



Thrive at work

Work design makes life better

Thrive at Work Toolkit



Curtin University

FUTURE OF WORK INSTITUTE



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Introduction

Introduction to the Toolkit

We need to think more broadly about work and well-being.

For Australia to embrace changes in the future of work, we need people within organisations that are mentally healthy, and beyond that – thrive – in their work.

In a thriving organisation, the mental health of all employees is protected and supported, regardless of cause. While supporting those experiencing mental illness is a vital part of any well-being initiative, there is an opportunity to do more to design work to protect against psychological harm and provide working environments that foster the development of positive mental health.

Work is more than just a place to survive each day. Good work provides opportunities for meaning, connection, learning, and growth, which in turn support employees to thrive. Thrive at Work is a ground-breaking well-being initiative centred on designing work that helps employees, organisations and industry to go beyond well-being, to thriving.

About us

The Future of Work Institute promotes productive and meaningful work as essential foundations of a healthy economy and society. We focus on how people contribute to, and benefit from, new knowledge and practices. Our mission is to support thriving people and organisations in the digital age.

Six intersecting programs shape the research and practice of the Institute, contributing to the overall theme of ‘thriving in the digital age’:

- Transformative work design
- Work capabilities and motivation
- Human system integration
- Public policy in the digital age
- Data analytics and decision making
- Ageing and work

Thrive at Work is our ‘flagship’ initiative and draws on all of our research streams.

Goals of this toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to help organisations mature their approach to employee well-being.

This toolkit has been designed as a downloadable version of the Thrive at Work website which can be printed or read offline. By working through this toolkit, you will gain a thorough understanding of the benefits of focusing on well-being in your organisation and the different pillars of the Thrive at Work Framework. In addition, you will have a clear methodology for how to go about taking stock of your current well-being practices, as well as the tools to develop a tailored mental health and well-being strategy.

By the end of you this toolkit, you will have identified key actions and developed a plan to move towards becoming a thriving organisation.

[The ultimate goal of Thrive at Work is a pragmatic, easy to follow framework and process to support organisations creating mentally healthy workplaces]

Target of this toolkit

This toolkit is aimed at any individual or group involved in the development of employee well-being strategies. Groups that may commonly be involved in this process include health and safety, wellness, human resources, and people and culture. The toolkit is also applicable to any individual, at any level, who is interested in championing the promotion of mental health and well-being in their organisation.

Senior leaders play a critical role in driving policies and practices that promote mental health in the workplace. Senior leaders can positively influence workplace culture, management practices, and staff experience. Therefore, it is useful for senior leaders to be on board with the Thrive at Work initiative.

The Thrive at Work initiative and this toolkit is designed for a wide range of workplaces. Many of the activities are applicable across a range of industries and organisation sizes and can be scaled up or down where needed.

How to navigate this toolkit

It is recommended that you read the toolkit in the order it is presented.

The information in this toolkit can be used end to end in its entirety, or components used separately as suits the needs of your organisation. Below is an outline of the different sections of the toolkit.



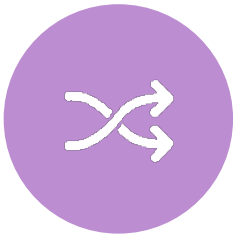
Knowing your 'why'

Before delving in to how to build a thriving workforce, it is important to articulate the benefits of addressing mental health and well-being in your workplace. This will help in building your business case for change.



Understanding the Thrive at Work Framework

The toolkit provides detailed information regarding the Thrive at Work Framework. The framework explains how we can help people in workplaces get well (mitigate illness), stay well (prevent harm) and be the best they can be (promote thriving).



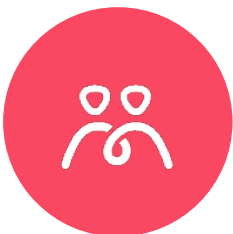
Learning how to implement Thrive at Work

Within the toolkit you will be provided with a methodology for evaluating your organisation's current state, developing a mental health and well-being strategy, and planning what actions need to be taken - all aligned to the Thrive at Work Framework.



Gaining access to resources outlining best practice

Throughout all of the sections, you will find a collection of useful resources to aid in the implementation of the Thrive at Work initiative. This includes Thrive at Work specific tools, case studies, articles, and industry expert guides.



Knowing your options for getting help

While this toolkit provides you with information on how to take a self-guided approach, there includes a range of options for organisations to connect with experts. This may take the form of virtual assistance, fully facilitated or train the trainer options.

For more information and resources, please visit the Thrive at Work website.



Our vision for Australia is one in which all working individuals – regardless of age, race, gender, job, industry, or organisation – thrive in their work







Why Invest in
**Mental Health
and Well-Being**



**Thrive
at work**

Why invest in well-being?

Before embarking on your Thrive at Work journey, it is important to first understand what drivers there are for investing in mental health and well-being in your organisation.

There are many benefits to improving the mental health and well-being of your employees. These benefits are not limited to reducing the impact of mental ill health – there are also benefits for promoting positive mental well-being as well.

An integrative approach

Organisations, employees, and the community get the best outcomes with an integrative approach to mental health. An integrative approach is one in which organisations support all employees to get well (Mitigate Illness), stay well (Prevent Harm), and be the best they can be (Promote Thriving).

Mitigate Illness

There are benefits to business, employees, and the community when organisations lessen the impact of mental health issues through early identification, support, and accommodation of illness.

Prevent Harm

All employees have the potential to be exposed to risks to their mental health at work. Everyone benefits when workplaces take active steps to protect employee mental health.

Promote Thriving

Thriving is not only the absence of mental ill health, but also the development of positive mental health. Employees who thrive are better equipped to continue to grow and adapt – enabling organisations to capitalise on opportunities presented by changes in the future of work.

It makes business sense

Improving the mental health and well-being of your employees is not only good for people, it is also good for business.

Demonstrate to your organisation the opportunity presented by a focus on workplace well-being across financial returns, increased productivity and engagement, decreased turnover and absence, compliance with legislation, enhanced reputation, and employees who thrive in all domains of their lives. Below is a high level introduction into each of the benefits an organisation could gain by improving workplace well-being. For more detail and research-driven findings please see the [Business Case](#) page on Thrive at Work website.



Compliance

Health and safety legislation is expected to change imminently, with higher standards and organisational accountability anticipated. Proactively reviewing and revising policies and practices will ensure compliance with forthcoming legislation. Work health and safety legislation requires workplaces to be, as far as reasonably practicable, physically and mentally safe and healthy for all employees.

Economic

Improved well-being outcomes at the individual-level can have a positive impact on your organisation's bottom line. In fact, for every dollar spent on successfully implementing an appropriate action to create a mentally health workplace, there is on average \$2.30 in benefits to be gained by the organisation in terms of improved productivity and lower numbers of compensation claims.¹

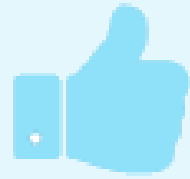


Reputation

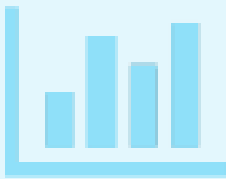
Developing a strong mental health and well-being strategy can enable organisations to become employers of choice. An Australian study found that 91% of surveyed employees believe that mental health in the workplace is important.² Furthermore, a mentally healthy workplace was the second most important factor in employees' decision to accept a new position.³

Engagement

Engaged employees are willing to go above and beyond to aid in the success of the organisation. There are a range of factors that organisations can use to drive employee engagement - prioritisation of well-being is one of them. A global survey study has found that when organisations prioritised employee well-being, engagement increased from 7% to 55%.⁴ That is, engagement was 8 times higher in organisations that prioritise well-being.



Turnover



It is known that turnover is highly influenced by the well-being environment. Research has found that that 50% of respondents had left a job due to a poor well-being environment.⁵ In addition, a mentally healthy workplace that promotes and protects the mental health of employees was the second most powerful inhibitor of leaving a job.

Productivity

Productivity can be impacted when employees are experiencing mental health and well-being issues. In Australia, mental disorders result in lost productivity costs of \$10.9 billion nationally each year.⁶ This comprises \$4.7 billion in absenteeism, \$6.1 billion in presenteeism and \$145.9 million in compensation claims.



Absenteeism

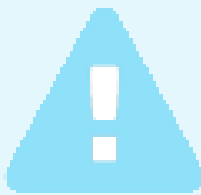
By investing in well-being initiatives, organisations can reduce their rates of absenteeism. Employees who consider their workplace mentally healthy are almost four times *less likely* to say they have taken time off work due to feeling mentally unwell in the past year compared to those who within a mentally unhealthy workplace.⁷

Workers Compensation

On average, 7820 Australian employees are compensated for work related mental disorders.⁸ When looking at all compensation claims, 6% are attributed to work related mental disorders. Focusing on building a mentally healthy workplace decreases workers' compensation claims.⁹



Ill Health



Approximately 20% of Australian adults will experience a mental illness per year. Organisations can make a positive impact by putting in place initiatives aimed at reducing this figure. KPMG estimate that Australian employers could save an estimated \$0.5 billion if 5% of individuals in each category of mild, moderate and severe mental illness were able to reduce the severity of their mental health issues as a result of a supportive workplace environment.¹⁰

Thriving

The benefits of addressing mental health and well-being go beyond reducing the number experiencing a mental illness. There are also benefits to focusing on the other 80% and promoting positive well-being. Employees who experience positive mental health are more committed to the organisation¹¹, behave more safely¹², are self-motivated, persist in the face of challenges, and perform beyond what is expected.¹³



In the next section, you will learn more about how your organisation can take an integrative approach to mental health in order to get the best outcomes. This integrative approach, as is detailed in the Thrive at Work Framework, includes how your organisation can best mitigate illness, prevent harm, and promote thriving.



The Thrive at Work Framework

The Thrive at Work Framework

The Thrive at Work initiative is underpinned by a world-leading, evidence based framework that helps organisations to navigate the wealth of information on mental health at work.

The Thrive at Work Framework has been developed in consultation with industry and an extensive evaluation of the academic literature. The result is a comprehensive framework that provides organisations with a clear set of evidence-based strategies to address the full spectrum of mental health.

The Thrive at Work Framework consists of nine building blocks, clustered within three over-arching pillars. Organisations that use the framework as a basis for their mental health and well-being strategy can be confident that they are taking a holistic approach that not only focuses on helping people get well again (Mitigate Illness), but also on helping people stay well (Prevent Harm) and be the best they can be (Promote Thriving).

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	 Detect Illness	→ Leader and employee education → Monitor mental health
	 Support Illness	→ Reduce mental health stigma → Remove barriers to support → Employee Assistance Program
	 Accommodate Illness	→ Injury management process → Return to Work process
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	 Increase Job Resources	→ S timulating job resources → M astery job resources → A gency job resources → R elational job resources
	 Reduce Job Demands	→ T olerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands → Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	 Increase Resilience and Coping	→ Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress
 Promote Thriving Optimise wellbeing and generate future capabilities.	 Create Conditions for Performance	→ Strategic Human Resource practices
	 Create Conditions for Connection	→ High quality work connections → Diversity and inclusion → Community engagement
	 Create Conditions for Growth	→ Strength-based development → Support lifelong learning

The building blocks are comprised of key evidence-based strategies that assist in the achievement of the building blocks. You can use the framework to both integrate what your organisation is already doing to support employee well-being and to strengthen your approach moving forward. The Framework is depicted above and explained further in the following pages.


Mitigate Illness

Mitigate Illness is one of three pillars in the Thrive at Work Framework and an important contributor to creating a workplace in which employees can thrive.

The Mitigate Illness pillar has three building blocks that work together to support employees experiencing mental illness. They are:

- ➔ Detect Illness,
- ➔ Support Illness, and
- ➔ Accommodate Illness.

Research tells us that mental illness can impact people across all types of workplaces, and all industries.¹⁴ To mitigate illness, organisations should aim to help employees identify when they are experiencing mental ill health, support employees who are impaired to get well again, and assist those who have been unwell to return to the workplace.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	✓ Detect Illness	➔ Leader and employee education ➔ Monitor mental health
	✓ Support Illness	➔ Reduce mental health stigma ➔ Remove barriers to support ➔ Employee Assistance Program
	✓ Accommodate Illness	➔ Injury management process ➔ Return to Work process

Why is it important to Mitigate Illness?

Approximately 45% of adults between the ages of 16 and 85 will experience a mental health issue in their lifetime.¹⁵ Many Australian adults who experience mental health issues will be of working age and employed in different roles, across all industries.

Research consistently shows that untreated mental illnesses negatively impact turnover, absenteeism and workforce productivity.^{16, 17} Organisations that mitigate illness demonstrate to their workforce they are committed to supporting employees experiencing poor mental health. In turn, employees want to work for and stay in organisations that acknowledge the importance of mental health and assists employees recover from mental illness.¹⁸ Organisations that mitigate mental illness can experience a significant return on investment, through increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

FACT

Untreated mental health conditions cost Australian business approximately \$10.9 billion per year in absenteeism, presenteeism and compensation claims¹⁹.

Detect Illness

Early intervention is vital to reducing the impact of mental ill health on individuals and to aid recovery. However, it is often difficult for individuals to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental illness in themselves and others.

To detect illness, organisations need to increase the capability of leaders and employees to identify, take action on, and monitor mental health issues.

Key strategies to detect illness include:

- ➔ Leader and employee education – educate leaders and employees such that they are able to recognise changes in behaviour, appearance and performance in themselves and in colleagues, enabling recognition of potential mental health issues.
- ➔ Monitoring mental health – provide leaders and employees with the skills to be able monitor employee mental health through meaningful conversations and organisational indicators of well-being.

FACT

1 in 5 employees report having taken time off from work due to being mentally unwell.²⁰

Support Illness

Unfortunately, employees who have identified that they need support are often faced with the challenge of mental health stigma and organisational barriers to accessing support.

Removing these barriers within organisations is critical for people being able to readily access support.

Key strategies to support illness include:

- ➔ Reduce mental health stigma – organisations and employees should continually challenge stigma by opening dialogue on mental health and well-being.
- ➔ Remove barriers to support – reduce difficulty to accessing workplace mental health support programs through clear communication of what is offered and allowing time for attendance.

- Employee Assistance Programs – make a confidential counselling service available via an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered to all employees.

FACT

A recent Australian survey revealed 43% of employees with mental health issues believe they experienced stigma with respect to mental health in their work environment.²¹

Accommodate Illness

For those employees who are experiencing mental illness, or employees who are returning to work after illness, original work tasks and conditions may need revising to ensure that employees are able to focus on recovery as well as still completing meaningful work.

Organisations should actively make accommodations for employees who are experiencing illness or injury or who are returning to the workplace after illness.

