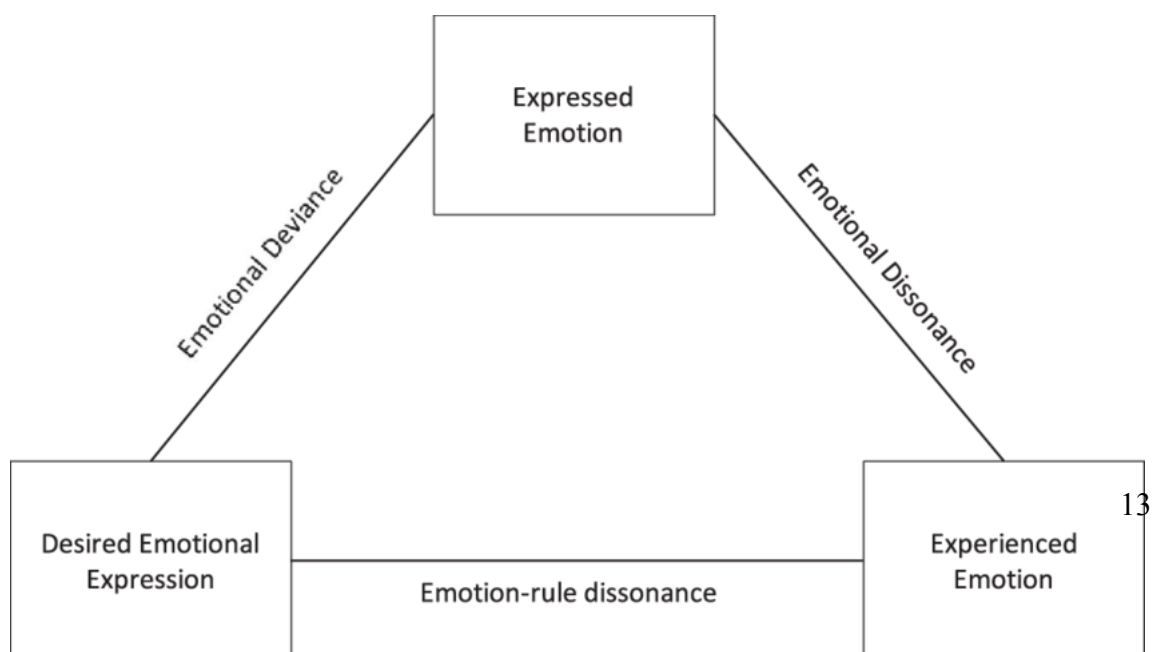


Figure 1: Triangle model of emotional labour.

At Hair Lounge, our research endeavours encompassed a multifaceted approach, involving a series of in-depth employee interviews, meticulous observations of customer interactions, and collaborative engagements with industry experts. This methodological diversity allowed us to gain rich, first-hand experiences and perspectives, thereby enhancing our understanding of the intricate emotional and cognitive challenges encountered by our salon employees daily. The utilisation of phenomenological interviews and observations provided valuable insights into the nuanced nature of emotional labour within our salon setting.

Furthermore, to complement our empirical findings, we undertook a comprehensive review of existing literature on emotional labour and its implications for employee well-being. This literature review not only augmented the depth of our research but also ensured a well-rounded perspective that integrated our empirical observations with established theoretical frameworks and scholarly discourse on emotional labour.

The amalgamation of these qualitative research methodologies, including in-depth interviews, observational data, and literature review, not only enriched the rigour and depth of our investigation but also contributed to the comprehensive and nuanced understanding of emotional labour within the unique context of the Hair Lounge environment.

Research Method	Data Collection Method	Data Analysis Method	Number of Observations	Findings/ Insights
Employee Interviews	Semi-Structured	Thematic Analysis	20	Identified common emotional labour challenges faced by employees, such as managing client expectations and handling difficult interactions.
Observations	Direct Observation	Content Analysis	50	Observed nonverbal cues and emotional responses during customer interactions, highlighting the emotional demands of the job.
Collaboration	Expert Consultation	Comparative Analysis	N/A	Industry experts, including The National Hairdressers Federation (NHF), provided insights into best practises and coping mechanisms for managing emotional labour in the salon setting.
Literature Review	Document Analysis	Narrative Synthesis	N/A	Reviewed existing studies on emotional labour and its impact on employee well-being, highlighting the need for support systems and coping strategies.

Table 2: Research Methods, Data Collection, and Findings in Managing Emotional Labour

As a result of our research, we are committed to supporting our team in managing emotional labour and promoting a positive work environment at Hair Lounge.

3. Evaluating Hair Lounge's Current HR Approach to Employee Well-being Support

While Hair Lounge has historically embraced a culture of support and recognition through day-to-day visual and verbal cues, the evolving legal landscape and industry standards necessitate a more structured and comprehensive approach to employee well-being. In response to these developments, Hair Lounge aims to enhance its existing policies and initiatives to align with the legal obligations and industry best practices, ensuring the holistic well-being of its valued employees.

Building upon the foundation of support and acknowledgement of emotional labour, Hair Lounge seeks to implement a more structured and targeted system to address the evolving needs of its staff. This enhanced approach will involve the development of specific programs and resources tailored to promote mental health, emotional well-being, and stress management. By formalising the support system, Hair Lounge aims to provide a framework for consistent and meaningful assistance to its employees, fostering a work environment that thrives on positivity and resilience.

The implementation of an enhanced employee well-being strategy will yield numerous benefits for Hair Lounge, its employees, and the overall business. These benefits include improved staff morale, reduced absenteeism, enhanced productivity, and a positive impact on client satisfaction. Furthermore, by prioritising employee well-being, Hair Lounge will attract and retain advanced and experienced stylists, positioning itself as an employer of choice within the industry. The investment in employee well-being will not only contribute to

the overall success of the salon but also align with the values of social responsibility and ethical business practices.

3.1 Recognising the Need for Enhanced Mental Health Support

Hair Lounge recognises the importance of providing comprehensive support for the mental health and well-being of its employees, particularly those who regularly engage in emotional labour. Despite offering private medical insurance coverage, the salon acknowledges the absence of a current Healthcare Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to address this need. Identifying this gap in support is crucial, as it emphasises the necessity to enhance the existing benefits package to better address the emotional well-being of staff members who regularly encounter emotional labour challenges.

3.2 Addressing the Impact of Client-Related Emotional Labor on Staff Well-being

Currently, Hair Lounge lacks an official protocol for handling client disclosures, resulting in staff members dealing with client-related emotional labour without a formal support system. This absence of structured support can have negative well-being effects on the staff, impacting their mental and emotional health. It is crucial to recognise the toll that handling client disclosures can take on the well-being of the staff, necessitating the implementation of a structured support system to address these challenges effectively.

