

## CHECKLIST: Checklist for telephone conversation telling your employer you will be absent from work.



- **Start off as you would with any conversation:** exchanging pleasantries and having an informal catch up.
- **State why you are calling:** “I wanted to talk to you about my sickness absence and the reason I have been off work”.
- **If you feel comfortable, give them the details of your ill-health.** Remember the more your employers know, the more they will be able to support you whilst you are off work and, on your return to work. You can use these to help you:
  - I am experiencing...
  - I am having trouble with...
  - I do not know why, but I feel...
- **Talk about how your ill-health affects your ability to do your job.** For example, “I am finding it difficult to concentrate/ I am making mistakes that I do not usually make”.
- **If relevant – talk about how your work has contributed to your ill-health.** This might be an incident for example “Yesterday a client was aggressive, and I feel...” or an accumulation of stress over time “I feel overwhelmed by the amount of work / emails/ tasks I need to do”. If you are specific, your employer may be better able to help you, and help others that might be in your position.
- **Suggest your preference for communication while off.** “So that I can concentrate on my health as much as possible, please could you contact me by (mail, telephone, meet ups), (once a week, after your appointment with the GP). I would feel most comfortable if this was with (my line manager/ Human Resources/ designated colleague)”.
- **Confidentiality:** Tell them whether you would like your reason for absence to be kept confidential to all colleagues/clients or whether you would like your immediate team to be told.
- **Your questions:** Ask your employer to clarify anything you are unsure about, for example sickness pay, whether they will let HR know etc.
- **Closing the conversation:** Thank them for their understanding and let them know what you will be doing to improve on your health and that you will let them know when you are clearer about when you will be back.