Key strategies to accommodate illness include:

- a work-design focused injury management process – employees who are experiencing mental illness or injury and able to remain at work are provided with a structured, tailored injury management process that also considers the quality of the work undertaken; and
- a work-design focused Return to Work process – employees returning to the workplace after time off to recover from mental illness undertake a structured, tailored return to work process addresses the quality of the employee's work.

FACT

A report commissioned by SafeWork NSW has estimated that the return on investment for psychological return to work programs is \$3.90 for small-medium enterprise and \$3.74 for large employer per dollar invested.²²

Detect Illness




The Detect Illness building block increases the capability of leaders and employees to identify, take action on, and monitor mental health issues in the workplace.

Empowering leaders and employees with knowledge about mental health enables them to look out for and assist their colleagues who are experiencing mental illness access help. In turn, possessing knowledge about mental health conditions and resources enables leaders and employees to monitor their own well-being and access appropriate resources in a timely manner.

Key strategies

Research shows us there are three main areas workplaces can act on to have a strong detecting illness focus: ^{23, 24, 25}

- leader education;
- employee education; and
- monitor mental health.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	 Detect Illness	→ Leader and employee education → Monitor mental health
	 Support Illness	→ Reduce mental health stigma → Remove barriers to support → Employee Assistance Program
	 Accommodate Illness	→ Injury management process → Return to Work process

FACT

Early intervention (specifically early identification and facilitating access to quality mental health care) is associated with a 492% Return on investment as calculated by comparing early intervention and treatment costs with subsequent reduction in absenteeism and improvement in work.²⁶

Why is it important to Detect Illness?

Early detection and treatment of mental health issues has the potential to minimise harm to an employee and reduce the length of any absence from work.²⁷ Research shows that people who are able to detect changes in mental health are more likely to promote mental health resources to others, and also seek help themselves sooner.²⁸

However, a key reason why employees with mental health concerns do not seek assistance and support is the perception that their leader does not possess the knowledge or skills to offer appropriate, non-judgemental support.

30% of Australian leaders themselves report that they do not address mental health issues in their workplace due to a lack of understanding of, and training in, supporting employees experiencing mental health issues.²⁹

When a leader develops the knowledge, skills and abilities to detect mental illness, the benefits to their organisation are substantial. Research highlights employees whose leader has completed mental health training are more likely to seek out and use available mental health resources than employees whose leader has not.³⁰ In addition, leaders who receive mental health training share more information with their workplace about mental health and mental health resources. They also report being more supportive of other employees' mental health issues, a decrease in stigmatising attitudes towards mental health, actively encourage employees to use workplace mental health resources and increased insight into their own mental health.^{31 32}

FACT

Anxiety and depression can be as debilitating as a serious physical illness, yet less than half of the people experiencing these conditions seek help.³³

Research-backed strategies to Detect Illness in your workplace

To effectively detect illness, organisation should build the capability of leaders and employees to identify, take action on and monitor mental health issues in the workplace.

Leader education

Research shows that leaders are often in the best position to detect an employee experiencing mental illness within their team.³⁴ As such, it is important that leaders be educated first with regards to understanding the signs and symptoms of mental illness. Training leaders to understand, appreciate and detect mental health issues helps to lay the foundations for a supportive workplace culture.³⁵

Research shows that leaders who received three hours of mental health training (including both information and role playing) share more mental health information and resources than leaders who do not receive any training.³⁶

Recent Australian research identified the following as key components of mental health training for leaders:³⁷

- be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of common mental health problems;
- know/have strategies to support and manage employees with depression and anxiety;
- understand the role of leaders in promoting and supporting good mental health;
- understand the impact of organisational culture on mental health; and
- know/have strategies for managing your own mental health and building resilience.

Ideally, selecting a mental health training program should be done in consultation with leader/s to ensure their learning needs and styles are considered and the most appropriate program is selected.

RESOURCE

For information on how to select an appropriate leader mental health educational training program and provider, please see our [guide](#) in the resources section of the website.

Employee education

After leaders and managers have been educated about mental health conditions and developed appropriate skills to address mental health issues in the workplace, the focus should expand to all employees. Currently, only 52% of Australian employees believe they have the knowledge and ability to advise a colleague on appropriate support options for mental health issues.³⁸ This statistic can be greatly improved through providing mental health training to employees.

All employees will benefit from receiving mental health training to equip them with the knowledge to recognise changes in the mental health of themselves and their colleagues. In fact, Australian research has found significant improvements in the detection and treatment of mental health conditions when employees receive mental health training, compared to when they do not.³⁹

The key outcomes for effective employee mental health training programs are:

- increase employees' understanding of mental health;
- employees are able to recognise signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions; and
- employees can develop skills to assist colleagues experiencing mental health issues.

Selecting a mental health training program should be done in consultation with employees, to ensure learning needs and styles are considered and the most appropriate program is selected.

RESOURCE

For information on employee mental health educational training programs and providers, please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

Monitor mental health

Mental health training for leaders and employees should be an ongoing process, and not a standalone, once off activity. Equipping employees and leaders with the tools and skills needed to appropriately and effectively engage in discussions about mental health, is essential for monitoring mental health in the workplace.⁴⁰ Employees and leaders should be encouraged to continually monitor the mental health of themselves and those around them in the workplace, and be encouraged to approach a colleague they are concerned about.⁴¹

The following strategies are designed to assist workplaces with monitoring the mental health of their employees:

- ➔ provide annual 'refresher' mental health training courses;
- ➔ role-model starting a conversation with an employee you are concerned about or seeking help if you have concerns yourself;
- ➔ train mental health first aid officers;
- ➔ ensure leadership team reports contain measures of employee well-being and are regularly reviewed and discussed;
- ➔ ensure Human Resources and Work Health and Safety functions monitor mental health and well-being trends; and
- ➔ ensure mental health is a regular topic at leadership and employee meetings.

RESOURCE

For information on monitoring mental health strategies and programs, please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

Support Illness





The Support Illness building block removes all barriers to employees seeking help and provides readily accessible mental health support for employees.

To support employees experiencing mental illness, organisations need to provide an encouraging environment in which mental health stigma is actively reduced to enable employees to seek assistance. Once an employee experiencing mental illness seeks assistance, organisations need to ensure they help employees access an appropriate mental health support service and establish supportive working conditions so that they can attend the service.

Key strategies

Research shows us there are three main areas workplaces can act on to have a strong supporting illness focus: ^{42, 43}

- reduce mental health stigma;
- remove barriers to support; and
- provide employee assistance programs.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	 Detect Illness	→ Leader and employee education → Monitor mental health
	 Support Illness	→ Reduce mental health stigma → Remove barriers to support → Employee Assistance Program
	 Accommodate Illness	→ Injury management process → Return to Work process

FACT

Escalating mental health issues result in significant employee leave, which currently costs Australian organisations \$1.54 billion in lost productivity.⁴⁴

Why is it important to Support Illness?

Supporting working employees at the early stages of a mental health issue helps lessen recovery time and reduces their time away from work.⁴⁵ Another benefit to appropriately supporting employees experiencing mental illness is that it demonstrates to other employees that the organisation is committed to employee well-being which, in turn, strengthens employee commitment to the organisation, increases productivity and decreases turnover.⁴⁶

Research reveals employees experiencing mental illness often encounter organisational barriers when trying to access support and treatment. One of the biggest barriers employees experiencing mental illness face is stigma in their workplace.

A recent Australian survey revealed 43% of employees with mental health issues believe they experienced stigma with respect to mental health in their work environment.⁴⁷

In order to support employees in the early stages of a mental ill-health, workplaces need to actively and continually reduce the stigma around mental health.⁴⁸ By reducing stigma, employees are more likely to approach someone at work about their mental ill-health. Along with proactively reducing mental health stigma, research highlights leaders need to maintain open communication with employees experiencing mental ill-health to demonstrate that they can and want to help.⁴⁹

FACT

According to a recent Australian report, only 15% of Australian employees report that their leaders proactively encourage and promote mental health policies and practices.⁵⁰

Research-backed strategies to Support Illness in your workplace

Enable employees to readily access mental health support by removing barriers to seeking help.

Reduce mental health stigma

Research reveals that the stigma surrounding mental health requires continual open discussion if it is to be challenged and ultimately removed. Workplaces are encouraged to continually challenge stigma by opening dialogue on mental health and well-being. Employees, in turn, are urged to confidentially disclose their own mental health issues and approach colleagues they may be concerned about.⁵¹

Research has shown that the following strategies assist with reducing stigma:^{52, 53}

- placing posters and flyers about mental health around the workplace;
- providing resources that include personal stories of mental illness;
- talking about mental health to the whole of organisation and at team meetings; and
- taking part in well publicised mental health events, such as R U Ok? Day and the National Mental Health Week.

RESOURCE

For information on mental health stigma reduction strategies, educational displays and events please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

Remove barriers to support

It is critical to ensure that employees who disclose a mental illness can access support. Leaders should be able to advise employees who disclose a mental illness about the support available to them (e.g. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), local GP, private mental health professionals), the services offered and assist them with accessing the support, if requested.⁵⁴ Leaders should also report back to their human resources department any areas of difficulty in accessing support faced by their team members, so that policies and practices can be continually assessed and improved.

Employees should be able to access appropriate medical support when they first notice signs or symptoms of mental ill health. For many, contacting their local doctor (GP) is an important first step to recovery. GPs can make a mental health assessment, develop a Mental Health Treatment Plan if necessary, and refer to more specialised mental health support services (such as psychologists or psychiatrists) where appropriate. Getting help early can make a difference, so it is important that organisations reduce barriers to support. This may involve allowing employees to work flexible hours to enable them to attend appointments for diagnosis or treatment.

The following strategies help employees to engage with an organisation's support program:

- ensure all employees receive information on how to access support programs;
- ensure leaders receive training in what services the EAP offers as well as their role in facilitating an employee accessing the support programs;
- ensure leaders are trained in the role of doctors in treating mental health issues; and
- allow the employee flexibility in hours so that they can access the EAP or attend appointments with their doctor or mental health professionals.

RESOURCE

For information on removing barriers to support strategies, please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

RESOURCE

[Think Mental Health](#) have developed a comprehensive list of additional mental health services that individuals can access for support.

Offer an Employee Assistance Program

An Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a service offered through workplaces which provides professional mental health support to their employees.⁵⁵ Most EAPs offer confidential counselling from mental health professionals, including Psychologists and Counsellors. EAP providers can assist employees who are experiencing both personal and work-related issues – including mental health issues, substance abuse, relationship concerns, stress or financial concerns.^{56, 57} Most counselling services can be offered to employees (and often their immediate families) either in person or via telephone or video conferencing.

To be of most benefit an EAP should be:

- completely confidential and accessible to all employees;
- advertised regularly and materials included in new employee/leader inductions;
- evaluated and usage tracked with anonymous feedback from users; and
- able to provide support to all employees in the aftermath of a critical incident.

When selecting an EAP, it is important to consider the following:

- choose an EAP provider who is endorsed by the Employee Assistance Professional Association of Australasia;
- choose an EAP provider with services appropriate for the organisation and/or industry; and
- implement a regular evaluation of the EAP's effectiveness to evaluate the impact and appropriateness of the program for the workplace.

RESOURCE

For information on Employee Assistance Programs and how to select an appropriate provider, please see our [guide](#) in the resources section of the website.

FACT

A return on investment (ROI) calculated for an average Employee Assistance Programs indicated that for every dollar spent on the program, there is an expected return of between \$5.17 and \$6.47.⁵⁸

Accommodate Illness

The Accommodate Illness building block increases the capability of leaders to provide structured, tailored psychological injury management and return to work programs which enable employees with mental illness to recover while undertaking appropriate and meaningful work.

Key strategies

Research shows that there are two main areas workplaces can act on to have a strong accommodating illness focus: ^{59, 60, 61, 62}

- a work-design focused injury management process; and
- a work-design focused Return to Work process.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detect Illness	→ Leader and employee education → Monitor mental health
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support Illness	→ Reduce mental health stigma → Remove barriers to support → Employee Assistance Program
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accommodate Illness	→ Injury management process → Return to Work process

Why is it important to Accommodate Illness?

Australian businesses incur significant financial losses as a result of worker's compensation claims being mishandled.

In addition to huge loses in productivity, between 2012 and 2013, Australian businesses, reported spending \$201 million on retraining existing employees or training new employees while the injured/unwell employee remained unable to work due to an ineffective return to work process.⁶³

On top of this, workers' compensation payments to the unwell individual have an average cost of \$68,844, including the value of lost wages and treatment combined.⁶⁴ Employees who are off work due to mental ill health and in the workers' compensation system are a substantial loss, considering Australian businesses invest approximately twice an employee's salary in on boarding, training and skill development.⁶⁵

Organisations can intervene to prevent significance losses by offering appropriate and timely support to employees who are experiencing mental illness before they consider submitting a workers' compensation claim. In fact, the Australian Bureau of Statistics found 70% of employees who reported experiencing work-related mental stress did not apply for workers' compensation.⁶⁶ Accommodating psychological injury and encouraging an unwell employee to continue working, results in significant benefit to both the organisation and the individual.

FACT

Approximately \$543 million is paid, each year, in workers' compensation for work-related mental health injury or illness.⁶⁷

Research-backed strategies to improve accommodation of mental illness in your workplace

Increase the capability of leaders to provide structured, tailored psychological injury management and return to work programs to enable employees with mental illness to recover while undertaking appropriate and meaningful work.

A work design focused injury management process

An effective injury management process is vital to ensuring employees who are experiencing mental illness or injury can continue working. An effective injury management process enables employees experiencing mental illness to do things such as attend health appointments and recover when away from the workplace and can prevent their illness from escalating into prolonged leave.^{68, 69}

Adopting a work design focused approach to injury management ensures the employee's tasks and work conditions provide flexibility and accommodation for the employee while they are seeking treatment.

Key features include:

- task modification to accommodate the employee's current capacity, while still using their skills to the fullest extent possible;⁷⁰
- leaders conduct frequent 'check ins' with the employee to ensure the injury management process continues to accommodate their recovery;⁷¹
- leaders/Human Resources personnel are trained in the creation and implementation of an injury management process with respect to workplace mental health; and
- teams around the injured employee are provided with adequate resources to continue to support their work goals while the team is not at full capacity.⁷²

RESOURCE

For information on work-design focused injury management process, please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

A work design focused Return to Work process

For an employee returning to work after an absence due to mental illness, an effective Return to Work (RTW) process is the key to ensuring a successful reintegration back into the workplace.⁷³ An effective RTW process is designed based upon work which uses the employee's skills, knowledge and abilities to create challenging and meaningful tasks, and is supported by appropriate organisational resources.