3.3 Enhancing Emotional Well-Being in the Annual Appraisal Process

Furthermore, the absence of specific guidelines for addressing emotional well-being directly in the annual appraisal process limits Hair Lounge's ability to comprehensively assess and support the mental health of its employees. The current practice of merely asking staff members how they are feeling and if they want to discuss anything during the annual appraisal is insufficient in addressing the multifaceted dimensions of emotional well-being. A more structured and targeted approach is essential to ensure that the annual appraisal process

becomes a meaningful platform for addressing and supporting the emotional well-being of the staff.

3.4 Rationale for the Proposed Integration

The identified gaps in addressing client disclosures and emotional well-being within the annual appraisal process underscore the critical need for a structured new business process to handle and care for staff well-being. By integrating specific protocols and resources to address these areas, Hair Lounge aims to create a comprehensive and supportive framework that prioritises the mental health and emotional well-being of its employees. This proposed integration will not only address the existing gaps but also contribute to a more resilient, thriving, and fulfilled workforce.

3.5 Expected Impact and Benefits

The implementation of an enhanced employee well-being strategy will yield numerous benefits for Hair Lounge, its employees, and the overall business. These benefits include improved staff morale, reduced absenteeism, enhanced productivity, and a positive impact on client satisfaction. Furthermore, by prioritising employee well-being, Hair Lounge will attract and retain advanced and experienced stylists, positioning itself as an employer of choice within the industry. The investment in employee well-being will not only contribute to the overall success of the salon but also align with the values of social responsibility and ethical business practices.

4. Proposal: 6 Key Initiatives for Enhancing Mental Health and Wellbeing Support at Hair Lounge

Initiative 1: Introduction of Emotional Wellbeing Assessment in Staff Appraisals at Hair Lounge

In response to the growing emphasis on prioritising mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, especially within the distinctive setting of Hair Lounge, this research proposes the implementation of a new business process initiative. The specific recommendation involves incorporating an emotional well-being assessment form into the annual staff appraisals at Hair Lounge. This strategic initiative is designed to strengthen the salon's dedication to proactively addressing the mental health and well-being of its team members.

Currently, Hair Lounge's approach to mental health within the appraisal process is predominantly reactive, with staff members only addressing these concerns if they choose to do so during the appraisals. By introducing the emotional wellbeing assessment, the intended advantages include the cultivation of an environment that promotes an open dialogue about mental health, consequently enabling staff to feel more supported and at ease when discussing their wellbeing. This proactive approach aligns with Hair Lounge's ethos of fostering a nurturing and supportive work environment.

The Emotional Wellbeing Assessment Form, intended for use during staff appraisals, has been included in the appendix of this report for reference (Appendix A).

Handling of Results and Actionable Insights

The implementation of the emotional well-being assessment form will require a comprehensive approach to handling the results and deriving actionable insights. The following section outlines the proposed strategies for managing the data obtained from the assessment and transforming it into tangible outcomes for the benefit of Hair Lounge and its employees.

Confidentiality and Privacy Protection

The first and foremost consideration in handling the results of the emotional well-being assessment is the assurance of confidentiality and privacy protection for all participating employees. Recognising the sensitive nature of mental health discussions, stringent measures will be put in place to safeguard the anonymity and privacy of individual responses. This will involve the establishment of secure data storage protocols and limited access to the assessment results to authorised personnel only.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Upon completion of the emotional well-being assessments, the collected data will undergo thorough analysis by qualified professionals trained in psychological assessment and workplace well-being. Statistical methods and psychometric analyses will be employed to identify trends, patterns, and areas of concern within the staff body. The insights derived from this analysis will serve as the foundation for developing targeted strategies to address specific mental health needs within Hair Lounge.

Benchmarking and Continuous Improvement

Furthermore, the aggregated data from the emotional well-being assessments will enable Hair Lounge to establish benchmark indicators for monitoring the overall mental health status of its workforce over time. By comparing subsequent assessment results to baseline data, Hair Lounge can gauge the effectiveness of implemented interventions and track the progress of its employees' emotional wellbeing. This cyclical process of assessment, intervention, and reassessment will form the cornerstone of Hair Lounge's commitment to continuous improvement in staff mental health support.

In summary, the handling of the results obtained from the emotional well-being assessment will be characterised by a commitment to confidentiality, rigorous analysis, individualised support, and a culture of continuous improvement. The actionable insights derived from the

assessment data will empower Hair Lounge to tailor its mental health initiatives and cultivate a workplace environment that actively promotes the well-being of its employees.

Initiative 2: Enhancing Staff Well-Being: Implementing an Emotional Recovery

Program at Hair Lounge

The implementation and actioning of the Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule at Hair Lounge will be a carefully orchestrated process that involves collaboration between the management and the staff members. We will begin by consulting extensively with our staff to gather their input and feedback. This will help us customise the schedule to better meet their individual needs and preferences. Subsequently, a structured schedule will be designed, allocating specific time slots for staff members to engage in designated recuperative activities following client interactions. Training sessions will be conducted to raise awareness about the importance of emotional recovery and to provide staff members with practical tools and resources to effectively utilise the designated recuperation time.

Furthermore, the finalised Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule will be formally included in the employee handbook, thereby establishing its official recognition and setting clear guidelines for its implementation and adherence. Regular monitoring and feedback mechanisms will be put in place to assess the efficacy of the recovery schedule and to adjust as necessary based on staff input and evolving needs. By involving staff members in the implementation process and providing ongoing support, Hair Lounge aims to ensure the successful integration and sustained effectiveness of the Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule within Hair Lounge's operational framework.

A copy of the updated company HR document, which will be added to the staff handbook, has been included in this report appendix for reference (Appendix B).

Initiative 3: Upgrading the Healthcare Package Initiative, Integration of a Healthcare EAP, and Financial Considerations

Hair Lounge is planning to integrate WPA Healthcare's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) into its current healthcare package (Appendix C). This proactive step reflects our commitment to surpassing legal obligations and prioritising the comprehensive wellness of our valued employees. By providing access to WPA Healthcare EAP, we aim to empower our employees with a valuable resource to support their mental, emotional, and physical well-being, solidifying our position as an industry leader in employee care and support. Additionally, this initiative underscores our commitment to the holistic well-being of our employees, surpassing mere legal compliance.

