



A STIGMAZERO WORKPLACE PAYS IN PROFITS

How breaking down mental illness stigma can *improve* your **bottom line**

by Sarah Nogues & Jason Finucan

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SARAH NOGUES

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Sarah Nogues 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

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Mental health advocate, stigma fighter, published author, professional speaker and founder of StigmaZero, Jason is also the instructor of the Create Your StigmaZero Workplace program offered within The StigmaZero Online Training Academy (www.stigmazero.com).

As someone who has experienced both a major physical illness (heart defect leading to open heart surgery in 1988) and a major mental illness (bipolar disorder leading to hospitalization in 2005), Jason shares his personal experiences with impactful storytelling techniques. These moving stories can be found as part of our academy programs, through his inspirational keynotes, and in his book *Jason: 1, Stigma: 0 – My battle with mental illness at home and in the workplace*.

Jason aims to make this difficult topic accessible and consumable, so he blends his stories with rigorous research in order to mobilize knowledge and perspective. His goal is for everyone to understand this important topic so they are empowered to make a real change and ultimately join in the effort to realize his vision for a future without stigma.

This is a mental health movement – and Jason wants you to be a part of it.



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'⁹³
- **54.6%** of employees with depression would not disclose their illness to their manager
- The most significant consequence of stigma is ... the silencing power¹⁵⁶ 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 claim⁵⁶
- In the US, 12bn work days are missed each year ... which represents **\$925bn** annually¹¹⁵
- It is estimated that mental illnesses cost at least **\$50bn** yearly to the Canadian economy^{7, 8}



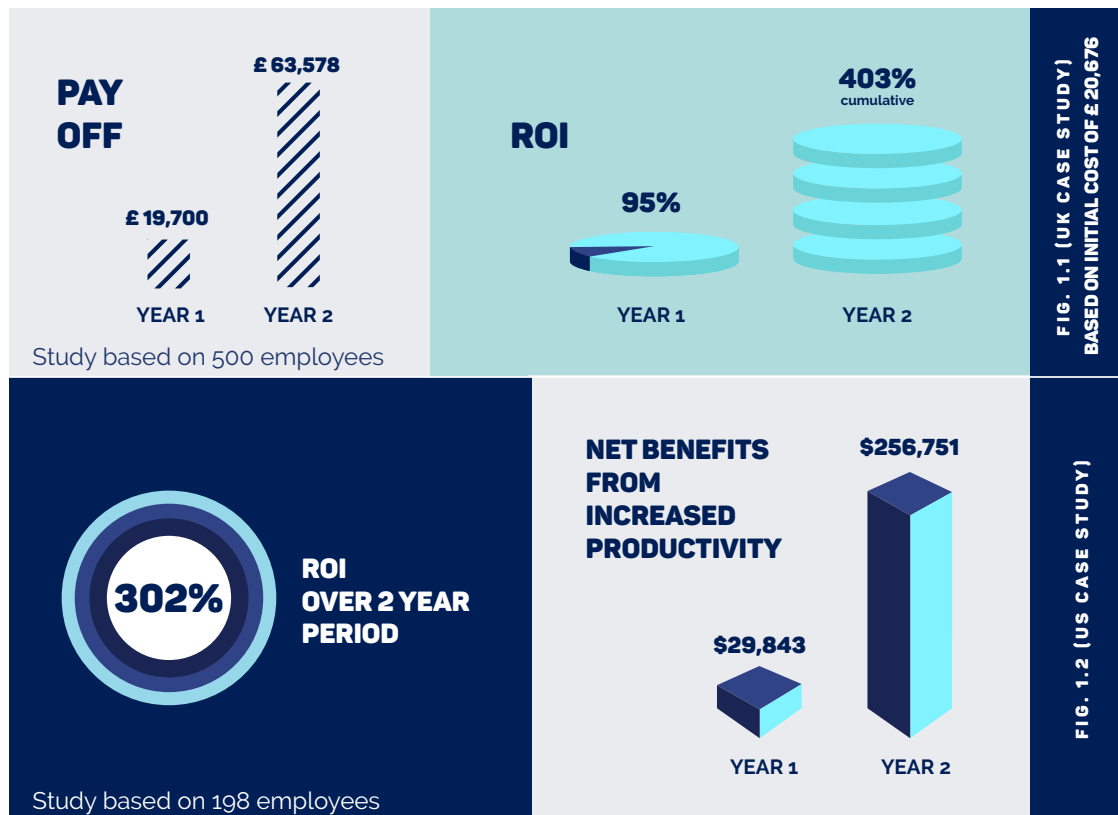
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We not only identify the problem facing companies, but offer **tangible solutions**.

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.^{104,105} 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:



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 The StigmaZero Online Training Academy, visit www.stigmazero.com.

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.**





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1-800-359-1241

hello@stigmazero.com

www.stigmazero.com

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