

Cheat sheet 4: How to bring it up at work without getting stabby

Bringing up perimenopause at work shouldn't feel like you're trying to negotiate world peace while dealing with brain fog so bad you forget your own job title. But workplaces aren't exactly ahead of the curve on this, and it's usually up to us to start the conversation. The good news? You don't have to suffer in silence or quit your job in a menopausal rage. Here's a cheat sheet to give you the tools to talk about it without feeling awkward (or homicidal), advocate for real change and get the support you deserve.

1. Perimenopause is a workplace issue

Don't assume your employer knows this so help them by sharing some facts. One in ten women quits her job due to menopausal symptoms, while many others reduce their hours, turn down promotions or quietly struggle. This isn't just an individual issue – it's a systemic one that businesses need to address. Losing women at the peak of their careers doesn't only hurt the women; it costs companies billions in lost productivity and expertise.

2. Start the conversation

Bringing it up at work doesn't have to feel like you're confessing a dark secret. Keep it professional but direct. With your manager, you might say, 'I'm managing some perimenopausal health symptoms that affect my work. Can we discuss support options?' If your company has an HR or People and Culture team, ask, 'Do we have a menopause policy? If not, can we introduce one?' And if you need moral support from colleagues, a simple 'If I forget the client's name in a meeting, please jump in and save me!' can break the ice. The more we normalise these conversations, the easier they become.



3. Advocate for change

Education is key. Peri and menopause support shouldn't be an after-thought. If your workplace is clueless about it, push for change. Menopause awareness training should be as standard as mental health initiatives. Policies should be real, not just an old PDF hidden on the intranet. When we speak up and push for better policies, we're not only helping ourselves – we're paving the way for every woman who comes after us. It also educates women so they can get treatment and back to their best selves at work.

4. Ask for what you need

You're not asking for a pony! After education, some reasonable workplace adjustments can make a huge difference. If insomnia is wrecking your mornings, flexible hours might help. If hot flushes are turning the boardroom into a sweat lodge, a desk fan or better ventilation could be the answer. Ask for uniforms to be made of breathable fabrics and ditch the pantyhose. Oh, and ask for period products in workplace bathrooms. These are not outrageous demands; they're necessities that help keep women performing at their best.



Of course, in an unapologetic shout out, I highly recommend you get someone like your Peri Godmother to present evidence-based information to your workplace or to speak at your conference or work retreat. You don't have to be an expert, you just have to access one.