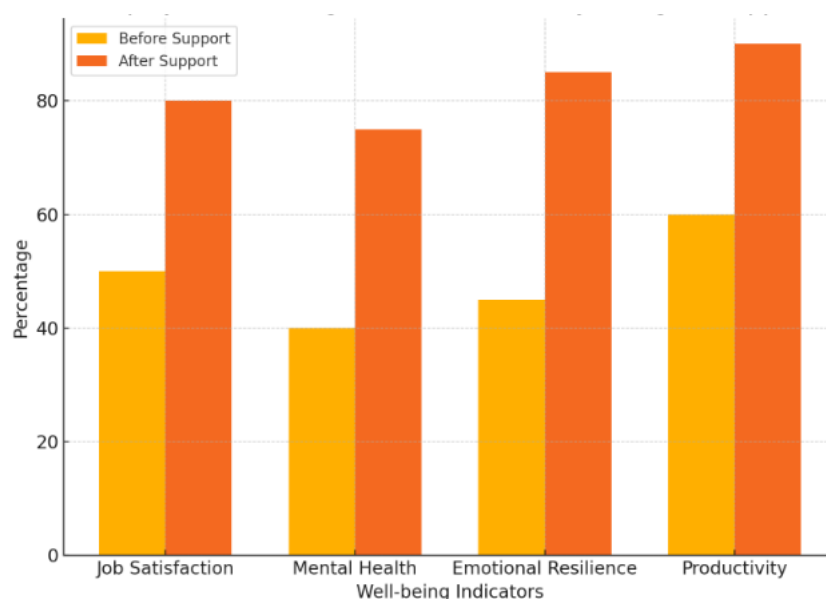
The current healthcare package provided by WPA, which is £246 per month for the company policy, has undoubtedly been instrumental in ensuring access to essential healthcare services for Hair Lounge's employees. However, the addition of the EAP upgrade, at an incremental cost of £67 per month, presents a modest increase in the overall expenditure. It is important to underscore that this relatively small financial increase is both absorbable from the current monthly income of Hair Lounge and offers substantial benefits that far outweigh the associated cost.

This marginal increase of £67 per month to incorporate the EAP into the healthcare package is not only a reasonable investment but also a demonstration of Hair Lounge's commitment to being a responsible employer that prioritises the well-being of its employees. The benefits of such a small financial outlay reverberate throughout the business, contributing to a positive and supportive work environment that fosters employee satisfaction, well-being, and productivity. By providing access to professional support services, counselling, and mental health resources through the EAP, Hair Lounge not only

fulfils its duty as an employer but also nurtures a culture of care and support that resonates with its employees on a personal level.

The minimal financial impact of the EAP upgrade is overshadowed by the substantial advantages it offers in terms of employee well-being, retention, and overall organisational health. It is imperative to recognise that the cost of neglecting employee well-being far exceeds the modest increase in the monthly expenditure. Moreover, from a business perspective, the long-term benefits of a healthier and more engaged workforce, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced productivity can be directly attributed to the proactive investment in employee support programs such as the EAP.

The figure below presents a comparison of employee well-being indicators before and after the implementation of psychological support systems, as documented in the data summary provided by WPA for their registered customers' companies. This comparison underscores the positive impact of embracing psychological support initiatives on employee well-being provided by WPA Healthcare and subsequently integrating them into the salon environment.



Graph 2: Employee Well-being Before and After Psychological Support

Initiative 4: Managing Client Disclosures in the Hair Salon Setting: Implementation of the Traffic Light System at Hair Lounge

This business initiative presents the Traffic Light System as a structured approach for managing client disclosures within Hair Lounge. The system classifies disclosures into three levels—Green Light (Low Concern), Yellow Light (Moderate Concern), and Red Light (High Concern)—and supplies specific guidelines for stylists to effectively and professionally address client disclosures. The main objective of this protocol is to safeguard client confidentiality, uphold professional boundaries, and ensure the emotional well-being of both clients and staff at Hair Lounge.

Effectively managing client disclosures is essential for fostering a professional and empathetic environment within the hair salon industry. This business initiative introduces the Traffic Light System, which aims to systematise the handling of client disclosures and provide clear guidelines for stylists to navigate sensitive conversations with clients. In addition to protecting client confidentiality, the initiative also underscores the importance of supporting staff in managing emotional labour and promoting well-being amidst client interactions.

Overview of the Traffic Light System

The Traffic Light System categorises client disclosures into three distinct levels, each with specific guidelines for stylists to follow:

Green Light (Low Concern):

In the Green Light category, stylists are expected to handle non-distressful or casual personal concerns with empathy and discretion. They should gently steer conversations back to the

hair service, maintaining an empathetic yet non-intrusive approach. If the stylist feels it is necessary, then the information shared is documented in the salon management and client record system using neutral and non-invasive language to comply with data protection laws and ethical confidentiality standards. Additionally, a note can be added to flag up the client's next appointment to remind the stylist of the previous conversation and ask tentatively if the client has been okay about it since the last visit. This proactive approach demonstrates our commitment to providing personalised and attentive service, ensuring that the client feels valued and well-cared for during their visits.

Yellow Light (Moderate Concern):

When clients manifest moderate emotional distress, the Yellow Light category prompts stylists to provide support within their professional scope and recommend additional assistance from mental health professionals if necessary. Meticulous record-keeping and follow-up reminders through the salon management software ensure ongoing support and care for the client. In addition, an alert is set to come up halfway between scheduled repeated appointments to text the client and check in with them, so the client feels supported.

Red Light (High Concern):

In instances where clients disclose significant emotional distress or mental health issues, stylists must respond with heightened care and professionalism. Prompt involvement of salon management and, if necessary, providing clients with access to specialised mental health resources and support groups are essential. An expedited reporting procedure underscores the confidentiality and urgency of the situation, with an assessment and intervention process directed by the salon management. If the situation warrants it, salon management will raise emergency services to ensure the client's immediate safety and well-being.

Benefit to Staff Emotional Labour Balance and Wellbeing Management:

The implementation of the Traffic Light System not only aims to protect client confidentiality and uphold professional standards but also considers the impact on staff emotional labour balance and well-being. By providing clear guidelines and support mechanisms for managing client disclosures, the initiative seeks to alleviate the emotional burden on salon staff, promote emotional well-being, and cultivate a supportive work environment. This focus on staff emotional labour balance and wellbeing management reflects Hair Lounge's commitment to prioritising the welfare of its employees.

In conclusion, the implementation of the Traffic Light System at Hair Lounge represents a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing client disclosures while acknowledging the significance of staff emotional labour balance and well-being management. By prioritising client confidentiality and staff emotional well-being, the initiative aims to enhance the overall professional environment and client experience at Hair Lounge.

Initiative 5: Tailored Emotional Resilience Training

In the context of Hair Lounge, prioritising the emotional well-being of our staff members is fundamental to upholding our commitment to delivering exceptional service and fostering a supportive workplace culture. The nature of our work often necessitates our hairdressers to engage in emotionally intense interactions with clients, delving into personal and sensitive topics. While these interactions contribute to strengthening client relationships, they also have the potential to lead to emotional exhaustion for our staff if not effectively managed.