Adopting a work design centred approach to RTW gives a holistic and tailored view of the considerations required for successfully returning an employee to the workplace.⁷⁴

Leaders and Human Resources personnel need to be trained in the creation and implementation of a RTW process which focuses on modifying the employee's work content as well as creating a supportive and inclusive environment.⁷⁵ Specifically, leaders and Human Resource personnel require training to effectively:

- conduct a careful assessment of the work an employee will return to, to ensure they are provided with well-designed, high quality tasks;⁷⁶
- understand when it is appropriate to, and then ensure returning employees are provided with a modified physical environment to accommodate their recovery;
- conduct frequent 'check ins' with the employee to ensure their RTW process continues to accommodate their recovery;⁷⁷ and
- provide the teams around the injured employee with adequate resources to continue to support their work goals while the team is not at full capacity.

A work design focused RTW program is structured around the five key features:

- involving the returning employee throughout the entire process;
- creating appropriate workloads for the returning employee;
- increasing the returning employee's job control;
- providing a supportive work environment; and
- continually evaluating the work design RTW strategies.

FACT

Between 2012 and 2013, Australian organisations reported \$1.54 billion in lost productivity as a result in ineffective return to work processes.⁷⁸

RESOURCE

For information on work-design focused Return to Work process, please see our [guide](#) in the resource section of the website.

Prevent Harm

Prevent Harm is one of three pillars in the Thrive at Work Framework and an important contributor to creating a workplace in which employees can thrive.

The Prevent Harm pillar has three building blocks that work together to mitigate harm and protect employees against psychosocial risk. They are:

- ➔ Increase Job Resources,
- ➔ Reduce Job Demands, and
- ➔ Increase Resilience and Coping.

Research show us that all employees can be exposed to risks to their mental health at work. In fact, unlike physical hazards (e.g. exposure to asbestos), which are only present for specific groups of working individuals, mental health risks exist in every industry and job.⁷⁹

Australian legislation requires that all workplaces take active steps to protect employee mental health, just as they would manage risks to physical health.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	✓ Increase Job Resources	➔ S timulating job resources ➔ M astery job resources ➔ A gency job resources ➔ R elational job resources
	✓ Reduce Job Demands	➔ T olerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands ➔ Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	✓ Increase Resilience and Coping	➔ Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress

Why is it important to Prevent Harm?

Research consistently finds that factors associated with work and the work environment can significantly increase the likelihood of employees developing physical and mental health conditions, including musculoskeletal conditions, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.⁸⁰

The key to reducing the effects of work-related stress is to understand and control for the types of organisational stressors or risk factors that might lead workers to experience stress and sustain psychological and/or physical ill-health.

Common organisational stressors include:

- low or high work demands;
- low control;
- low task variety;
- low task significance;
- poor support;
- lack of role clarity;
- poorly managed relationships;
- low levels of recognition and reward;
- poorly managed change; and
- organisational injustice.

The mental health outcomes associated with uncontrolled risk factors contribute to decreases in organisational performance. Outcomes include:

- increased absenteeism rates;⁸¹
- reduced productivity and performance;⁸²
- higher turnover rates and associated costs;⁸³ and
- increased workers compensation rates attributable to work stress.⁸⁴

The building blocks in the Prevent Harm pillar enable organisations to take proactive, preventative measures to either reduce or remove risk factors, and thereby reduce the potential for harm.

FACT

46% of Australians working in a workplace they consider mentally unhealthy have taken time off from work in the past 12 months because they felt stressed, anxious, depressed or mentally unhealthy.⁸⁵

Increase Job Resources

Job resources are aspects of work that help people to meet their work goals and, as such, are positive for workers' mental health.⁸⁶ Job resources can also buffer the damaging effects of high job demands, thereby making the demands less stressful.

Increasing job resources is a type of work redesign. Work redesign means changing employees' tasks, responsibilities, and interactions with people within their job.⁸⁷ Good work design that balances an employee's job resources and demands addresses organisational stressors and therefore protects against psychological harm.⁸⁸

The SMART Work Design model, developed by Professor Sharon Parker at the Future of Work Institute is a useful model that employees and employers can refer to when designing meaningful and motivating work. Based on decades of research, the SMART Work Design model identifies five key job characteristics that result in positive outcomes across jobs and industries. SMART work is: Stimulating, Mastery, Agency, Relational, and Tolerable demands.



There are many job resources that can be considered. The SMART work design model identifies four key types of job resources:

- Stimulating job resources – stimulating job resources include having task variety and meaning in the job.
- Mastery job resources – mastery job resources include workers having role clarity, and receiving feedback, including getting appropriate reward and recognition in their work.
- Agency job resources – agency job resources include job control and participation in decision-making.
- Relational job resources – relational job resources are about having positive work relationships and having high levels of supervisor and co-worker support.

Tolerable demands are addressed within the Reduce Job Demands building block.

RESOURCE

Read more about the [SMART work design model](#) in the resources section of the website.

Reduce Job Demands

Job demands are aspects of work that require effort. In excess, or when there are insufficient buffering job resources, job demands can cause stress and discomfort.⁸⁹ Organisations can actively demonstrate their legal compliance through work design that removes, reduces, or manages excessive and harmful job demands in the workplace.⁹⁰

In the SMART model of work design, the T stands for “Tolerable” demands. This recognises that every individual has different levels of tolerance to demands in the workplace, and stress can occur when the amount of work demands exceeds a person’s capacity to cope. Therefore, when evaluating the level of demands, it is important to take into account not only the demands but the person.⁹¹



There are a number of job demands that organisations should manage to ensure they are tolerable. These can include:

- time demands – inadequate time or resources available to complete allocated work, or long working hours;
- cognitive demands – tasks that are mentally demanding due to long periods of high concentration and difficult decision making, or are boring and repetitive;
- emotional demands – work that is emotionally challenging, due to high emotional involvement, or having to regularly disguise emotion at work;
- physical demands – tasks or a physical environment at work that negatively impacts health;
- demands associated with organisational change – poor consultation, communication and implementation of change; and
- demands caused by a lack of organisational justice – processes, procedures, decisions and interactions that lack transparency and are inconsistently handled.

FACT

Research indicates that individuals reporting high levels of job demands are 30-35% more likely to develop mental ill-health.⁹²

Increase resilience and coping

Effectively preventing harm requires organisations to support employees at both an organisational and individual level. By increasing individual resilience and coping, organisations can build employees' ability to cope with, adapt to and recover from stress at work.⁹³

Research suggests that people have differing capacities to manage and recover from stress.⁹⁴

Key strategies to address resilience and coping include:

- build individuals' resilience – increase the ability of employees to cope with and adapt to change and to effectively deal with challenges when they arise; and
- support employees' ability to recover from stress – provide opportunities to recover from stress that occurs at work.

FACT

Research indicates that open and realistic communication can contribute to reducing psychological stress, uncertainty and absenteeism.⁹⁵

Increase Job Resources

Job resources are protective factors in and of themselves because they make work more positive and meaningful.

Job resources are also important because they help people to cope with their work demands and other organisational stressors.⁹⁶ In other words, job resources can buffer employees against the potentially damaging effects of excess work demands and protect employees from harm.

The SMART work design model, developed by Professor Sharon Parker at the Future of Work Institute, outlines five work design characteristics that drive positive individual and organisational outcomes. The characteristics for SMART work are Stimulating, Mastery, Agency, Relational, and Tolerable demands.



Key strategies

Organisations can build job resources into the design of a role by focusing on increasing:

- stimulating job resources;
- mastery job resources;
- agency job resources; and
- relational job resources.

This creates healthy work and buffers the effects of work demands and other organisational stressors. Reducing work demands such that they are tolerable will be described in the Reduce Job Demands building block.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	✓ Increase Job Resources	→ S timulating job resources → M astery job resources → A gency job resources → R elational job resources
	✓ Reduce Job Demands	→ T olerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands → Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	✓ Increase Resilience and Coping	→ Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress

Why is it important to Increase Job Resources?

There are two reasons that job resources are important.

First, job resources are positive for mental health in and of themselves. Studies have shown that jobs with sufficient resources are associated with fewer instances of absence and higher organisational commitment.⁹⁷ The value of job resources to mental health at work is more obvious when they are low or missing. Jobs that have low resources are a source of stress and have been linked to significantly higher rates of both physical illnesses and mental illness (including substance use, depression and anxiety).⁹⁸ Consequently, they have also been linked to increased rates and costs of workers compensation claims and absenteeism.^{99,100,101}

The SMART model of work design addresses organisational stressors through increasing stimulating, mastery, agency, and relational resources and ensuring tolerable demands. Providing access to job resources is an important way that organisations can comply with [Australian Work Health and Safety legislation](#), which highlights the provision of resources and supports as a core responsibility of employers in protecting employee mental health.

Second, job resources help to buffer against high job demands.¹⁰² That is, they can lower the damaging impact of work demands on employee mental health and well-being. Evidence shows that this buffering effect is particularly critical in situations of high demands.¹⁰³

The buffering effect is important because it is not always possible to reduce all work demands to make them tolerable. Some demands can be an inherent part of the job and removing them would fundamentally change the role. In these situations, the work can be made more tolerable by ensuring employees have access to job resources.

RESOURCE

The Centre for Transformative Work Design at the Future of Work Institute is staffed by world-leading academics with a vision to transform work through work design. Check out the [website](#) and contact us for support in transforming work design.

FURTHER READING

There is a wealth of knowledge and research to support the use of good work design to Increase Resources and Supports. This [report](#) by Professor Sharon Parker summarises the principles and evidence for good work design.

Research-backed strategies to Increase Job Resources in the workplace

Provide employees with the necessary resources that will enable them to meet their work demands, buffer against the potentially damaging effects of work demands, and protect them from organisational stressors.

Evidence suggests that different resources can be useful for buffering the effects of different work demands.¹⁰⁴ The specific job resources that might need to be changed in any particular workplace will depend on:

- the needs of the individual employees;
- the specific requirements of the role;
- the organisation; and
- the industry.

For instance, employees working in the mining sector will likely need different types of support compared to retail customer service employees.

Rather than relying on changing factors associated with the individual worker (e.g. increasing training), the strategies in this building block tend to be team- or organisational- level solutions that involve addressing work design. [Work design](#) is the term used to describe the way that tasks, relationships and responsibilities are organised in a job, team and organisation.¹⁰⁵ It can involve making modifications to the individual's role, the work environment, and conditions.

By adhering to the principles of good work design, organisations can build job resources into the role during the design process to create healthy work, address organisational stressors and to buffer the effects of work demands, and thereby Prevent Harm.¹⁰⁶

S *Stimulating job resources*

Good work is an excellent opportunity for intellectual stimulation. Work can be made more stimulating by increasing task variety, or the degree to which a job involves a variety of activities and uses a number of different skills.¹⁰⁷ Increasing variety in a job can improve the interest and challenge in a job, which enhances employees commitment and satisfaction.¹⁰⁸ A job that lacks stimulating job resources will be narrow, repetitive, and monotonous. This offers little challenge and can lead to disengaged workers, wasted talent, and turnover. In highly physical work, narrow tasks can cause biomechanical or musculoskeletal strain.¹⁰⁹

The optimum amount of task variety will differ from person to person and will depend on the level of the position, and the needs of the job.

Possible actions to increase task variety:

- provide the opportunity to do tasks that make the work more meaningful;
- combine tasks to form new and larger modules of work;
- create and support small groups and teams to take on important, prominent assignments; and
- provide opportunities for employees to be creative and to use and develop their skills.

FACT

A research study that examined the interplay between job demands and job resources in the workplace confirmed the important buffering effect of job resources. The study found high autonomy, good supervisor relationships, social support and performance feedback were all effective in buffering the effects of high workload on exhaustion. By contrast, the experience of high demands and low resources significantly predict the experience of burnout.¹¹⁰

M *Mastery job resources*

Most people want to do their job effectively. To achieve mastery of one's work and to reduce exposure to organisational stressors, people need to have clarity around their role, and get feedback and recognition for their work.

Role Clarity:

Role clarity means being clear around what one has to do. Increasing role clarity ensures that the employee, their co-workers and leaders are on the same page about the key objectives, core tasks and responsibilities in their role. This reduces anxiety and stress, and enables the employee and their leader to effectively manage their workload.

Possible actions to increase role clarity:

- provide clear and regularly updated position descriptions;
- provide all new employees with inductions that explains how their role fit within their team, and the broader organisation; and
- have an organisational chart that is easily accessible to all employees and identifies clear reporting relationships

Providing feedback, and rewarding and recognising:

Providing feedback, and rewarding and recognising employees' work and contribution, communicates to an employee the organisation's appreciation for their effort and dedication.

Not only does recognition motivate employees to continue working hard, it also helps employees know they are on the right track and encourages them to continue.¹¹¹

Possible actions to increase recognition and reward:

- provide regular performance reviews and communicate what has been done well and constructive advice for future development;
- use team meetings as a time to share and celebrate successes; and
- ensure rewards are meaningfully linked to job performance.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand the consequences of poorly defined or conflicting roles and possible solutions. The [link](#) is on the Increase Job Resources page of the website.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand that rewarding workers' efforts and recognising organisational contributions and achievements, are essential to minimising the risk of work-related stress. The [link](#) is on the Increase Job Resources page of the website.

A Agency job resources

Agency, also known as autonomy or job control refers to an employee's ability to control aspects of their work.¹¹² Giving employees the opportunity to decide how and when they complete their tasks and the opportunity for input into decision making and can enable employees to address their job demands in the most effective and efficient way.¹¹³ On the other hand, unnecessary levels of supervision and surveillance, excessive responsibility but little authority or decision making power, and little or no say in how work is done may all lead to a stress response.

Possible actions to increase agency resources:

- consult with employees before making changes to their job;
- allow employees the opportunity to give input into how tasks are done, the pace and order in which they work (where possible); and
- educate managers in processes of consultation and participative decision making.

Research has found that employees with low levels of control have 20-25% increased risk of mental health issues. In contrast, employees with high levels of job control have a 25% lower risk of mental health problems.¹¹⁴

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand job control (agency job resources) and possible strategies to increase employee control. The [link](#) is on the Increase Job Resources page.

R Relational job resources

Support from supervisors and co-workers is critical in buffering the stress responses people might otherwise experience where their jobs are demanding and they feel that they are not in control. Adequate relational support can be achieved by providing both practical and emotional support where necessary.¹¹⁵

Possible actions to ensure supervisor and co-worker support:

- Hold regular team meetings or debrief sessions where employees can share concerns and engage in collaborative problem solving; and
- Train leaders and employees about signs and symptoms of work stress and how to provide support.
- Conduct regular performance reviews, including open and constructive feedback;

Some studies have reported 24-44% increased risk of mental health problems for employees with poor supervisor or co-worker support.¹¹⁶

Workplace relationships can be a major source of support at work but can also be a significant source of stress. It is likely that wherever groups of people work together, some conflict will arise from time to time. This is normal and in some cases can provide positive impetus for innovation and growth. Conflict becomes a risk factor however, where it remains unresolved or becomes particularly intense. Ongoing workplace conflict, bullying and harassment can be damaging to employee mental health and should be addressed to prevent psychological harm.¹¹⁷

Possible actions to improve relationships at work:

- ensure all leaders and employees are aware of the organisation's bullying and harassment policies and that these are enforced;
- encourage respectful, honest and open communication throughout the workplace; and
- provide systems for conflict resolution and ensure all employees are aware of them.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand the role leaders and co-workers can play in supporting colleagues through stress. The [link](#) is on the Increase Job Resources page of the website.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand that relationships and / or conflict with bosses, peers and subordinates can positively or negatively affect the way a worker feels at work. The [link](#) is on the Increase Job Resources page of the website.

