



# A **stigmaZERO** WORKPLACE PAYS IN **PROFITS**

How breaking down mental illness stigma can improve your bottom line

by Sarah Nogues & Jason Finucan

# About the Authors



## Sarah Noguees

Sarah Noguees is an expert in work-life balance and workplace flexibility issues. Her field research has led her to understand the needs and motivations of particular groups of workers, such as employed caregivers and older workers.

Her paper “*The Right to Request Flexible Working: A Policy Instrument for Employed Caregivers?*”, which explores the effects and implications of this new labour legislation in liberal countries, was accepted for publication in the journal *Canadian Public Policy*.

Sarah is a Masters candidate in UQAM’s (Université de Québec à Montréal) School of Management Sciences, with a major in human resource management, and has a background in sustainable development and arts.

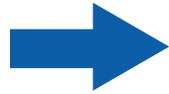


## Jason Finucan

Jason Finucan is the Founder of stigmaZERO, a stigma expert and a professional speaker; his aim is to open people’s minds to the reality of stigma. Having experienced both a major physical and mental illness, Jason learned the hard way what a negative – and truly unnecessary – force stigma could be.

Through his innovative stigmaZERO Workplace Program, Jason strives to help employers eliminate stigma in the workplace. This goal is achieved through an accessible, proven program that combines personal experience with actionable guidelines to enable a positive culture change around mental illness. Jason firmly believes in his vision of a future without stigma for all of his clients.

# Executive Summary



## Mental illness and stigma are draining profits

Mental illness and stigma are two of the biggest causes in reduced productivity and lost profits.

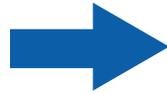
And yet, few companies are talking about them in these terms – and even fewer have a clear action plan to effectively tackle these challenges.

In this paper we aim to address the elephant in the room: the cost of mental illness and stigma is staggering.

Our exhaustive research of peer-reviewed academic literature using economic, business and health databases has proven that:

- » 28.8% of Canadians reported their work as being 'quite a bit or extremely stressful'<sup>93</sup>
- » 54.6% of employees with depression would not disclose their illness to their manager
- » The most significant consequence of stigma is ... the silencing power<sup>156</sup> which in turn causes presenteeism and greatly exaggerates the impact of the illness
- » 1 mental disability claim represents about \$18,000 ... twice as expensive as a physical-related claim<sup>56</sup>
- » In the US, 12bn work days are missed each year ... which represents \$925bn annually<sup>115</sup>
- » It is estimated that mental illnesses cost at least \$50bn yearly to the Canadian economy<sup>7, 8</sup>

# Executive Summary



We not only identify the problem facing companies, but offer tangible solutions.

We found that workplace social support, and especially supervisor social support, has proven to bring relief to the symptoms of employees with a mental illness.<sup>104,105</sup> As such, while workplace stress can often be the trigger to acute symptoms of mental illness, the workplace itself can be a significant part of the solution.

In addition, our research found a considerable ROI for companies investing in the reduction of stigma along with mental health awareness and support initiatives:

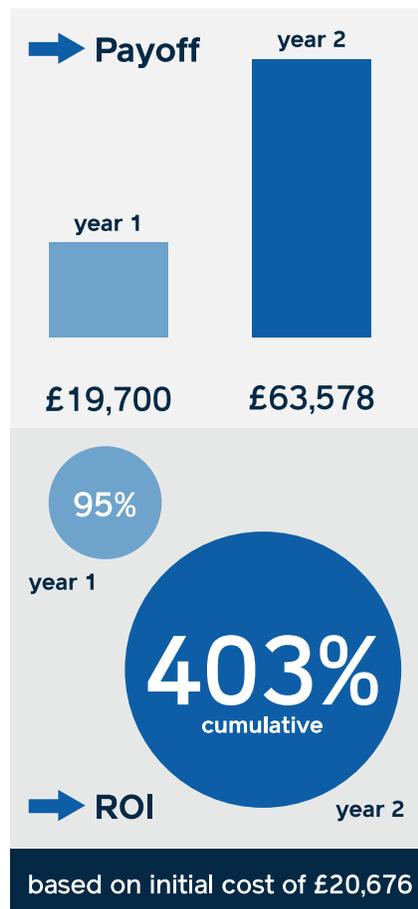
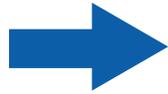


Fig. 1.1 (UK case study)



Fig. 1.2 (US case study)

# Executive Summary



stigmaZERO offers a solution that has been specifically designed to address the most challenging aspect of mental illness in the workplace: stigma.

For more information on our stigmaZERO Workplaces Program, visit [www.stigmazero.com/stigmazero-workplaces-program/](http://www.stigmazero.com/stigmazero-workplaces-program/)

It's time for employers to see the stigma surrounding mental illness as not only an HR issue but also a financial issue.

We're here to show you how mental health initiatives can benefit *everyone*.

It's better for your employees, it's better for teamwork and it's better for your **bottom line**.



A **stigmaZERO** WORKPLACE PAYS IN PROFITS  
by Sarah Nogues & Jason Finucan

514.212.3436  
jason@stigmazero.com  
www.stigmazero.com

© stigmaZERO 2016