Recognising the significance of addressing this challenge, Hair Lounge is preparing to implement a comprehensive training and empowerment program designed to equip our staff with the necessary skills to navigate emotionally intense client interactions. A central

component of this initiative is the development of a customised training curriculum aimed at providing our staff members with psychological tools essential for managing the complexities inherent in their professional engagements. Through immersion in the study of emotional labour and the acquisition of strategies to mitigate its adverse effects, our employees will not only safeguard their emotional boundaries but also maintain a demeanour of professionalism and compassion in their dealings with clients.

Furthermore, this program aligns with Hair Lounge's overarching vision of sustainability, as it underscores the pivotal role of staff retention and well-being in driving both Hair Lounge's success and client satisfaction (Joao et al., 2019). By prioritising the holistic development of our workforce, Hair Lounge seeks to fortify its position as an industry leader committed to nurturing a work environment that fosters resilience, empathy, and excellence in service delivery.

The extended tailored emotional resilience training schedule, meticulously designed to equip Hair Lounge staff with the emotional resilience and psychological tools necessary to navigate emotionally intense client interactions while maintaining a professional and compassionate demeanour, has been attached to the assignment appendix for reference (Appendix D). This proposed training schedule outlines a comprehensive two-day endeavour, meticulously designed to equip salon staff with the emotional resilience and psychological tools necessary to navigate emotionally intense client interactions while maintaining a professional and compassionate demeanour.

The emotional resilience training component will emphasise the cultivation of a mindful approach to stress, self-awareness of staff emotions, and the adept management of these emotions during client interactions. Given the emotionally charged nature of their work,

this training holds particular significance in shielding staff from the cumulative effects of emotional strain stemming from impassioned conversations with clients.

Moreover, a pivotal facet of this training initiative will involve equipping staff with the capacity to discern early indicators of emotional exhaustion, coupled with the provision of coping mechanisms to forestall burnout. By integrating mindfulness practices into their daily routines, employees will fortify the attributes requisite for preserving their well-being while consistently delivering considerate and professional service to clients. Beyond the salutary effects on overall health, these initiatives are poised to engender a workplace environment characterised by heightened emotional intelligence, enhanced professional conduct, and sustained excellence in client interaction.

The proposed training schedule, conducted by Mrs Rebecca Rathbone, Hair Lounge's Proprietor with Qualifications in Psychology and Trauma, is further bolstered by her extensive experience spanning 24 years of directly handling customers in the hair salon setting. This wealth of experience enables Mrs Rathbone to directly relate to the scenarios and challenges faced by the salon staff, thereby enriching the training with practical insights and an empathetic understanding of the nuances involved in client interactions within the salon environment.

Furthermore, the inclusive nature of this training program fosters a sense of camaraderie among the staff, providing them with a platform to express and share their experiences. By creating a supportive environment where stylists can openly discuss and relate to each other's challenges, the training aims to alleviate the emotional burden often associated with client interactions, ultimately promoting a more cohesive and empathetic team dynamic.

Initiative 6: Continued Professional Development in Psychology and Client Support at Hair Lounge

Hair Lounge's operational philosophy prioritises the continuous professional development of each staff member in the fields of psychology and client support as essential components of delivering exemplary service and emotional care. This commitment underscores the salon's dedication to fostering a managerial-employee focus, emphasising emotional intelligence, stress tolerance, and adept client relations alongside technical proficiency.

Recognising that each staff member's dedication to their professional development is crucial, Hair Lounge requires all employees to register themselves with the UK's Continued Professional Development (CPD) organisation. This registration is essential for recording each employee's annual commitment to their personal and professional growth. Subsequently, Hair Lounge will facilitate sending staff members on accredited courses, covering business, psychology, and customer relations, which will then be meticulously recorded on their files.

This strategic approach ensures the systematic tracking of professional development for each staff member, fostering a culture of accountability and growth. By harnessing the resources provided by the CPD framework, the salon not only stays abreast of the latest advancements in psychology but also equips its personnel to effectively support clients. This unwavering dedication not only enhances service delivery but also cultivates a supportive workplace environment that aligns with Hair Lounge's core values of employee welfare and enriching the customer experience.

5. Linking Empowerment to Sustainability and Innovation in the Context of Hair

Lounge

The empowerment of Hair Lounge's staff through targeted psychological support programs is intricately linked to the salon's sustainability goals, as explicated in the Module 1 strategic plan. Here, sustainability transcends environmental concerns and encompasses the human resources element. It is posited that emotionally healthy employees play a pivotal role in alleviating stress levels, thereby contributing to the salon's overall well-being. This emphasis on the well-being of staff members not only aligns with Hair Lounge's sustainability objectives but also augments its potential for long-term success.

Furthermore, the integration of psychological support services resonates with Hair Lounge's commitment to innovation, as delineated in the Module 2 strategic plan. The salon's adoption of best leadership practices, such as participative leadership, ensures that staff members are not only equipped to navigate emotionally sophisticated communication but are also actively engaged in enhancing the salon's client management approach. This dual emphasis on empowerment and creativity positions Hair Lounge as a trailblaser in the industry, serving as a model for other hair salons seeking to implement psychological support for both staff and customers to enhance overall service quality (Joao et al., 2019).

5.1 Empowerment as a Catalyst for Cultural Change

The empowerment of staff through comprehensive training and psychological support catalyses effecting profound cultural change within Hair Lounge. Beyond merely bolstering individual resilience, this approach engenders a fundamental shift in the salon's organisational ethos. By prioritising the health and well-being of its employees, Hair Lounge fosters a sense of organisational commitment, cultivating a workforce that is willing and eager to dedicate their efforts to fulfilling their roles within the salon. This strategic emphasis on nurturing employee well-being is instrumental in elevating the quality of service delivery,

as motivated employees entrusted with decision-making responsibilities have exhibited heightened productivity and unwavering dedication to their work.

The establishment of robust feedback systems plays a pivotal role in sustaining this cultural transformation by attentively addressing employees' concerns and fortifying the presence of an emotional support framework within the salon. This open communication channel underscores Hair Lounge's responsiveness to the needs of its employees, thereby amplifying the impact of empowerment initiatives as a foundational organisational strategy at Hair Lounge. Through these concerted efforts, Hair Lounge can not only guide its employees but also continually enhance the salon's reputation as a hair salon that prioritises the well-being of both its workforce and clientele.