RESOURCE

Bullying and harassment is unlawful and a leading cause of work related stress. There are a multitude of useful resources to guide your organisation in this area. See our [guide](#) on the resources page of the website.

Reduce Job Demands

Leaders and employees need to be able to identify, eliminate, reduce or manage excessive and unnecessary demands in the workplace. We refer to this as ensuring job demands are “tolerable” for the employees doing the work.

The SMART work design model outlines five characteristics of good work design that lead to more meaningful and motivating work, and prevents harm through the reduction of potential stressors. The model addresses the need for Stimulating, Mastery, Agency and Relational job resources which aid in the design of healthy work (for more on this, see the increase job resources section). However, to effectively reduce stress and prevent harm, the demands placed on the individual need to be Tolerable.



Key strategies

There are a number of demands that organisations should ensure are tolerable. These include:

- time demands;
- physical demands;
- cognitive demands;
- emotional demands;
- demands associated with organisational change; and
- demands caused by a lack of organisational justice.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	 Increase Job Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Stimulating job resources → Mastery job resources → Agency job resources → Relational job resources
	 Reduce Job Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tolerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands → Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	 Increase Resilience and Coping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress

Why is it important to ensure Tolerable Job Demands?

All work involves demands because there are goals to achieve, and effort must be put in to achieve these goals. So demands in and of themselves are necessary in all work. In fact, when demands are challenging and present at appropriate levels (and supported by adequate resources) they can increase employee engagement.¹¹⁸

Demands become problematic when the level of demand exceeds the individual's ability to meet those demands, or when they become intolerable.¹¹⁹ The extra effort required to work in an environment with excessive demands for extended periods of time without recovery can deplete energy levels and result in strain, exhaustion and burnout.¹²⁰

Research consistently shows a clear relationship between excessive job demands and negative outcomes for both the individual and organisation. For instance, excessive job demands have been associated with increased risk of mental health conditions, including depression and anxiety.¹²¹ These mental health problems have in turn been associated with higher than average workers compensation costs, absenteeism, and turnover.^{122, 123, 124, 125}

Every employee has a different tolerance for the demands of their work. What is considered excessive, stressful or overwhelming for one individual may be energising, challenging and engaging for another. Knowing this, it is important that organisations design work that optimises the demands for each employee by tailoring work to the individual's skills and abilities.

Australian legislation states that organisations and employees have a shared responsibility to create and maintain a safe and mentally healthy work environment. Organisations have a legal obligation to protect employees from risks to mental and physical harm, so far as reasonably practicable. Regulatory bodies recommend good work design that reduces excessive demands on employees is a key way for employers to protect worker mental health.¹²⁶

FURTHER READING

In Australia, there are legislative requirements requiring employers to consult with employees about changes to work design. The [link](#) is on the Reduce Job Demands page of the website.

CASE STUDY

Legally, there can be serious repercussions for organisations who fail to make reasonable adjustments to create a mentally healthy workplace. Recently, a Victorian teacher took legal action after repeatedly being assigned the most difficult and unruly students. When the school failed to address his concerns or provide appropriate resources to support his workload, the excessive work demands resulted in serious psychological injury. The Court found that the school had neglected their duty as awarded him over a million dollars in compensation.¹²⁷ The [link](#) to watch a video on the case is on the Reduce Job Demands page.

Research-backed strategies to Reduce Job Demands in the workplace

Increase the capability of leaders and employees to identify and eliminate excessive or unnecessary stressors in the workplace.

T *Tolerable demands*

To offer the highest possible protection against physical and psychological harm, organisations need to ensure demands placed on individuals are tolerable. To do this, the following need to be addressed: time demands, cognitive demands, emotional demands, physical demands, demands associated with organisational change, and demands caused by a lack of organisational justice. The following sections provide detail into how these demands can be reduced to a tolerable level.

Time demands

Unrealistic or excessive time demands can cause stress, fatigue and exhaustion. Examples of excessive time demands include:

- demanding workloads – excessive work with insufficient time or resources to achieve work requirements; and
- demanding work hours – including overtime, shift work, rostering that does not provide sufficient time for sleep and recovery.

Possible actions to reduce time demands:

- train managers to ensure that they understand how to safely allocate workload;
- monitor workloads during periods of high demands and provide additional support where required;
- ensure that all employees and managers are aware of the organisation's policies related to fatigue management (including overtime, rosters and shift work); and
- managers and employees establish practice of negotiating reasonable deadlines.

RESOURCE

One of the major stressors in workplaces operating on shifts or with huge time demands – is tiredness. Managing fatigue is one aspect of designing work for well-being. For more information, see our [guide](#) on the resources page of the website.

Cognitive demands

Although workers like to have challenging and stimulating work, sustained periods of very high cognitive demands (also known as mental demands) can be exhausting. Examples of work that is highly cognitively demanding include:

- work that is extremely complex or requires high level of decision making; and
- work that requires extended periods of concentration.

Remember that cognitively demanding work is not always the problem. Work that is very boring or monotonous can also be draining. In fact, individuals completing monotonous tasks have to work even harder to maintain concentration and vigilance.

Possible actions to reduce cognitive demands:

- ensure that employees have appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities for the work that they are assigned;
- allow adequate time for breaks;
- provide additional practical assistance for employees performing mentally challenging work;
- rotate boring, monotonous tasks; and
- give employees control over the order, method and pace at which they complete tasks.

Physical demands

Poor physical work environments and physically demanding work can result in fatigue, and a range of health conditions including musculoskeletal problems.¹²⁸

Examples of excessive physical demands include:

- environmental hazards such as poor lighting, noise vibration, poorly designed work equipment or work stations; and
- physically demanding work, including repetitive tasks.

Possible actions to reduce physical demands:

- ensure that leaders and employees understand how to identify physical hazards in the environment and are able to respond appropriately;
- allow employees to take regular breaks from physically demanding or repetitive tasks; and
- ensure that employees have necessary tools and equipment for a physically safe and comfortable work station.

RESOURCE

Promoting physical health at work supports employee well-being. For more information, see our [guide](#) on the resources page of the website.

Emotional demands

Some types of work can be inherently emotionally demanding. Examples of emotional demands include:

- work that requires high amount of emotional involvement;
- work that requires employees to hide or regulate their emotions); and
- work that is emotionally disturbing.

Possible actions to reduce emotional demands:

- allow employees to take breaks or 'time out' from emotionally demanding work;
- provide access to employee assistance programs (EAP) for those who experience a traumatic event or those working in roles with high emotional demands; and
- provide regular training to individuals working in roles that require them to regularly interact with clients, regulate or hide their emotions (for example, conflict resolution, customer service training, or stress management programs).

RESOURCE

An employee assistance program delivers psychological services to employees and their families, whilst considering their workplace needs. For more information, see our [guide](#) on the resources page of the website.

RESOURCE

Stress at work contributes significantly to the experience of mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression. The primary intervention for reducing stress is addressing work design. A secondary intervention is to support employees in the development of skills and personal resources to help manage and recover from work-related stress. The Future of Work Institute has produced a page of [guidance](#) to assist with this on the resources page of the website.

Demands associated with organisational change

Organisational change is an unavoidable part of working life. However, if not implemented properly, poorly managed change can increase risk of stress and anxiety. Organisations should aim to reduce uncertainty during periods of change through effective communication before, during and after change processes.

Possible actions for effective change management:

- train leaders and managers in effective communication skills;
- carry out change processes with openness and transparency so that employees understand why and how changes will occur and the impacts they will have; and
- engage in process of consultation with employees that encourages feedback and participation.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks – including one to assist organisations understand the stress-related consequences of managing change poorly and steps to ensure changes are managed well. The [link](#) to read more is on the Reduce Job Demands page of the website.

Demands caused by a lack of organisational justice

Organisational justice is the term used to refer to employees' perceptions of fairness at work. Lack of organisational justice has been associated with increased risk of negative mental health outcomes, low job satisfaction, and reduced organisational commitment.^{129, 130} Researchers have also noted an association with justice and work performance, with a lack of organisational justice being associated with anger and negative attitudes towards the organisation, which results in reduced performance and quality of work.¹³¹

There are three kinds of justice that, if not addressed, can cause additional stress to employees. These include:

- procedural justice: perception of fairness in how processes and procedures are carried out in the workplace;
- interactional justice: perception of fairness in treatment of individuals when decisions are made, including whether employees are treated with respect and dignity and whether the reasons for decision outcomes are explained; and
- distributive justice: perception of fairness of decision outcomes and the distribution of resources.

Possible actions to increase organisational justice:

- carry out all processes consistently across the organisation;
- use open communication during times of change, including clear explanations of the reasons for decisions; and
- treat all employees with dignity and respect at all times.

FURTHER READING

WorkSafe NSW has formulated a series of tip sheets addressing psychosocial risks, including one on organisational justice – explaining the importance of promoting a positive and fair working environment. The [link](#) is on the Reduce Job Demands page of the website.

Increase Resilience and Coping

The Increase Resilience and Coping building block assists employees in improving their ability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from stress at work.

Key strategies

There are two key strategies that organisations can use to increase employee resilience and coping. These are:

- individual resilience; and
- support recovery from stress.

Sometimes it is not always possible to reduce all demands or increase resources enough to entirely buffer against stress. Increasing resilience and coping skills supports employees to develop skills and techniques to deal with the unexpected ups and down in the workplace and in life.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	 Increase Job Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Stimulating job resources → Mastery job resources → Agency job resources → Relational job resources
	 Reduce Job Demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tolerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands → Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	 Increase Resilience and Coping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress

Why is it important to Increase Resilience and Coping?

Even with risk factors controlled through good work design (by reducing demands and increasing resources and supports), unavoidable stressful events can still occur. For example, unanticipated organisational change, fluctuations in markets, or traumatic events. In the event of unpredicted stressful events, employees need to have psychological resources to effectively cope and recover.

Employees with higher resilience tend to be more adaptive to failure, setbacks and change.¹³² Research has linked resilience to improved mental health outcomes and has found that resilience-building programs in the workplace can help with improving employee performance,

enhancing well-being and preventing mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression.¹³³

Whereas promoting individual resilience focuses on providing skills to deal with future stressful events, activities that promote stress management and stress recovery have a more immediate focus and is critical in preventing long term harm. Stress management interventions that use a cognitive-behavioural approach have been found to be the most effective in terms of stress, anxiety and other mental health outcomes.¹³⁴

Interestingly, the way an individual spends their time outside of work plays a critical role in their ability to recover from work demands. Research strongly suggests that the most effective recovery strategies are psychological detachment and mastery experiences.¹³⁵ Employees who are able to completely switch off and disconnect at the end of the work day (psychologically detach) experience fewer mental ill-health symptoms, emotional exhaustion and job strain over time.^{136, 137} Mastery experiences are activities that are completely unrelated to work and are challenging but not over taxing, such as learning a new language, playing a sport. Employees who engage in mastery experiences outside of work have increased engagement work and increased well-being.¹³⁸

RESOURCE

For guidance on how to select a resilience and coping intervention, review our [Selecting Resilience and Coping Interventions information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website.

FACT

A study found that individuals who did not have the opportunity to psychologically detach from work during non-work time had significantly higher emotional exhaustion one year later. The authors concluded that the ability to switch off outside of work is critical to buffering the effects of job demands.¹³⁹

Research-backed strategies to Increase Resilience and Coping in your workplace

Assist employees in improving their ability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from stress at work.

Individual resilience

Resilience is the ability to effectively cope, adjust and recover quickly from stress and adversity.¹⁴⁰ Providing employees with the opportunity to build resilience and coping skills can help them build the resources they need to cope with and bounce-back from current and future

stressful situations. The purpose of resilience building programs in the workplace is to provide employees with the skills and personal resources to necessary to bounce back from future setbacks.¹⁴¹

In today's ever changing environment, resilience is a personal resource that all workers can benefit from. However, the need for strong resilience skills is particularly for employees in high risk industries that are regularly exposed to traumatic or stressful events, such as first responders, and disaster relief.

Possible actions to increase individual resilience include:

- resilience training programs that incorporate cognitive behavioural therapy components that address thought patterns and responses to stressful events;
- introduce coaching and mentoring programs; and
- provide flexible work options that allows individuals to approach stressful situations in a way that works for them.

Individual ability to recover from stress

For employees to perform at their best and manage stress at work, it is important that they have adequate time and opportunity to recover. Being able to switch off from work at the end of the day enables employees to recharge their energy and return to work refreshed. Non-work related activities, physical exercise, mindfulness and relaxation can all assist the recovery process.

Possible actions to support individual ability to recover from stress:

- stress recovery training programs;
- provide meaningful breaks after stressful events;
- provide the opportunity for employees to engage in sport and other physical activity;
- roster adequate breaks between shifts; and
- maintain boundaries between home and work life, including limiting email contact, technology use.

FACT

Mindfulness and mindfulness-based techniques have been associated with improved coping with stressful events, faster recovery from negative events, better problem solving, increased job satisfaction, increased working memory and more.¹⁴²

Promote Thriving


Promote thriving is one of three pillars in the Thrive at Work Framework, and an important contributor to creating a workplace in which employees can thrive.

The Promote Thriving pillar has three building blocks that work together to optimise employee well-being. They are:

- ➔ Create Conditions for Performance;
- ➔ Create Conditions for Connection; and
- ➔ Create Conditions for Growth.

Thriving is being energised, feeling valued, and feeling that what you do is valued. Thriving is being productive, being open to challenges presented, and having the opportunity to continuously learn and grow.¹⁴³

Research tells us that mental health is not only the absence of mental ill health, but also includes the development of positive mental health, characterised by positive states of thinking, feeling, and functioning.¹⁴⁴ A thriving organisation not only protects employees against psychological harm, but also provides an environment that fosters the development of positive mental health and a sense of fulfilment. In thriving workplaces, all individuals can experience positive well-being.¹⁴⁵

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Promote Thriving Optimise wellbeing and generate future capabilities.	✓ Create Conditions for Performance	➔ Strategic Human Resource practices
	✓ Create Conditions for Connection	➔ High quality work connections ➔ Diversity and inclusion ➔ Community engagement
	✓ Create Conditions for Growth	➔ Strength-based development ➔ Support lifelong learning

Why is it important to Promote Thriving?

