Top Tips

Ask about:
• Their understanding of the cause of their problem
• What they are expecting will help
• The physical and stressful demands of their job
• Their expectation of returning to work
• Job satisfaction
• Social support – both at home and in the workplace
• Potential for modification of work
• Communication from/with employer regarding their problem/absence

Management principles:
• Promote a stay at work culture
• Encourage early return to work if off
  → Develop specific plan of ‘when and how’
• Liaise with employer/Jobcentre advisor/case manager
• Use written confidentiality waiver
• Consider assessing and rehabilitating in the workplace
• Use of ‘fit note’ rather than sick note
  → Emphasising ability not disability

References

Introduction
Work is good for us; for both our physical and mental health and well-being. It is also good for society and recent Government drivers place increasing emphasis on employers, managers and the NHS to actively address work-related factors and ‘work flow’ (see figure 1).

These issues are not only the remit of specialist services, such as Jobcentre Plus, Pathways to Work providers (e.g. condition management programmes) and the proposed ‘Fit for Work’ services, but there is now also an onus on all health professionals:

“... to do all we can to help people enter, stay in or return to work.” (Healthcare Professionals’ Consensus Statement)3