The introduction of advocacy, support, and training programs at Hair Lounge can be viewed as a multifaceted strategy aimed at effectively addressing the emotional challenges confronted by salon employees in the course of their work. By ensuring that employees at Hair Lounge are equipped to navigate emotionally charged interactions, the salon is instrumental in cultivating an organisational culture that embodies sustainability, improved employee well-being, and organisational prosperity aligned with overarching business objectives. This holistic approach underscores Hair Lounge's commitment to fostering a work environment that not only supports the personal and professional development of its employees but also aligns with the overarching goals of the salon as a business.

5.2 Strategic Linkages to Sustainability and Trichology Integration at Hair Lounge

The strategic initiatives of Hair Lounge, particularly its dedication to sustainability and integration of Trichology services, are manifested in its emphasis on client boundaries and referral protocols. This alignment underscores the salon's commitment to professionalism and ethical conduct in serving its clientele, encompassing both the environmental stewardship

of the salon and the scientific rigour of hair treatment practices. By upholding these principles, Hair Lounge positions itself as a holistic service provider, championing professionalism, effective client care, and ongoing innovation within the hair salon service sector.

Moreover, the implementation of these protocols not only signifies Hair Lounge as a vendor of high-quality hair services but also as an advocate for the well-being of its employees and customers (Harness et al., 2020). Furthermore, the protection of employees' psychological health in their interactions with clients directly correlates with the psychological dimensions introduced by the proposed integration of Trichology services, as elaborated in previous assignments. This comprehensive integration of services not only underscores Hair Lounge's vision to endorse sustainable, ethical, and business-minded practices across all facets of its operations but also serves as a testament to its commitment to holistic well-being within its organisational ecosystem.

5.3 Autonomy and Innovation in Proposed Initiatives

The proposed initiatives at Hair Lounge exemplify a spirit of autonomy and innovation in addressing the complex dynamics of emotional labour and client interactions within Hair Lounge. By fostering a culture of autonomy and infusing innovative approaches, Hair Lounge is poised to redefine professional practice and establish itself as a salon committed to fostering resilience, empathy, and sustained workplace well-being.

- Staff Empowerment and Decision-Making Autonomy: Hair Lounge's initiatives prioritise staff empowerment through comprehensive training programs and professional development opportunities, enabling employees to exercise autonomy in managing emotionally intense client interactions. By equipping staff with the necessary skills and knowledge, Hair Lounge fosters a culture of trust and autonomy,

empowering employees to make informed decisions in navigating complex emotional dynamics with clients.

- Tailored Emotional Resilience Training: The introduction of tailored emotional resilience training programs reflects Hair Lounge's innovative approach to addressing the psychological challenges confronted by salon employees. By embracing novel strategies to support staff well-being and equip them with emotional intelligence, the salon demonstrates a commitment to fostering autonomy in managing emotional labour and client support with innovative, personalised training curricula.
- Establishing Client Boundaries and Referral Protocols: The establishment of comprehensive client boundaries and referral protocols underscores Hair Lounge's commitment to fostering autonomy among employees in managing emotionally charged client interactions. By delineating clear boundaries and empowering staff to navigate complex emotional disclosures with professionalism, the salon emphasises autonomy in client support while upholding ethical standards.
- Integration of Self-Care Culture: The emphasis on promoting a self-care culture within the salon environment demonstrates Hair Lounge's innovative approach to nurturing autonomy and well-being among its employees. By encouraging self-care practices and prioritising mental well-being, the salon empowers employees to autonomously manage their emotional resilience and well-being, fostering a culture of self-empowerment and innovative well-being practices.
- Adaptation to Post-Pandemic Challenges: Hair Lounge's proactive response to the post-pandemic emotional landscape exemplifies the salon's innovative approach to addressing evolving challenges. By adapting operational strategies and integrating virtual platforms for client interactions, Hair Lounge demonstrates an autonomous

and innovative response to the dynamic emotional demands in a changing business landscape.

5.4 Change Management and Cultural Shift at Hair Lounge

Hair Lounge is embarking on a significant initiative to introduce psychological support for its staff, necessitating a strategic cultural shift led by the Human Resources department. Given that frontline stylists may often become confidants for clients experiencing personal or emotional challenges, HR is pivotal in advocating for an inclusive environment and fostering increased awareness of mental health. In line with this strategic direction, Hair Lounge recognises the importance of prioritising psychological support for its staff, particularly during periods of operational and transformative changes (Anthony 2017). This cultural shift aims to integrate mental health measures while upholding the salon's core values of kindness, client focus, and employee well-being.

To effectively manage this shift, HR must orchestrate a comprehensive change management plan tailored to Hair Lounge's unique context. This plan encompasses conducting specialised employee orientation sessions focused on mental health awareness, enabling staff to identify signs of mental health challenges and guiding them to seek appropriate support. However, the transformation goes beyond training adjustments; it involves fostering a culture that openly discusses and embraces mental health. Specifically, the required cultural change revolves around cultivating psychological capital among employees, as suggested by psychologists, to equip them with the resilience needed to manage stress and enhance overall productivity.

Anticipating and addressing resistance to change is an inherent challenge in organisational transformation. HR must proactively anticipate potential pushback and develop strategies to mitigate it. Leadership's clear communication of the rationale behind the

change and a demonstrable commitment to supporting staff are crucial in this regard. Successfully implementing this cultural shift will lead to a healthier workforce, where employees feel supported and clients benefit from interactions with staff who are not only skilled but also emotionally resilient. Through this approach, Hair Lounge will establish itself as a progressive salon that places employee well-being at the core of its business model, aligning with contemporary organisational culture trends (Anthony, 2017).

6. Impact of COVID-19 on Integrating Psychological Support at Hair Lounge

The global COVID-19 pandemic brought about substantial transformations in the provision of psychological support within workplace contexts, particularly within service-based industries such as the hair industry. Hair Lounge must concentrate on delineating the ramifications of the pandemic on the salon, elucidating the distinctive challenges it has posed for both employees and clients and articulating the requisite adaptations that the salon must undertake to facilitate the provision of psychological support.

6.1 Prevalence of Emotional Distress

Post-COVID-19 saw a rise in emotional distress among individuals globally, which directly impacted salon environments. Employees at Hair Lounge faced heightened emotional interactions, with clients more likely to share their struggles during appointments. Most clients talk about the consequences of isolation, the lack of financial stability, and concern about one's health. For this reason, due to the rise in personal disclosure, interactions at Hair Lounge became emotional; employees needed to be ready for such discussions yet remain professional (Furstenthal et al., 2021).

The interpersonal dynamics at play engendered heightened stress among the staff. Employees were concurrently navigating their anxieties and concerns surrounding COVID-19 while also empathetically internalising the emotional states of their clients. This

compounded pressure, coupled with insufficient psychological support, contributed to employee burnout (Hwang et al. 2021). Consequently, given the pervasiveness of these circumstances, it became imperative to address the need to support the staff in effectively managing these challenges. Therefore, Hair Lounge has recognised the heightened necessity of implementing specific measures aimed at mitigating burnout and enhancing the emotional well-being of its employees.