Thriving employees go above and beyond for the organisation, they are more creative, safer and are more committed to the organisation.

Supporting employees to thrive makes clear business sense. Research has found that thriving employees are more confident and energised, better able to respond to challenges, and recover quicker from the demands of work.¹⁴⁶ Thriving is linked to sustainable individual and

organisational performance.¹⁴⁷ Organisations experience greater customer satisfaction and loyalty, productivity, safety performance and overall profitability along with reduced turnover and absenteeism.¹⁴⁸

Fortunately, there are activities and actions that organisations can invest in to promote thriving in the workplace. It is important to have a solid understanding of the three building blocks in the Promote Thriving pillar and how they work together to create conditions of thriving.

FACT

Employees who experience states of positive mental health perform beyond the required tasks of their job.¹⁴⁹

Create Conditions for Performance

To be able to cope with and benefit from changes in the future of work, organisations need to build a thriving and high performing environment.

High performing organisations are those that foster innovation, proactivity, and engagement at work.

Key strategies to create conditions for performance include:

- strategic human resources practices – implement practices that drive employee outcomes. This can include: self-managed work teams; recruitment and selection; training and development; compensation and benefits; employee relations; communication practices; work design and involvement; performance management and appraisals; promotions and internal mobility; and turnover, retention, and exit management.

FACT

Employees who experience states of positive mental health are more committed to the organisation and perform better.¹⁵⁰

Create Conditions for Connection

In order to reap the benefits of a thriving workforce, it is vital that employees have a sense of meaning in their work. One way that employees derive meaning from their work is through their connections.

Importantly, these connections can be internal and external to the organisation.

Key strategies to create conditions for connection include:

- high quality work connections – build work relationships that allow for both resource and information sharing, a sense of social connectedness, and emotional support;
- diversity and inclusion – ensure organisational policies, procedures and behaviours support diversity and inclusion; and
- community engagement – provide opportunities for employees to contribute to the community

FACT

*Thriving employees behave more safely, are more creative, proactive and open to new experiences.*¹⁵¹

Create Conditions for Growth

Growth is an essential human process across the lifespan and individual learning and growth is a key dimension of thriving.¹⁵²

Workplaces are an important source of learning, growth and well-being for individuals.¹⁵³

Key strategies to create conditions for growth include:

- strengths-based development – assist employees to identify, grow, and leverage their natural strengths at work; and
- support lifelong learning – encourage continuous learning and self-development.

FACT

*Job design characteristics, demands, rewards, workplace physical activity and work-life balance are particularly useful in preventing mental health problems in the workplace and reducing disability claim costs.*¹⁵⁴

Create Conditions for Performance









The most critical aspect of high performing organisation is to have a system of human resource practices that cultivate employee innovation, proactivity and engagement at work.

To become a high performing organisation, an organisation needs to enable employees to have the capacity and capability to perform beyond simply meeting performance requirements.

Key Strategies

Human Resources practices that can be used as an opportunity to promote thriving in the workplace include:

- self-managed work teams;
- recruitment and selection;
- training and development;
- compensation and benefits;
- employee relations;
- communication practices;
- work design and involvement;
- performance management and appraisals;
- promotions and internal mobility; and
- turnover, retention, and exit management.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
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	 Create Conditions for Growth	 Strength-based development  Support lifelong learning

Why is it important to Create Conditions for Performance?

In Australia, only 19% of employees report being highly engaged in their work.¹⁵⁵ Such a high volume of employees experiencing 'disengagement' at work can negatively affect productivity, and as a result, the bottom line for organisations.¹⁵⁶

High performing employees are engaged, proactive, intrinsically motivated, find meaning in their work, apply their strengths and have opportunities to learn and grow. Engaged employees are

more vigilant, energised, and focused on their work tasks.¹⁵⁷ In turn, this high engagement translates to improved employee performance at work.

Unfortunately, few organisations are taking the steps to create conditions for high performance.¹⁵⁸ Rather than purely focusing on measuring outcomes such as employee engagement, organisations need to take a step further and create a broader strategic action plan for high performance. This requires an organisation to take a critical look at their human resources strategies.

FACT

Companies with highly engaged workforces outperform their peers by 147% in earning per share.¹⁵⁹

Research-backed strategies to Create Conditions for Performance in your workplace

Introduce a system of human resource practices that cultivate employee innovation, proactivity and engagement at work.

Self-managed organising

Self-management is the organisational philosophy represented by individuals freely and autonomously performing the traditional functions of management without the need for hierarchy or arbitrary command authority over others. Instead of being assigned tasks based on functional roles, a self-managed team determines, plans and manages their day-to-day activities and duties under reduced or no supervision. A growing number of organisations are seeking ways to organise less hierarchically in this way in the hopes of becoming more innovative, nimble, and enriching places to work.¹⁶⁰

Selective hiring practices

Selective hiring practices focus on recruiting the right person for the job, regardless of the effort required during the recruitment and selection process.¹⁶¹ Having a strong focus on hiring the best employees, using explicit and long-term criteria that relates to organisational strategy, has been shown to result in greater employee commitment and organisational performance.

Training and development

Training and development practices help employees develop new skills to strengthen the organisation's functioning. Examples of high-performance training and development practices include cross-functional and multi-skilling training, and training for firm-specific skills.

Compensation and benefits

High performance compensation and benefits can include various forms of individual and team incentives. They can include incentive compensation payment plans, such as performance based rewards, gain sharing, profit sharing, stock ownership, and pay for skills.

Employee relations

Practices concerned with governing the relationship between employees and the employer can influence organisational culture, feelings of trust and organisational performance. Fair complaint and grievance procedures and employment security are two simple employee relations strategies that can enhance organisational performance.¹⁶²

Communication practices

Information sharing across organisational levels is critical for high performance in general.¹⁶³ It can reduce employee uncertainty, clarify goals, and help establish links between tasks and the overall strategy. Practices typically involve the use of a formal information sharing system or program to aid information sharing across departments and levels.

Participation in decision making

Employees have the power to make their own decisions on how to plan and schedule their tasks and the methods they use in their daily work. This can be accomplished by eliminating bureaucracy, reducing unnecessary rules and regulations, and providing alternative and flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or establishing self-managing teams.¹⁶⁴

Flexible work practices

Designing work that allows for flexibility in time, leave, place, and choice.¹⁶⁵ Flexible work can improve the performance and well-being of organisations, teams and employees. Promoting thriving through flexibility requires more than accommodating individual requests for flexible work. It requires re-organising all team members' work to maximise performance and well-being.

Performance management and appraisal processes

These practices are concerned with measuring and improving team and individual performance. Examples include frequent feedback based on team/organisational goals, and managing objectives linked to strategies.

Promotions and internal mobility

These practices relate to the opportunities and methods by which employees can move to higher level positions within an organisation. Example practices include using promotions to reward good performance, career paths in the organisation, and job ladders.

FACT

In Australia, only 17% of team leaders made sure that employees had the resources available to complete their work, and only 14% stated that there are clear structures in place that ensure transparent decision making.¹⁶⁶

RESOURCE

For guidance on how to select a resilience and coping intervention, review our [Selecting Resilience and Coping Interventions information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website.

RESOURCE

There are two fundamental challenges for modern work – firstly, work happens in an increasingly uncertain world of rapid, unpredictable, and mostly sustained change. Secondly, employees are increasingly interdependent with other people through teams, networks, and interconnected systems. The Future of Work Design’s MAPNet approach helps organisations to understand the multitude of skills and activities that enable success in uncertain and interdependent work environments. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

RESOURCE

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency have developed two free toolkits on workplace flexibility for managers and employees, including guidance on creating, communicating and fostering flexible work practices within teams. For more information and access to these toolkits, see our [guide](#) on the resources page of the website.

Creating Conditions for Connection











A critical aspect of a thriving organisation relates to the meaning employees derive from their work, through the quality of their connections and relationships at work.

Relationships with others at work provide key contributions to how employees make sense of the meaning of their work, the job itself, and themselves in the job.¹⁶⁷ The relationships and connections can be internal and external to the organisation, including co-workers, leaders, teams and communities.¹⁶⁸ Positive interpersonal connections occur when trust, inclusiveness and fairness characterise the relationships individuals have with others.¹⁶⁹

Key Strategies

There are three strategies highlighted in the research:

- build high quality work connections;
- foster diversity and inclusion; and
- enable community engagement.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Promote Thriving Optimise wellbeing and generate future capabilities.	 Create Conditions for Performance	 Strategic Human Resource practices
	 Create Conditions for Connection	 High quality work connections  Diversity and inclusion  Community engagement
	 Create Conditions for Growth	 Strength-based development  Support lifelong learning

Why is it important to Create Conditions for Connection?

Greater connections and meaning at work has been shown to influence important outcomes such as:

- motivation;¹⁷⁰
- absenteeism;¹⁷¹
- engagement;¹⁷²
- individual performance;¹⁷³
- personal fulfilment;¹⁷⁴ and
- well-being.¹⁷⁵

In contrast, a lack of connection and meaning in work can lead to poor motivation and ‘disengagement’ from work, which can negatively affect organisational outcomes. These include turnover, safety performance, productivity and customer service.¹⁷⁶ Organisations that help employees connect and find greater meaning in their work, are more likely to reap the benefits of a more engaged workforce.

FACT

A recent survey in Australia found only 22% of people are motivated to work hard because their job is interesting and important to them personally, and only 13% indicated that there are efforts made to help individuals find meaning and purpose in their work.¹⁷⁷

Research-backed strategies to Create Conditions for Connection in your workplace

Enable employees to engage in meaningful work through diverse and high quality connections and relationships at work and with the community.

Build high quality work connections

Building high quality connections (HQC) are essential in promoting positive mental health and well-being.¹⁷⁸ HQC move beyond co-worker/ and supervisory support, to the existence of relationships that are open, trustworthy, fair and encourage generativity.¹⁷⁹ Employees who experience HQC feel safer to:

- generate new ideas;
- take risks;
- experiment and try new things; and
- take into account the needs of co-workers when doing their own work.

On an individual level, HQC can support personal development and growth and enhance meaningfulness through positive interpersonal interactions with co-workers and clients.^{180,181} At an organisational level, HQC are associated with increased interpersonal trust and coordination between employees.¹⁸²

Despite the importance of quality relationships, Superfriend’s Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Report¹⁸³ reported that only 20% of relationships in the workplace are based on trust.

Possible actions to build high quality work connections include:

- facilitate greater information and resource sharing;
- encourage more feedback seeking behaviour;
- develop a culture of trust that supports vulnerability, openness and authenticity; and
- provide opportunities for social interactions with colleagues, e.g. include time on meeting agendas to check in with the team and offer space for sharing experiences/stories.

RESOURCE

The Future of Work Institute has curated a page of information available on building high quality work connections, including a guide to job crafting – a component of which is allowing employees to build the level and type of interaction they would like into their day to day work tasks. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

Foster diversity and inclusion

Australia has a highly diverse workforce. Diversity provides the opportunity for creativity, innovation, and higher quality output in comparison to a team of like-minded individuals.¹⁸⁴ However, these positive outcomes can only be achieved when organisations focus on both diversity and inclusion.¹⁸⁵

The Diversity Council of Australia states that inclusion occurs when “a diversity of people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation. It is only through inclusion that organisations can make the most out of diversity.”

According to Deloitte’s Global Human Capital Trends (2017) survey, the proportion of executives who cite inclusion as a top priority rose 32% between 2014 and 2017. In mid-2017, 150 CEO’s from world leading organisations pledged to launch action for Diversity and Inclusion, committed to developing workplaces that are thriving. Diverse and inclusive workplaces are more likely to attract, hire and retain high performing employees and as a result, improve their bottom line.¹⁸⁶ In addition, research shows that inclusion can increase innovation, reduce groupthink and improve performance.

Possible actions to foster diversity and inclusion include:

- develop a diversity and inclusion policy;
- take initial actions to foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace such as review and aligning HR practices and policies and leadership training to build more inclusive leaders; and
- ensure adequate resources are in place to drive the diversity and inclusion function.

RESOURCE

The Future of Work Institute has curated a page of information containing available resources on creating diverse and inclusive workplaces. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

Enable community engagement

Organisations can shape the meaning of work by enabling workers to build relationships and ties to the community. Research suggests that creating the opportunity for employees to contribute to the community through their work, allows employees to develop an enhanced sense of purpose, agency, and impact, which can lead to work being experienced as more meaningful.¹⁸⁷

Possible actions to enable community engagement include:

- develop a Corporate Social Responsibility strategy;
- partner with a non-for-profit organisation;
- link team building days with volunteer activities; and
- get involved with corporate volunteering.

RESOURCE

The Future of Work Institute has curated a page of information containing available resources on the ways in which your organisation might engage with community organisations and offer corporate volunteering. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

RESOURCE

The Future of Work Institute has developed an innovative framework for understanding the nature of work in a rapidly changing world. MAPNet represents a new way to re-think the organisation of work and identify the skills that will be required to successfully navigate a dynamic future. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

FACT

A study by Deloitte found a direct correlation between diversity, inclusion and business performance. The study found that more diverse and inclusive workplaces saw on average 83% improvement on their ability to innovate, 31% increase in the ability to respond to changing customer needs and a 42% increase in team collaboration. Greater diversity and inclusion was also related to higher levels of employee engagement.¹⁸⁸

Create Conditions for Growth

The future of work is increasingly complex, geographically dispersed, digital and collaborative, and the demands of the work environment are constantly changing.¹⁸⁹

To keep up with the changing nature of work, organisations need to change the way they approach employee learning and development and contribute to personal growth. This involves shifting from traditional, short-term fixed knowledge and skill acquisition models, to a focus on building capabilities for the future.¹⁹⁰











Adopting a growth mindset will help organisations and individuals continue to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, and stay relevant, competitive and employable.¹⁹¹

Key Strategies

The need to learn and grow is a natural process across a lifespan, and workplaces are one source of learning and growth for individuals.

Key strategies include:

- strength-based development; and
- support lifelong learning.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Promote Thriving Optimise wellbeing and generate future capabilities.	 Create Conditions for Performance	 Strategic Human Resource practices
	 Create Conditions for Connection	 High quality work connections  Diversity and inclusion  Community engagement
	 Create Conditions for Growth	 Strength-based development  Support lifelong learning

Why is it important to Create Conditions for Growth?

