



GETTING HIRED- STAYING HIRED

Acquiring, Managing, And Holding a Job: Pointers For Care-Seekers And Caregivers Dealing With Mental Illness



About the Speaker

Mr. Ganesh Chella is an organizational practitioner and leadership coach with extensive experience working with companies and professionals across sectors. His work focuses on leadership development, organizational behavior, and career sustainability. He brings a practical workplace-oriented perspective to mental health and employment readiness.

Seminar Overview

The seminar examined how individuals experiencing mental health challenges can successfully enter the workforce and sustain long-term employment. Mr. Ganesh Chella approached the topic from an organizational and performance perspective, focusing on workplace realities, employer expectations, and evolving job structures.

He emphasized that mental health should not be viewed in rigid categories of “healthy” versus “ill,” but as a continuum where individuals move across levels of emotional well-being depending on circumstances. The session highlighted practical strategies related to job selection, readiness assessment, disclosure decisions, support systems and coping frameworks required for career continuity.

Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace

The speaker noted that awareness of mental health has significantly increased in recent years. Mental health challenges are no longer seen as distant or rare conditions but as realities affecting many families and workplaces. This shift has improved acceptance, although organizational systems are still evolving toward full inclusion.

He compared this shift to large-scale public health awareness movements, explaining that personal familiarity with mental health struggles has increased empathy and recognition. While stigma has not disappeared, there is greater openness today toward discussing psychological well-being at work.

Transformation of the World of Work

A major theme of the seminar was the structural transformation of employment itself. Traditional fixed-schedule, office-based jobs are no longer the only pathway. Remote work, freelance roles, contract projects, and gig-based assignments have expanded employment possibilities.

Work has increasingly been broken into specialized tasks and short-duration projects. This allows individuals to contribute skills without rigid long-term scheduling demands. Such flexibility benefits not only those managing mental health conditions but also caregivers, parents, retirees, and career changers.

Technology was described as a key equalizing force. Individuals who develop digital skills can access global opportunities in editing, design, consulting, analytics, and technical services. Technological adaptability was presented as a core employability factor.

Organizational Realities and Performance Expectations

Mr. Chella explained that organizations are inherently structured to increase expectations over time. Employees who demonstrate competence are often given additional responsibilities, which can increase pressure and workload. Understanding this reality helps individuals prepare psychologically for growth-related stress.

He described employment as existing along a spectrum

of engagement models: permanent full-time roles, contract positions, project assignments, and highly flexible freelance work. Selecting the correct segment of this spectrum based on one's stability, stress tolerance, and lifestyle needs is essential for sustaining employment.

Career sustainability depends not only on getting hired but on choosing a work structure that aligns with personal capacity.

Role of Support Systems

The importance of strong support systems was emphasized repeatedly. Family and close social networks were described as “extra-therapeutic factors” that significantly influence employment stability. Emotional backing, encouragement, and practical help during difficult periods enhance resilience.

He also highlighted the value of having a knowledgeable mentor or advisor — a “go-to person” who understands professional environments and can provide guidance during career decisions and stress periods. This bridging role often prevents impulsive decisions such as sudden resignation during emotional distress.

Emotional and Career Readiness

The seminar stressed the need to assess emotional readiness before entering or re-entering employment. Individuals should evaluate their stress tolerance, responsibility handling capacity, and coping mechanisms for difficult days.

Career readiness includes identifying strengths and aligning them with market demand. Person–job fit was identified as a more important predictor of retention than academic qualification alone. Many early job exits occur due to mismatch rather than lack of ability.

Where necessary, a preparation period focused on skill development, technology learning, and routine building was recommended before job entry.

Disclosure and Workplace Communication

On the subject of disclosure, Mr. Chella advised that mental health conditions should generally not be mentioned on resumes. Disclosure decisions should be strategic and context-sensitive. In many cases, it is better to establish credibility and performance reliability first.

Disclosure may be considered later depending on workplace culture, managerial openness, and availability of support structures. Some large organizations now offer Employee Assistance Programs and internal mental health resources, which can support employees confidentially.

The decision to disclose should balance privacy, necessity, and anticipated benefit.

Managing Episodes and Sustaining Employment

Interactive discussion addressed concerns about medication side effects, probation stress, frequent job changes, and emotional episodes at work. The speaker emphasized early intervention — discussing distress with a trusted advisor before making major career decisions and consulting medical professionals regarding treatment adjustments.

Structured coping strategies, routine stabilization, and communication with support persons help prevent impulsive employment disruption. He noted that workplace stress affects many employees, including those without diagnosed conditions, and therefore individuals should avoid self-stigmatization.