6.2 Adaptation to Virtual Platforms

In response to the challenges posed by the global pandemic, many businesses, including Hair Lounge, underwent a strategic shift towards digital platforms. This transition necessitated a fundamental rethinking of service delivery, leading to the incorporation of virtual consultations as a core component of the business model. The profound impact of this change extended beyond mere operational logistics, significantly influencing the provision of emotional support to both staff and clients.

The utilisation of virtual platforms emerged as a crucial mechanism for maintaining robust communication channels with clients and providing essential psychological assistance to employees. Notably, the adoption of virtual consultations prompted Hair Lounge to re-evaluate its approach to emotional care, acknowledging the need for a comprehensive support system in the digital realm.

The traditional paradigm of face-to-face interactions, integral to addressing clients' hair care needs, underwent a paradigm shift, as stylists increasingly relied on virtual mediums to engage with clients, proffer advice, and navigate shared emotional stresses through video conferencing. This shift necessitated an evolution in the means of cultivating client relationships, wherein salon staff adapted to novel modes of communication, recognising the inherent complexities of fostering genuine connections within the confines of virtual space.

The expansive scope of these adaptations' underscores Hair Lounge's proactive stance in addressing the multifaceted challenges engendered by the pandemic, epitomising a steadfast dedication to fostering resilience and adaptability amidst unprecedented circumstances (Sangwijit et al., 2024).

6.3 Recognition of Pandemic-Induced Stress

Clients coming into the salon after the lockdown during the pandemic were visibly overwhelmed and anxious due to health concerns and strict social distancing measures. They were torn between their fears and the desperate desire to reinstate normality by having their hair done after a prolonged period without salon services. This conflicting emotional state posed a significant challenge for both clients and the staff, contributing to heightened physiological stress and emotional strain. Consequently, it was vital for Hair Lounge to communicate with staff to effectively recognise and empathetically address the myriad emotional complexities engendered by these circumstances while maintaining professional boundaries. This underscores Hair Lounge's commitment to nurturing an environment where employees are equipped to navigate the multifaceted psychological impacts of the pandemic with profound sensitivity and acumen.

The knowledge and experience gleaned from navigating the intricate emotional landscape of the pandemic era have endowed salon staff with invaluable insights and skills, positioning them adeptly for the evolving trajectory of the business and their career trajectories. By deftly navigating the complexities of client interactions during the pandemic, employees have honed their emotional intelligence and capacity for empathetic engagement, thereby fortifying their professional acumen and resilience. This enhanced proficiency not only augurs well for the continued success of Hair Lounge but also equips the staff with a robust foundation for navigating future challenges with heightened empathy, sagacity, and adaptability, thereby fostering enduring client relationships and professional growth.

6.4 Enhanced Emphasis on Self-Care

Considering the post-pandemic repercussions, the management of Hair Lounge has earnestly recognised the need to prioritise in-depth research to implement comprehensive mental health support packages for salon staff. These initiatives encompass a range of interventions, including counselling services, stress management resources, educational materials, and workshops focusing on emotional well-being.

Concurrently, this emphasis on self-care has also been extended to the clientele. Many customers have sought emotional solace, and hair and self-care services have emerged as fundamental avenues to address this need. Hair Lounge has aligned its approach to customer relations to ensure that employees are equipped to deliver compassionate and supportive services without compromising their well-being or allowing clients to exert undue emotional strain.

This evolution toward a more holistic approach to self-care reflects Hair Lounge's commitment to the well-being of both its employees and clientele in the wake of the pandemic, underscoring the salon's dedication to fostering a nurturing and empathetic environment.

6.5 Updated Client Confidentiality Protocols

The global pandemic has necessitated a comprehensive reassessment of client confidentiality protocols, particularly considering the heightened likelihood of health-related and personal disclosures. In response to this evolving landscape, Hair Lounge has undertaken a thorough review of its existing policies and has identified the importance of introducing robust measures to fortify staff privacy and enhance client confidentiality. This is especially pertinent given the increased openness of clients in sharing personal health concerns and challenges during their salon visits.

In recognition of the heightened importance of safeguarding client information and ensuring compliance with data protection laws, Hair Lounge has enacted stringent policies to elevate the privacy of client information. These measures are designed to not only uphold the confidentiality of sensitive discussions but also to align with prevailing data protection regulations.

Moreover, Hair Lounge is actively exploring avenues to introduce further psychological support measures and augment existing protocols governing client disclosure. The proposed implementation of a traffic light system is a key initiative which will provide clear guidelines on how to navigate client interactions while ensuring discreet and confidential handling of personal information. By empowering employees with structured guidelines and tools, such as the traffic light system, Hair Lounge aims to create a secure and confidential environment for both its employees and clientele. This proactive approach underscores Hair Lounge's unwavering commitment to maintaining a safe and confidential space, irrespective of the challenges encountered in the dynamic business landscape.

7. Risk Analysis and Mitigation Strategies for Psychological Support Integration

Hair Lounge's strategic initiative to integrate psychological support into its Human Resources strategy presents inherent risks that demand meticulous analysis and robust mitigation strategies to ensure successful implementation. The complexities of organisational change and the sensitive nature of psychological support interventions necessitate a high-level risk assessment to proactively address potential challenges. The following risk analysis and mitigation plan align with best practices to fortify Hair Lounge's endeavour to foster a resilient and empathetic workplace culture.

Risk 1: Employee Resistance to Change

Risk Analysis: Historically, organisational change initiatives often encounter resistance from employees entrenched in established processes and practices. The introduction of new working processes and training programs may provoke scepticism and resistance, impeding the smooth transition to the proposed psychological support framework.

Mitigation Strategies for Hair Lounge:

Hair Lounge plans to Deploy a strategic communication campaign to articulate the rationale behind the proposed changes and underscore the anticipated benefits to Hair Lounge employees, emphasising the positive impact on their well-being and professional development.

Campaign Title: “EmpowerU: Embracing Change, Enriching Futures”

Objective

The objective of the “EmpowerU” campaign is to effectively communicate the rationale behind the proposed changes and highlight the positive impact on employees’ well-being and professional development. This involves emphasising the importance of embracing change for a brighter future, investing in personal growth and success, and enhancing well-being through positive transformations.

Key Messages

1. Embracing change for a brighter future
2. Investing in your growth and success
3. Enhancing well-being through positive transformations

Communication Channel

Hair Lounge plans to create an informational brochure that will be visually appealing and handed out to staff. The brochure will outline the proposed changes, their benefits, and the support available to employees during the transition. By utilising this communication channel and delivering consistent, compelling messages, the “EmpowerU” campaign aims to effectively articulate the rationale behind the proposed changes and emphasise the positive impact on employees’ well-being and professional development.