Research shows that all employees need opportunities to learn and grow at work. The availability of growth opportunities is one of the main reasons why individuals change jobs.¹⁹² Workplaces that do not provide these opportunities risk increasing turnover, with employees exiting to seek out organisations that do offer these opportunities. Research shows that growth and development opportunities is a particular priority for millennial workers.¹⁹³

It is impossible to separate work participation and learning.¹⁹⁴ The opportunities the organisation provide for individual learning is key to utilising workplaces as sources of learning

and growth for employees.¹⁹⁵ Providing opportunities to learn in addition to other job resources such as high quality feedback, have found to be positively associated with greater work engagement- a state of work-related well-being that is linked with greater individual job performance.^{196,197}

Organisations that take a strengths approaches to employee development have consistently been found to enhance overall individual well-being.¹⁹⁸

FACT

A global survey conducted by PWC, found that 52% of millennials stated that career growth and progression was the main attraction to an employer, coming ahead of competitive salaries.¹⁹⁹

Research-backed strategies to Create Conditions for Growth in your workplace

Enable employees to build capabilities for the future by shifting from traditional, short-term fixed knowledge and skill acquisition, to a model of continuous development and lifelong learning.

Strength-based development

Strategies that allow employees to use their natural talents to become strengths have the potential to greatly improve productivity.²⁰⁰ A common way that organisations suppress productivity is failing to provide the opportunity for employees to be in roles that play to their inherent talents, abilities and strengths. Employees value the opportunity to apply their unique talents and strengths at work. However, the management perspective has historically been heavily focused on identifying and developing weaknesses, rather than strengths.²⁰¹

Employees that use their strengths at work every day are more likely to be intrinsically motivated, engaged and more productive.²⁰² The Gallup Organisation conducted a study of almost 50,000 business units in 45 countries, and reported that those work groups that received a strength-based intervention, observed a subsequent increases in sales by 10% to 19% and profits by 14% to 29%, in comparison to control groups.

According to Superfriend's Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Survey (2018) found that only 18% of talents, skills & competencies of the workforce are well used.

Possible areas of action to develop a strengths-based approach in the workplace include:

- ➔ review people management systems and processes;
- ➔ assist employees to better understand their strengths and utilise them at work; and
- ➔ provide strengths-based leadership training.

RESOURCE

The Future of Work Institute has create a page of information available on strengths-based development, including a tool to help employees understand their strengths, and a guide for employers on developing employees with strengths in mind. See our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website to learn more.

Lifelong learning

People by nature, are lifelong learners; they purposefully seek new knowledge and skills or attempt to transform themselves.²⁰³ Workplaces play a key role in promoting lifelong learning and personal growth through encouraging continuous learning and self-development.

Due to the fast pace and changing nature of work, performance standards are becoming more complex and demanding, and new technologies must be integrated into the organisation.²⁰⁴ This is an ongoing challenge for both individuals and organisations, making continuous learning critical.

Not only are opportunities for learning important for employee well-being, leaders that focus on creating opportunities for employees' personal growth and career development enable workers to feel more empowered and engaged, making them less likely to leave the organisation.²⁰⁵

Despite the importance of growth opportunities, Superfriend's Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Survey (2018), only 18% of leaders actively provide opportunities to develop professionally.

Possible areas of action to create conditions for growth in the workplace include:

- ➔ review the learning and development function within your organisation; and
- ➔ embed ongoing self-development opportunities – e.g. by mentoring, coaching.

RESOURCE

See PwC's [discussion paper](#) on the need for embedding continuous learning opportunities for employees in our resource section of the website.

FACT

According to a recent global survey, learning in the workplace is key indicator of general life satisfaction and positive well-being.²⁰⁶

RESOURCE

At the Future of Work Institute our researchers have been examining the skills that both employees and organisations need to consider in order to thrive in a changing work landscape. To read more, see our [information sheet](#) on the resources page of the website.





Thrive at Work Implementation Process

Thrive at Work Implementation Process

Knowing what impacts mental health and well-being in the workplace is only one part of the puzzle. How to go about addressing it is another. A recent Australian survey found that 16% of organisations have not addressed workplace mental health and well-being because they don't know where to start.²⁰⁷

The Thrive at Work implementation process has been established to help your organisation develop a strategic approach to employee well-being in order to produce the most positive organisational outcomes.

Goals of the implementation process

Thrive at Work provides organisations with a methodology for developing a mental health and well-being strategy and action plan. The process provides step-by-step guidance and resources for your organisation that is detailed below:



Collaborating on well-being

The Thrive at Work implementation process is useful for a wide range of workplaces. Most of the activities are applicable across a range of industries and organisation sizes and can be scaled up or down where needed.

Regardless of your organisation's size or industry, developing an integrated well-being strategy is likely to involve collaboration with multiple stakeholders. Groups that may be involved in this process include functional areas such as health and safety, well-being, human resources, and people and culture. It may also include employees and leaders who are interested in championing the promotion of mental health and well-being in the organisation, irrespective of role.

Senior leaders will also play a critical role in driving policies and practices that promote mental health in the workplace. Senior leadership can positively influence workplace culture, management practices and staff experience. Therefore, it will be useful for senior leaders to be on board with the Thrive at Work initiative and act as champions for the process.

Prepare

Building a strong foundation for change is fundamental to ensuring the long term viability of your mental health and well-being initiatives.

Three preparatory steps are recommended to maximise the impact of your well-being activities:

1. Construct a strong business case
2. Identify a core team and commit resources
3. Gain employee support

Construct a strong business case

A strong business case is an important tool that you can use to get leader and stakeholder buy-in when introducing a new mental health and well-being strategy to your organisation.

Gaining leadership and stakeholder support from across the organisation will help you access resources, build employee engagement with initiatives and facilitate your ability to develop a successful mental health and well-being strategy. When it comes time to introduce new well-being activities, it will be critical to have senior leaders on-board who can then advocate for your chosen activities and demonstrate executive support. Senior leaders will also have an awareness of the overall organisational strategy and can help articulate how well-being contributes to your organisation's vision and goals.

Tailor your business case to your audience

The most compelling rationale for supporting mental health at work can vary depending on your organisation's focus areas and priorities. Different arguments will appeal to different leaders and business areas. Some stakeholders will be motivated by ethical considerations, others by financial, legal, productivity or client satisfaction benefits. Business cases are most successful when they are tailored to the interests of key stakeholders or address desired organisational outcomes. Stakeholders will want to know the specific benefits of your proposed activities relevant to their department and organisation. Fortunately, there are a plethora of benefits to investing in employee well-being, which can be drawn upon to create a strong business case.

When identifying points for inclusion in your business case, your case can be strengthened by linking evidence to your organisation's priorities, values and key performance indicators (KPIs). Should it be available, you may wish to include your own company specific data and statistics. Below we present some examples of tailored business cases.

Example 1: Legal Compliance, External Benchmarking and Reputation

Consider an organisation in which leadership is predominantly concerned with ensuring legal compliance, benchmarking against other organisations and their external reputation. Organisations can achieve these goals when investing in mental health and well-being using the Thrive at Work Framework as a foundation for their actions. In this instance, the following points might support the business case to this leadership team.

- Gap analyses have shown that many Australian organisations are positioned behind international well-being standards. Developing a mental health and well-being strategy based on the Thrive at Work Framework gives us the opportunity to be national leaders in this area.
- Health and safety legislation is expected to change imminently, with higher standards and organisational accountability anticipated. Proactively reviewing and revising policies and practices will ensure compliance with forthcoming legislation.
- Developing a strong mental health and well-being strategy can enable organisations to become employers of choice. Research indicates that a mentally healthy environment is the second most important factor in an employee's decision to accept a new job.

Example 2: Absenteeism & Turnover Concerns

Consider an organisation currently experiencing high absenteeism, or turnover. To make the case for implementing the Thrive at Work initiative the project team might outline the way addressing employee mental health and well-being will address these concerns, such as:

- We have identified that the average rate of absence in our organisation is increasing. Researchers estimate that a 10% increase in employee well-being will result in 5% fewer unscheduled absences (Worksafe, 2011).
- Results of a Beyond Blue survey (run on behalf of Beyond Blue by Instinct and Reason²⁰⁸) has indicated turnover is highly influenced by the well-being environment. This research found that that 50% of respondents had left a job due to a poor well-being environment. Conversely, research has shown that a mentally healthy workplace that promotes and protects mental health of employees was the second most powerful inhibitor of leaving a job.

Add detail to your argument

Qualitative evidence can also help support your objective arguments and build a strong business case. Personal stories and case studies outlining the success of mental health and well-being initiatives can be emotionally impactful and inspire leadership commitment to improving well-being. Personal experiences (used only with permission), can create personal and emotional engagement with the strategy.

Stakeholder engagement with your arguments can be increased with case studies from other organisations that have successfully addressed employee mental health and well-being with positive organisational outcomes. This can demonstrate and make tangible, the viability and validity of your arguments. This toolkit has case studies throughout that you may wish to utilise in your own business case. Extended case studies can also be found on the website. We will continue to grow these, so stay connected. Also, please let us know if you have case studies to share.

RESOURCE

We have collated evidence and arguments from a range of empirical studies, industry reports, and policy documents, etc. For more statistics and evidence backed arguments to support your business case, refer to the Thrive at Work [business case](#) page of the website.

Identify a core team and commit resources

Before starting work on your well-being strategy, it will be useful to establish your Thrive at Work project team. Distributing tasks and responsibilities across the project team will help ensure the success of the project.

Your Thrive at Work team will be responsible for a range of activities over the project period, including:

- evaluating existing mental health strategies;
- strategically planning and prioritising mental health and well-being activities;
- gathering and reviewing organisational metrics and designing, disseminating and analysing employee perception data; and
- tracking progress and the effectiveness of activities across the organisation.

Identify the team

When establishing the Thrive at Work project team, there are two approaches that can be taken; you can form a new team, or task an existing committee or working party with driving the project. When establishing a new team, it will be beneficial to draw individuals from across different functions/departments, with differing levels of authority. By taking a cross-functional approach, specialised knowledge, practices and procedures, and data on mental health from across the organisation will be uncovered. This ensures a more comprehensive evaluation of mental health in your workplace, prevents overlapping work being completed, and streamlines the process through effective use of time, resources, knowledge and skills. It is also important that members with decision making authority are included to ensure that decisions made by the team can be implemented.

Many organisations will have existing governance structures that can take responsibility for the Thrive at Work project (for example: a Well-being Committee or an OHS working party). However, as above, it is vital that the team has members from a range of functions with differing levels of authority. If this is not the case, consider inviting additional members to maximise the effectiveness of the project.

Consultation and buy-in

When presenting the business case to the team undertaking the Thrive at Work project and ultimately senior leadership, it is important to be properly prepared. Consider all the detail that

is needed for key stakeholders to understand what the Thrive at Work project is, the benefits that it brings, and what needs to be done to implement it. By stepping people through the process and ensuring they have a clear understanding, you are more likely to be successful. If key stakeholders do not understand the benefit, exactly what will be done, and how much time it will take, they will be unlikely to approve or be motivated to complete the project.

Committing resources

Once the business case has been accepted and senior leadership has committed to your Thrive at Work initiative, you will need to consider the resources required to sustain engagement with the process. Planning the financial, human and other resources as early as possible is helpful to ensure adequate resources, maintain momentum, and increase the chance of success.

All staff working on the Thrive at Work project should have dedicated time for meetings and other work relevant to the preparation, evaluation, planning and tracking of well-being activities. It is important that the time allocated to the project forms part of the individuals' current workload, and is not an addition to their workload.

Gain employee support

Once leadership has committed to the development of a strategy to increase workplace mental health and well-being it will be important to build support with employees.

Your Thrive at Work team may not need broad employee support to take stock of current well-being activities on offer, but it will be crucial if you decide to make changes to well-being activities or want to collect employee perception data. Failing to build employee support risks poor engagement with the process overall, as well as low engagement with future activities.

At the early stage of the project it will be important to communicate the overall goal or vision of your organisation moving forward. Regular and ongoing communication throughout the process will help break down barriers to addressing mental health and well-being and contribute to reducing mental health stigma. Communicating with staff about their mental health and well-being needs will also enable you to target your activities, ensuring that resources are being used to address genuine needs. This regular communication with staff will also help build and maintain momentum and achieve broader organisational buy-in.

Heads Up suggest 5 questions that leaders should be prepared to answer when introducing change²⁰⁹:

1. Why change... why now?
2. What happens if we don't change?
3. What will the change look like?
4. What's in it for me?
5. What can we expect?

Your communication with employees should answer these questions and educate employees about the importance of mental health and well-being at work. Ensure that everyone is aware of the role they will play, the supports that are available, and the benefits of participating.

Evaluate

Before undertaking any new well-being activities, it will be useful to pause and take stock of the existing practices and activities that impact employee well-being in your organisation.

What are you already doing? Is it having a positive impact? What could you be doing better?

The Thrive at Work assessment tool has been designed as a clear, simple to use resource to support you to review the state of your existing mental health and well-being policies, practices and activities.

The 'evaluation' section will guide you through a process in which you will use the Thrive at Work assessment tool to:

- identify your organisation's existing mental health and well-being activities and assess where they fit in relation to the Thrive at Work Framework;
- evaluate the maturity of your existing mental health and well-being activities; and
- review your results with a strategic focus to identify strengths and potential opportunities for development.

Why is it important to evaluate?

Your evaluation using the Thrive at Work assessment tool is a critical first step that will allow you to identify your current position as a baseline. Spending some time establishing a baseline position will result in:

- Economic savings – taking stock of existing activities will help avoid introducing activities with overlapping (and therefore less impactful) outcomes. Starting with an evaluation will enable you to tailor new activities to address gaps, preventing wasted time and resources.
- Better employee mental health and well-being outcomes – a better understanding of current strengths and key gaps enables more strategic and tailored responses to mental health and well-being needs.

With continuous use, you can monitor your developing maturity through improved organisational metrics and track the impact of your initiatives. Taking stock in this way will allow you to make strategic decisions about the types of activities you keep, remove or change and will help you prioritise resources and investments based on their impact.

Many organisations will already have a number of activities, policies, and practices in place that will affect employee mental health and well-being. Therefore, the evaluation stage will allow you to take stock of all these activities (regardless of initial reasons for implementation) to enable a holistic assessment of areas that are lacking and may need future development.

RESOURCE

The Thrive at Work assessment tool has been developed by Organisational Psychology Researchers at the Future of Work Institute. The assessment tool guides you through the process of documenting what your organisation is already doing, and planning to do, against each pillar of the Thrive at Work Framework. Our [assessment tool](#) is available to download.

Evaluating against different standards

The Thrive at Work Framework is intended to assist you to identify and incorporate best practice activities into your well-being strategy across key building blocks of employee well-being. It is, however, not strictly necessary to use the Thrive at Work Framework. Some organisations may prefer to prioritise benchmarking and compliance and therefore may choose to map their activities against the WA Workplace Mental Health Standards, or other codes of practice. Alternatively, if your organisation has developed its own model or approach to mental health using strategies that align with the Thrive at Work Framework's Building Blocks, these could also be used.

Step 1: Familiarise yourself with the tool

The Thrive at Work assessment tool has been designed as a clear, simple to use resource to support organisations in reviewing the state of their existing mental health and well-being policies, practices and activities.