The focus should remain on strengthening coping capacity rather than labeling oneself as incapable.

Conclusion

The seminar concluded with a realistic yet optimistic message. While organizations are still developing full mental health inclusion practices, modern workplace flexibility and technological expansion have created unprecedented employment opportunities.

With appropriate emotional readiness, strategic job selection, skill development, and support systems, individuals experiencing mental health challenges can both obtain and sustain meaningful employment. Career continuity is achievable when personal capacity and work structure are thoughtfully aligned.

Question and Answer Session Highlights

The webinar concluded with an interactive question-and-answer session where participants, caregivers, and mental health professionals discussed practical concerns related to employment, workplace challenges, and recovery. The speaker, Ganesh Chella, addressed these queries from an organizational and practical perspective.

1. Are there specific organizations that hire individuals with mental illness?

One participant asked whether there exists a list of organizations that actively hire individuals experiencing mental health challenges. The speaker explained that while such centralized lists may not always be available, individuals can begin by connecting with non-profit organizations and mental health support groups that focus on employment opportunities. These organizations often maintain networks with employers and may serve as bridges between job seekers and potential workplaces.

He emphasized that the modern job market offers multiple opportunities, particularly through gig work and skill-based freelance platforms, which can be suitable for individuals seeking flexible work environments.

2. How can individuals manage stress caused by maintaining consistency at work?

Another question addressed the challenge of maintaining consistency in work routines while managing stress. The speaker acknowledged that consistency and regularity are important in professional settings; however, individuals should gradually develop coping abilities rather than forcing unrealistic expectations upon themselves.

He noted that organizational roles often evolve with time. Employees who perform well are usually given additional responsibilities, which may increase stress. Therefore, individuals should work toward enhancing their coping capacity through skill development, stress-management strategies, and gradual exposure to work demands.

3. Should individuals disclose their mental health condition to employers?

Participants raised concerns about whether they should disclose their mental health conditions during the hiring process. The speaker recommended that such information should **not be included in resumes**, as screening

processes may be handled by individuals who lack the maturity or understanding to interpret the information appropriately.

However, he suggested that disclosure may be considered later in the recruitment process—especially after progressing through interviews and technical evaluations. At that stage, sharing relevant information can foster transparency and allow organizations to provide appropriate support if needed.

4. How should conflicts with managers or team members be handled during episodes of illness?

A participant asked about managing workplace conflicts during periods of mental health difficulty. The speaker explained that managers often operate within organizational constraints and may have limited flexibility, especially when deadlines and team responsibilities are involved.

Therefore, selecting roles that allow some flexibility in workload and scheduling can be helpful. Building a positive relationship with one's immediate manager is also important, as supervisors often have the greatest influence on day-to-day workplace accommodations.

5. What if someone frequently changes jobs due to symptoms of mental illness?

One participant shared that an individual had held many jobs but struggled to retain them due to recurring symptoms. The speaker responded that frequent job changes may indicate that the individual possesses valuable skills but may not have found the right job structure.

He suggested exploring work models that provide flexibility, such as freelance assignments, project-based work, or remote tasks. These arrangements allow individuals to contribute their skills without being constrained by rigid schedules or workplace pressures.

6. Should mental illness be mentioned on a resume?

Another participant expressed concern that mentioning mental illness on a resume might prevent candidates from receiving interview calls. The speaker agreed that resumes should primarily focus on **skills, qualifications, and professional achievements**, rather than medical conditions.

Instead, discussions about personal limitations or support requirements can be held at a later stage in the hiring process when the candidate has already demonstrated competence and value.

7. How can individuals cope with medication side effects such as fatigue at work?

Caregivers also raised concerns about medication side effects such as sleepiness during work hours. The discussion highlighted the importance of consulting healthcare professionals about medication schedules and potential adjustments.

Participants also suggested practical strategies such as taking short breaks, stretching, or briefly walking instead of napping during work hours. Maintaining communication with medical professionals about job requirements can help tailor treatment plans to professional routines.

8. How can individuals avoid quitting jobs impulsively during difficult periods?

The speaker emphasized the importance of having a **trusted support person**—such as a mentor, family member, counselor, or peer support group. Before making significant decisions like quitting a job, individuals should consult this trusted person to gain perspective.

He explained that many employees, regardless of mental health status, experience moments of frustration or the urge to leave their jobs. Having someone to discuss these feelings with can prevent impulsive decisions and support long-term stability.

Overall, the session highlighted that long-term employability is not only about securing a job, but about building resilience, self-awareness, and supportive workplace relationships.

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