Feedback Mechanisms

In the context of this initiative, Hair Lounge endeavours to foster a culture of active engagement and cooperation, aiming to incorporate employee feedback as a pivotal element in the process of executing organisational changes. This approach is intended to cultivate a profound sense of responsibility and harmonisation with the overarching vision of the salon. Hair Lounge’s strategy involves the utilisation of feedback surveys designed to gather comprehensive insights from both stylists and assistants regarding their perspectives and apprehensions about the proposed modifications. The surveys will be structured to encompass inquiries that evaluate the degree of comprehension regarding the impending changes, the perceived impact of these adjustments on their well-being and professional growth, as well as any supplementary assistance they may deem necessary. Furthermore, a suggestion box will be situated within the staff room to facilitate the anonymous submission of feedback. This anonymity is anticipated to encourage candid and uninhibited responses, providing management with a more authentic and unfiltered perspective on the efficacy of the impending changes from the staff members.

Risk 2: Confidentiality Breaches

Risk Analysis: The implementation of the Traffic Light System for managing client disclosures introduces a heightened risk of potential breaches in client confidentiality,

necessitating stringent measures to safeguard sensitive information and uphold ethical standards.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Implement thorough training programs and workshops at Hair Lounge to cultivate a culture of confidentiality and data protection. These initiatives will equip employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate complex client interactions while upholding professional standards.
- At Hair Lounge, we will establish a robust and systematic framework for conducting regular audits and reviews to vigilantly monitor compliance with confidentiality protocols. This framework will enable us to swiftly identify and rectify any breaches that may occur, thereby fortifying the integrity of client confidentiality. By adopting this proactive approach, we reassert our dedication to maintaining the utmost standards of confidentiality and safeguarding the trust and privacy of our esteemed clients. Hair Lounge is deeply committed to cultivating a culture of transparency and accountability that is fundamental to our core values. Through fostering open dialogue and implementing robust reporting mechanisms, we seek to not only elevate ethical conduct but also to safeguard the privacy of our esteemed clients. Our steadfast dedication to these principles underscores our unwavering commitment to professionalism and integrity. We strive to create an environment where every individual who walks through our doors feels secure, respected, and confident that the sensitive information shared during appointments is held in the strictest confidence, fostering a deep sense of trust between our staff and clients.

Risk 3: Overwhelmed Staff and Increased Workload

Risk Analysis: The introduction of new emotional well-being assessment and recovery programs may impose additional burdens on staff, potentially leading to an overwhelming and increased workload, which can undermine the effectiveness of the proposed initiatives.

Mitigation Strategies:

- Management must prioritise the integration of the proposed communication campaign “EmpowerU” to communicate the purpose and expected benefits of the new programs. This will help address staff concerns and foster a sense of purpose and commitment to the upcoming changes.
- At Hair Lounge, we will introduce phased rollouts of new initiatives to ensure a smooth and gradual transition, allowing our staff to adapt and provide valuable feedback for ongoing improvements. This approach is designed to create an environment of constant refinement, ensuring that our implementation process is responsive to the evolving needs and insights of our team at Hair Lounge.
- Provide comprehensive support and resources to effectively oversee the implementation process, prioritising the well-being of the staff to mitigate the potential risks of overwhelm and burnout during the transition. By emphasising the holistic support of the personnel, we aim to foster a resilient and adaptive workforce, thereby optimising the success of the implementation endeavours.

By rigorously evaluating potential risks and articulating robust mitigation strategies, Hair Lounge can navigate the complexities of integrating psychological support initiatives into its operational framework, thereby fortifying its commitment to prioritising the well-being of its employees and clients.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Hair Lounge has embarked on a transformative journey to integrate psychological support into its Human Resources Strategy, prioritising employee well-being and client interactions. The proposed initiatives underscore Hair Lounge's commitment to fostering a nurturing work environment while effectively managing the emotional demands placed upon its employees. By acknowledging the extensive role of emotional labour and introducing tailored support systems, Hair Lounge positions itself as an industry leader dedicated to sustaining a resilient, empathetic, and sustainable work environment within the hair salon industry.

The strategic initiatives outlined in this report demonstrate Hair Lounge's proactive efforts to address the multifaceted dimensions of emotional labour, client interactions, and staff well-being. From implementing the Traffic Light System for managing client disclosures to integrating mental health support and comprehensive training, Hair Lounge's commitment to continuous improvement and employee well-being remains unwavering.

Through these strategic initiatives, Hair Lounge not only emphasises the importance of professional development in psychology and client support but also underscores the cultural shift and change management required to effectively implement psychological support initiatives. Hair Lounge's dedication to sustainability, innovation, and the holistic well-being of its employees and clients is evident in its mission to proactively integrate organisational psychological support into its human resources strategy.

As Hair Lounge continues to navigate the evolving post-pandemic landscape, the strategic integration of psychological support measures signifies the salon's commitment to sustainability, client care, and employee resilience. By fostering an inclusive and empathetic

workplace culture, Hair Lounge is poised to reinforce its position as a trailblazing salon dedicated to nurturing a supportive work environment and enriching the customer experience.

Therefore, the integration of psychological support measures at Hair Lounge not only underscores its commitment to innovation and sustainability but also positions the salon as a paragon of resilience and empathetic workplace culture within the hair salon industry.

Appendix

Document A: Hair Lounge Emotional Wellbeing Assessment Form



Emotional Well-being Assessment Form

Hair Lounge Staff Appraisal Emotional Well-being Assessment

Employee Name: [Insert Name]

Position: [Insert Position]

Appraisal Date: [Insert Date]

Instructions: Please take a few minutes to honestly assess your emotional well-being by responding to the following statements. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to support your overall well-being and professional development.

Emotional Well-being Assessment Scale:

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Section 1: Stress Management

1. I feel well-equipped to manage work-related stress.
2. I am able to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
3. I have access to adequate resources and support to cope with stress.

Section 2: Emotional Resilience

1. I am able to bounce back from setbacks and challenges effectively.
2. I feel emotionally resilient in the face of work-related pressures.
3. I am confident in my ability to handle emotionally demanding situations.

Section 3: Self-Care and Well-being

1. I engage in regular self-care practices to nurture my well-being.
2. I feel supported in prioritizing my mental and emotional health.
3. I have access to resources and programs that promote self-care and well-being.

Section 4: Work Environment and Support

1. I feel valued and supported within the workplace.
2. I have access to appropriate channels for seeking emotional support and guidance.
3. I feel comfortable discussing emotional well-being with my colleagues and supervisors.