To get started, download the assessment tool and familiarise yourself with the contents.

RESOURCE

The Thrive at Work assessment tool has been developed by Organisational Psychology Researchers at the Future of Work Institute. The assessment tool guides you through the process of documenting what your organisation is already doing, and planning to do, against each pillar of the Thrive at Work Framework. Our [assessment tool](#) is available to download.

Before completing the evaluation, it will also be useful for the project team to be familiar with the Thrive at Work Framework (depicted below) and the requirements of the assessment process. To review the aims of the pillars and their building blocks, return to the Thrive at Work Framework section.

Pillar	Building Block	Key Strategies
 Mitigate Illness Monitor, accommodate, and treat illness, ill-health and injury.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detect Illness	→ Leader and employee education → Monitor mental health
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support Illness	→ Reduce mental health stigma → Remove barriers to support → Employee Assistance Program
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accommodate Illness	→ Injury management process → Return to Work process
 Prevent Harm Minimise harm and protect against risk.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Job Resources	→ S timulating job resources → M astery job resources → A gency job resources → R elational job resources
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reduce Job Demands	→ T olerable demands: time, physical, cognitive, and emotional demands → Demands associated with organisational change and a lack of organisational justice
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase Resilience and Coping	→ Build individuals' resilience and ability to recover from stress
 Promote Thriving Optimise wellbeing and generate future capabilities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Create Conditions for Performance	→ Strategic Human Resource practices
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Create Conditions for Connection	→ High quality work connections → Diversity and inclusion → Community engagement
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Create Conditions for Growth	→ Strength-based development → Support lifelong learning

The assessment tool is presented as an Excel worksheet. Each tab in the assessment tool workbook corresponds to a Pillar of the Thrive at Work Framework and lists the Building Blocks and Key Evidence Based Strategies for building a thriving organisation.

Whilst you review the tool, think about what relevant activities you may already have in place, which departments/functions in the organisation will have relevant information, and how you will gather input. For example, Human Resources, Occupational Health and Safety, and area managers can all have relevant information and skills necessary for the evaluation.

WHO SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE EVALUATION?

At this stage of the process, it will be useful to have a team that has an understanding of a range of functions and activities taking place across the organisation. The tool requires input from people who are aware of elements of management practices, HR policies, and occupational health and safety practices.

If it is not possible to have a representative from all relevant areas, consider allowing members of your project team to approach those departments to investigate relevant practices and policies they may otherwise be unaware of.

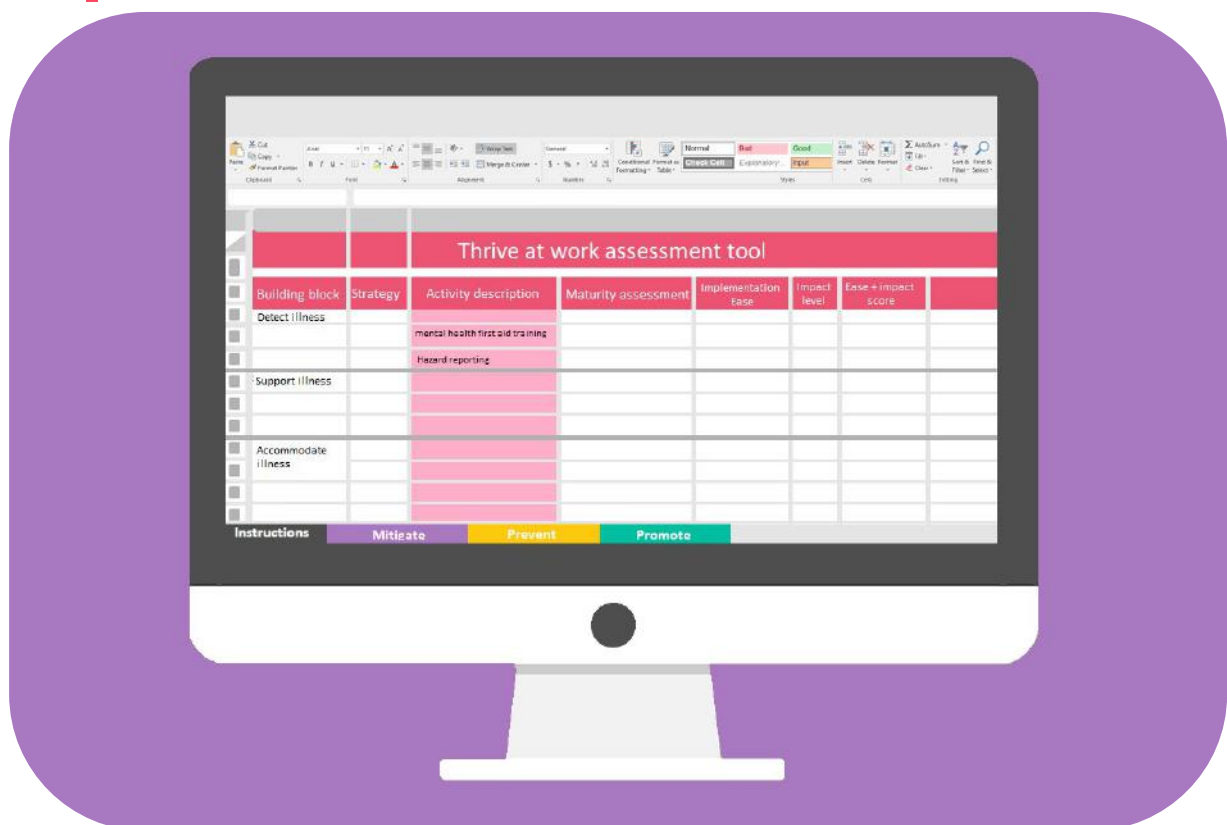
Step 2: Summarise your current activities

Identifying how your current mental health and well-being activities align with the Thrive at Work Framework will help you take a more strategic and integrated approach moving forward. The evaluation process will enable you to highlight areas of strength and identify opportunities for future development.

Start the evaluation process by brainstorming activities that may be relevant to each key strategy, by listing the activities in the Activity Description column for each strategy.

The assessment tool provides example activities that your organisation may be undertaking within each Building Block of the Thrive at Work Framework. You can use this list as a prompt for your own initial brainstorming. Remember that the list is not exhaustive. We find organisations are often doing a lot more in each Building Block than they initially realise and it is also likely that you will be undertaking activities that are not listed.

Some organisations find it useful to conduct an initial brainstorm in their first meeting, then reconvene to review the activities and inclusions and add activities that were missed the first time.



Levels of implementation

When taking stock of your activities, you can include activities regardless of whether they are currently in place, planned or are being considered. Some organisations find action planning easier when the initial assessment differentiates between activities based on their level of implementation.

- **Implemented:** activities your organisations already has in place (e.g. yearly performance reviews, Employee Assistance Programs).
- **Planned:** activities your organisation has in the pipeline, with concrete timelines in place and resources allocated (e.g. the wellness branch have committed time and resources to introducing a new cognitive-behavioural therapy based resilience program next year).
- **Considered/future activities:** activities your organisation may have discussed, or ideas you find useful – but have not put in place any firm plans/timelines to undertake (e.g. Organisational Development is considering bringing in external career coaches).

If you find that there are Building Blocks in which you currently have few or no strategies in place, don't be discouraged or hastily add activities. Remember that the evaluation is designed to establish a baseline that will enable you to build upon and strategically target areas for development.

What counts as an activity?

A huge variety of workplace activities can impact employee mental health and can therefore be included in the Thrive at Work assessment. Canadian workplace mental health experts, [Guarding Minds at Work](#), categorise activities into the groups below:

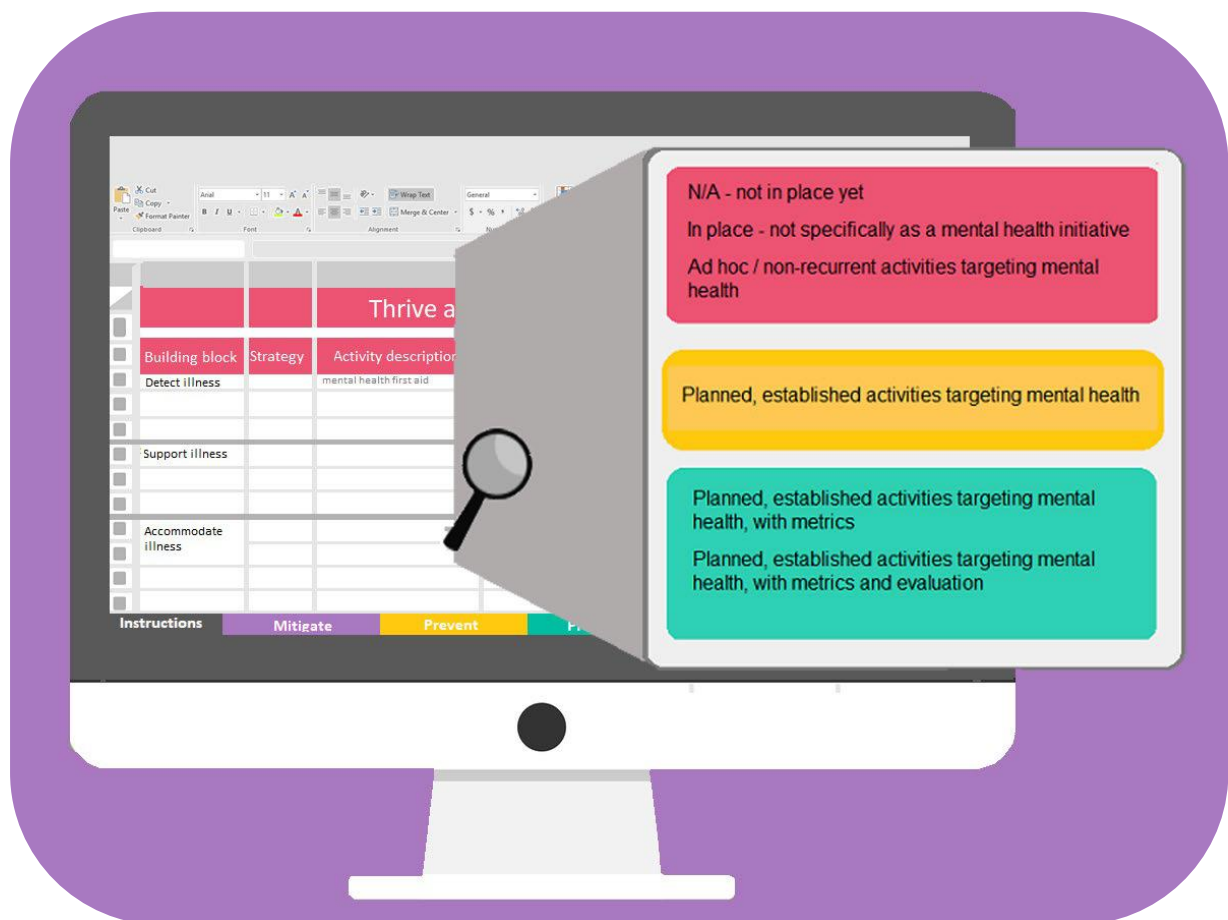
- **Work and environment, norms, values, practices:** is there something about the work or work environment that contributes to the strategy?
 - **Training and development opportunities:** are there training and development programs that staff and leaders can access that contribute to the strategy?
- **Communication:** is information relevant to the strategy communicated to staff and leaders in a clear and respectful manner?
- **Formal policies and procedures:** how do your organisational policies and procedure enable the strategy to be effective?

You can use these categories to prompt your thinking around what activities you are undertaking in your organisation, remembering that not all may be relevant to each strategy within a building block.

Step 3: Assess maturity

Understanding how mature your mental health and well-being activities are, will help when it comes time to prioritise your next steps.

Once you have collated your current activities, you can then complete a self-assessment of how strategically mature the mental health and well-being activities you have listed are by using the maturity rating scale depicted below.

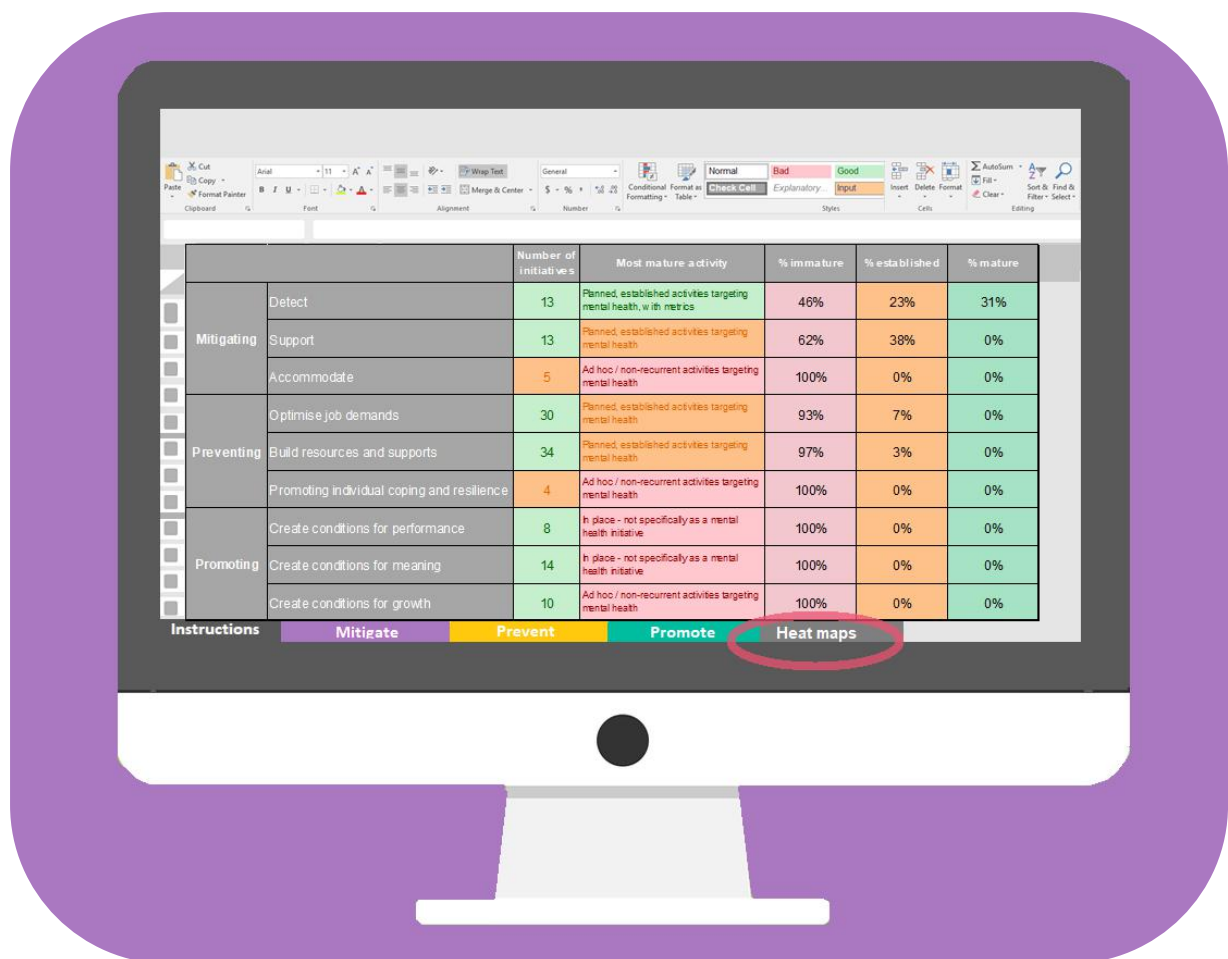


Most employee mental health and well-being strategies are not well advanced across industries in Australia. Many organisations who complete the assessment tool are likely to find that the majority of their activities tend to fall in the red (not in place, not mental health specific, or ad hoc) category, indicating low maturity. This is a reflection of workplace well-being being an emerging focus area within Australian organisations. Do not be discouraged by a low maturity rating, particularly in your first year using the Thrive at Work Initiative. A low maturity rating provides an important baseline for your organisation's future development and honesty at this stage in the process is critical to accurately address the real needs of your organisation.