Section 5: Overall Well-being Assessment

1. My emotional well-being significantly influences my work performance.
2. I believe that prioritizing emotional well-being is crucial for overall job satisfaction.

Doc 6.2 V3

3. I feel that my emotional well-being is adequately considered and supported within the organization.

Additional Comments:

Please use this space to provide any additional comments or insights related to your emotional well-being or any specific support you may require.



Hair Lounge HR Policy Document: Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule

At Hair Lounge, we recognise the importance of prioritising the emotional well-being of our staff to ensure their sustained professional and personal fulfilment. As part of our commitment to supporting our employees, we have established a structured schedule to facilitate emotional recovery for staff members following client interactions. This schedule is designed to provide designated time for relaxation and emotional rejuvenation, acknowledging the demanding nature of their roles and the potential emotional impact of client interactions.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule is to promote the emotional well-being of our employees by allowing them dedicated time for recuperation and emotional recovery following client interactions. This initiative aims to mitigate the potential effects of emotional labour and foster a supportive work environment.

2. Implementation

- ✓ Each staff member is allotted a specified duration of time for emotional recovery after engaging with clients. This period is determined based on the nature of their client interactions and the potential emotional strain involved.
- ✓ Employees are encouraged to utilise this time for relaxation, mindfulness activities, or any other methods that promote emotional rejuvenation.
- ✓ Managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring that staff members can adhere to their designated emotional recovery schedules and are not disturbed during this time, barring exceptional circumstances.

3. Support Resources

Hair Lounge is committed to providing additional resources to support our staff's emotional well-being, including access to counselling services through the company healthcare programme, mindfulness training, and other relevant programs aimed at promoting emotional resilience.

4. Communication

This policy will be communicated to all staff members through an official memorandum and

Document B: Hair Lounge HR Staff Emotional Recovery Schedule

Document C: WPA Company Policy Mental Health/Wellbeing Cover Outline

Nick Paton and Deboise Cullen for WPA Health Insurance



Health and Wellbeing at work



As we head into the winter, the expectation is that we will see an acceleration of 'hybrid' working practices. For many it may also be the time they return to work for the first time following furlough. This may leave some feeling anxious about the practicalities of returning to potentially crowded spaces and transport systems as well as how best to balance the priorities and pressures of this 'new normal'. Having access to health and wellbeing support such as an Health & Wellbeing helpline (Employee Assistance Programmes) can help, though users may need help understanding how to access, and fully benefit from what's available.

Why health and wellbeing support is going to matter even more in our 'hybrid' working world, and how to get the most from them

'Hybrid working', or where workers are juggling being back at work for some days a week while still working at home for others, is likely to be the reality for many employees over the coming months.

A recent survey by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) highlighted that this gradual return to working is likely to have an impact on employee wellbeing, especially in terms of potential anxiety around being back in the workplace, on public transport and among crowds.

Other concerns, as a survey by the recruitment website CV-Library has also shown, include worries around what these new forms of working will mean for flexibility and work life balance, workplace productivity (especially if workers are chopping and changing how and where they work) and even having to deal with 'workplace politics' again.

Access health & wellbeing hesitancy

Yet the other side of this coin is there can often be hesitancy or apprehension about using these services – how it works or how to access it, even if it is something fully available to them through their company's health insurance package. They may assume their anxiety or mental ill health is not 'serious' enough to warrant seeking help or worry about whether employer-funded services are genuinely confidential – as an aside, they are and will be covered later.

A key focus of wellbeing strategies over the coming weeks and months may therefore need to be around communicating the value of using a health and wellbeing service and, crucially, helping everyone understand what to expect when they contact their provider.

Making the case for good mental health

Taking communicating 'value' first, it is nowadays well recognised that when we have good physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, we are generally more resilient and feel better able to cope with the pressures of day-to-day life.

When we have a concern about our physical wellbeing – a bad back or a musculoskeletal injury, for example – we don't think twice about booking an appointment with a medical professional to discuss our concerns and seek advice on appropriate treatment.

Why, then, should it be any different with every day worries be they medical, mental, legal or financial to name a few of the many things covered by this service? Yet, too often, it is. People wait until they are really struggling before considering the options available for help, even sometimes only asking for help when they are spiralling into a crisis.

What's more, many of these concerns be they physical or mental can be interlinked. If we're in pain or worried about something, especially if we're sitting around waiting to be seen by a GP or specialist, that can feed through into anxiety, stress, sleeplessness or depression, all of which can affect both our personal and professional lives.

Impact of the pandemic on NHS waiting times

On the issue of 'sitting around waiting', the Covid-19 pandemic has invariably made life more difficult in this context, with NHS services seriously stretched with significant waiting times, especially for referrals to counselling.

Indeed, according to a survey by remote GP service HealthHero, more than 50% of those who have avoided making GP appointments reported worsening mental health problems.

This is where employer-funded, insurance-based alternatives that offer speed and ease of access to high quality support can make a real difference.

For instance: One of the great values of a helpline is that, rather than having to rely on (and feeling guilty about approaching) the hard-pressed NHS, the helpline is a mental health resource that you can use for as little or as much support as you need, as and when you need it.

What's more, it's not just something that the insured can benefit from. Access to the Health and Wellbeing Helplines are also available to family members aged over 16, who live with the insured.

Which brings us to our second question: what should you expect when you do first make contact with the Health & Wellbeing provider? Let's answer this by answering the five most common questions that tend to be asked about the WPA Health and Wellbeing Helpline.

Document D: Hair Lounge Proposed Emotional Resilience Training Schedule



Extended Tailored Emotional Resilience Training Schedule:

Day 1	
09.00 - 10.30	Introduction to the Traffic Light System and Understanding Emotional Disclosures
10.30 - 10.45	Break
10.45 - 12.30	Green Light (Low Concern) - Handling Non-Distressful Disclosures with Empathy and Discretion
12.30 - 13.30	Lunch Break
13.30 - 15.00	Yellow Light (Moderate Concern) - Providing Support within Professional Scope and Documentation Process
15.00 - 15.15	Break
15.15 - 16.30	Role-playing Exercises and Scenarios related to the Traffic Light System

Day 2	
09.00 - 10.30	Red Light (High Concern) - Responding with Heightened Care and Involving Salon Management
10.30 - 10.45	Break
10.45 - 12.30	Soft Skills and Emotional Intelligence Training - Identifying Red Flags in Client Behaviour and Disclosure
12.30 - 13.30	Lunch Break
13.30 - 15.00	Confidentiality and Data Protection - Adherence to Data Protection Laws and Salon Management System
15.00 - 15.15	Break
15.15 - 16.30	Purpose and Significance of the Protocol

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