Step 4: Review your heat maps

At this stage of the evaluation process your spreadsheet should contain a comprehensive list of the mental health and well-being activities which your organisation is engaging in, across the three Pillars of the Thrive at Work Framework. The next step is to review the number and maturity of activities in your assessment so that you can begin to narrow down potential areas for action.

The assessment tool contains an automatically generated heat map, showing the number of activities you have documented within each pillar and their maturity. It provides a high level visual representation of your organisation's progress across each pillar and building block of the Thrive at Work Framework.



Heat map components

The heat map assessment tool generates contain three main components:

Number of activities

This column of the heat map collates the number of activities you have entered as currently in place, planned or future under each building block of the Thrive at Work Framework.

- **Red** – no activities in place,
- **Orange** – some activities in place (defined as 1 to 5 activities), and
- **Green** – many activities in place (defined as over 5 activities).

This is intended to provide a summary of the number of activities you have in place under each building block of the Framework. The colour coding of the numbers for "Some" and "Many" activities have been defined to assist in the visual representation - if this does not work for your organisation, you do not need to focus on it. This representation is useful to demonstrate the area(s) of your current focus - by highlighting building blocks under which you may have not have any activities, or have a few/many relative to other building blocks.

Most mature activity

This column of the heat map draws out the most mature activity you have documented in each building block of the Thrive at Work Framework.

- **Red** – no activities, ad hoc or non-recurrent activities, or activities in place but not specifically as a mental health initiative,
- **Orange** – planned and established activities, in place specifically as a mental health initiative, and
- **Green** – planned and established activities, in place specifically as mental health initiatives – with metrics or metrics and evaluation mechanisms.

This column of the heat map provide a visual representation of the most mature activity your organisation is undertaking in each building block of the Thrive at Work Framework. This representation is useful, in that it clearly shows areas of the framework within which your organisation's activities may be particularly mature, or need further maturation.

Maturity of activities

These columns of the heat map aggregate all of the activities you have entered into each building block of the Thrive at Work Framework. The columns then calculate the percentage of activities within each building block that are classified as:

- **Red / "immature"** – no activities, ad hoc or non-recurrent activities, or activities in place but not specifically as a mental health initiative,

- **Orange / “established”** – planned and established activities, in place specifically as a mental health initiative, and
- **Green / “mature”** – planned and established activities, in place specifically as mental health initiatives – with metrics or metrics and evaluation mechanisms.

These columns of the heat map provide a visual representation of the spread of maturity of activities your organisation is undertaking in each building block of the Thrive at Work Framework. This representation gives an indication of useful starting points - building blocks that may have no mature activities in them.

The combination of all of the information in the heat maps gives a starting point as you begin the process of deciding which future actions you will take as you mature your organisation's well-being strategies. We provide further guidance in the 'Plan' section of the process.

Evaluation extension: Employee perceptions

For some organisations, conducting the stocktake assessment will be enough information to get started on developing an employee well-being strategy. To ensure the activities you focus on are having an impact, it is recommended that you also monitor employee perceptions.

You can collect employee feedback using a variety of methods. These include surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

Surveys

Surveys are useful for obtaining quantified staff perceptions that can be tracked over time to evaluate the improvement of employee well-being as a result of your well-being initiatives. You can use surveys to track things like employee engagement, their experience of psychosocial risks of stress, or perceptions of stigma in the organisation. Surveys can also be a great way to get feedback on specific mental health activities, which allows you to continuously improve programs to meet the needs and expectations of staff.

The benefits of collecting employee perceptions and feedback

- New activities can be introduced strategically to directly address employees' reported sources of stress and strain. This will ensure the programs are more effective in improving well-being.
- Checking in with staff at regular periods allows you to monitor the impact and effectiveness of your activities for continuous development.
- Regularly monitoring progress against your goals will allow you to continually grow.
- Activities with strategic measurement and evaluation process can achieve the highest maturity rating in the audit.

Focus groups and interviews

Focus groups are great for developing a rich understanding of the challenges and supports in the workplace. Focus groups allow staff to come together to share their experiences at work and explore the breadth and depth of experience.

In some cases, one-on-one interviews may be a more appropriate way to understand what is needed to support the mental health and well-being of employees. This is especially the case for small businesses or middle managers.

RESOURCE

As you progress with your well-being review, your organisation can continue to improve the type of metrics it tracks and use staff feedback more strategically.

The Future of Work Institute has developed a comprehensive [methodology guide](#) for collecting and using different types of organisational data, including focus groups. This is available on the resources section of the website.

Plan

After populating the assessment tool you will have a better understanding of your organisation's 'baseline' with respect to the pillars of the Thrive at Work Framework.

Your next actions will be dependent on what you found during your evaluation and the specific needs of your organisation. For example:

- ➔ you may decide to focus on strengthening a particular building block that has few or low maturity activities;
- ➔ you may prefer to focus more broadly and develop a single pillar (e.g. narrow your focus on the Prevent Harm building block to reduce risks).

The Plan section will guide you through the process of identifying your focus, developing your well-being strategy and action planning to address the results of your evaluation. Taking some time to plan will translate into more successful outcomes in the long term.

At the Plan stage you will build an action plan to address the results of the audit.

1. Identify your focus;
2. Establish or revise your organisation's well-being strategy;
3. Plan specific well-being actions.

Tailoring your plan

Although it is recommended that the Plan section is completed using the method specified, it is not strictly necessary. There is no single way to design and implement mental health and well-being activities because every organisation has different starting points, needs and pressures that are unique to their context. For some organisations, the process outlined in this section may not be feasible or practical. It is important that you consider your organisation's context (such as resources, timeframes, reporting requirements) and build an action plan that works best for the unique needs and constraints of your organisations. For example, some organisations may prefer to achieve some quick wins to build staff engagement with the well-being initiative before writing or modifying their strategy. You are encouraged to consider your organisation's context, needs, appetite for action, and resources and engage with the Plan stage in the way that is best suits your organisation.

Identify your focus

Figuring out where you want to focus your resources will help you when it comes time to write your mental health and well-being strategy and plan your new activities.

Below are some options you may consider as your approach, which you can use later to guide the specific activities you might then introduce.

- Ensure Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm are adequately addressed.
- Ensure the whole Thrive at Work Framework has been addressed.
- Address the maturity of your activities.
- Address those with high impact and ease of implementation.
- Consolidate activities.

NOTE

Once you have chosen your focus, you can use this to inform your mental health and well-being strategy. You will probably find that your focus and priorities will change over time as you successfully introduce new activities of increasing maturity.

Focus option 1: Ensure Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm are adequately addressed

Australian Work Health and Safety legislation requires organisations and employees to take shared responsibility for the protection of employee mental health. Activities relevant to ensuring your legal compliance are in the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm building blocks.

We recommend that all organisations address the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm building blocks first to ensure that employees are protected and supported. This option is particularly important if legal compliance is a primary concern for your organisation. Some areas to consider if you select this as your focus are below.

Do you have activities in every building block?

Refer to your summary heat map. Are there any building blocks in the Mitigate Illness or Prevent Harm pillars that are highlighted red? This means that you currently do not have any activities relevant to that building block. If this is the case, your first priority should be adding at least one good quality activity in the Mitigate Illness or Prevent Harm building blocks that do not currently have any activities. Your legal obligations sit within these two building blocks so addressing them will help you work towards compliance.

Do you have a variety of activities in each building block?

Take a look at how your activities are distributed within each building block. For example, are all of your Support Illness activities focused on stigma reduction, without any activities that aim to remove barriers to accessing help? To address each building block successfully, we recommend that organisations use a variety of strategies. If your activities for each building block are clustered around one or two strategies, your priority should be to focus on the addition of an activity in each strategy of the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm pillars.

Focus option 2: Ensure the whole Thrive at Work Framework has been addressed

If your audit indicated that your current activities are heavily concentrated in one or two building blocks, you may want to focus on introducing activities across the full Thrive at Work Framework. This will enable your organisation to support employees across the full spectrum of mental health.

It is recommended that you build a solid foundation by addressing the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm building blocks before progressing to the Promote Thriving. The strategies in the Promote Thriving building blocks tend to be the most difficult and most ambitious but can be a rewarding opportunity to optimise employee well-being. Starting slowly by adding one or two long term Promote Thriving goals can will help ensure your actions are sustainable and successful.

Focus option 3: Address the maturity of your activities

If you feel comfortable with the number and spread of well-being activities in your organisation, you may prefer to focus your attention on improving the maturity of your activities.

Link activities to your well-being strategy

Look at your summary heat map in the evaluation tool. Are there building blocks that are shaded red or blue? Within those building blocks, are there important well-being activities that should be linked to your well-being strategy? If so, committing to them by including them as a key activity in your well-being strategy is an easy way to mature your activities from 1 to 3-5 without investing any additional resources. Depending on the number of activities you choose to link, your next evaluation could have a much lower proportion of immature activities.

The next section will guide you through the process of writing or modifying your well-being strategy.

NOTE

The activities you add to your well-being strategy should make strategic sense. Committing to activities that don't have an appropriate mental health and well-being focus or adequate resources available will be detrimental in the long run.

Remember that having mature activities in the Promote Thriving pillar is a very ambitious goal. We recommend that you focus on maturing and embedding activities in the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm pillars to begin with. Most organisations will spend several years maturing these areas.

Establishing ad hoc activities

Use your heat maps to examine if there are building blocks that appear to be dominated by activities that address mental health in an ad hoc, non-recurrent way? If so you may consider maturing these ad hoc activities to the rating 'planned and established activities that address mental health at work'.

This will require you to consider longer term resourcing, time frames and assigning responsibilities to individuals so be careful not to commit to too many activities being recurrent too soon.

Introduce metrics and evaluative processes

Organisations that measure and evaluate their activities and monitor their employees' well-being are able to make more strategic and impactful decisions. For an activity to be considered mature it should have relevant metrics being monitored at minimum.

Many organisations do not currently assess their organisational metrics in light of mental health and well-being, so if you're starting here, you might make your goal to identify relevant metrics to be linked and start monitoring them over time. The evaluation tool contains a sheet labelled "metrics". You can use this to identify metrics that may be relevant to each building block.

Ideally, to achieve a rating of 4 for the maturity rating you should have a goal to have at least one metric that is reflective of each Building Block.

If you have already metrics associated with your activities, you can start evaluating their outcomes to achieve a maturity rating of 5. If this is the case, you may prioritise introducing new data collection and analysis techniques in order to make strategic and informed decisions about how to address mental health and well-being in your organisation.

Focus option 4: Address activities with high impact and ease of implementation

You may decide to focus on activities that are easier to implement and will have high impact as a starting point.

Within the Thrive at Work assessment tool, there is room to evaluate the activities in terms of how easy it would be to go from the current state to a fully implemented, measurable version of this initiative, and the impact the activity could have if it was fully implemented and measurable.

Evaluate ease of implementation

For each activity, evaluate how easy it would be to move it from its current maturity rating to a fully implemented and measurable version. Assign a rating of 1 (high difficulty), 2 (medium difficulty) or 3 (easy).

Some factors to consider include:

- financial/people resources;
- senior leader approval;
- employee demand or response;
- linkage to business strategy/plans; and
- pre-existing supporting resources/structures/systems.

Evaluate potential impact

For each activity, evaluate the impact the activity could have if it was fully implemented and fully measured. Assign a rating of 1 (low impact), 2 (medium impact), or 3 (high impact).

Activities that are likely to have a high impact are those that will result in employee or leader behavioural changes. Actions that are likely to prompt people to act differently at work are likely to result in more sustainable change than actions that simply raise awareness. Although all activities that impact well-being are useful and play an important part, it is not practical or realistic to invest equally in all activities. We recommend attending to activities that are going to have high behavioural impact, to ensure sustained change. Remember that each organisation has different needs and areas of concern.

Ease and impact score

The Thrive at Work Assessment spreadsheet will automatically calculate the sum of your ease of implementation and impact scores. This provides guidance in how to select areas for prioritisation and development. Activities with a score of 5 and 6 are those that are considered to be fairly easy to fully implement and will have a high impact on employee well-being and behaviour.

Focus option 5: Consolidate activities

You may decide (regardless of the maturity or spread of activities) that there are activities that you would like to add or remove.

If you recognise that a number of existing activities are currently in place and are not achieving the outcomes you were hoping for, you can either modify them, remove them, or replace them. The ultimate goal of this approach is to ensure that activities are as effective as they can be and that resources are utilised in effective ways. It can be difficult for organisations to identify which activities are having positive, negative or neutral impacts, especially if you do not currently have metrics available.

If this is the approach you'd like to take and you need help deciding which activities to keep and which to discontinue contact the Future of Work Institute for assistance.

Develop a well-being strategy

A well-being strategy that takes an integrated approach to mental health and well-being will address mental ill health regardless of cause, prevent harm by addressing risk factors in the work environment and promoting the positive and enable employees to thrive.

Why is a well-being strategy important?

Your well-being strategy articulates your organisation's commitment to employee well-being and will help embed well-being in your organisation's overall vision and day to day activities. Establishing a strategy (or at least some broad well-being goals) is useful for a number of reasons. These include:

- your well-being strategy sets your directions and priorities for the period assigned;
- a well-being commitment that is endorsed and championed by senior leadership will assist you in justifying and requesting resources to support the implementation of your plan; and
- a strategic, integrated and holistic approach to well-being is more likely to be successful in terms of impact on mental health and efficient use of resources.

REVISIT YOUR BUSINESS CASE

When developing your strategy it may be necessary to re-engage with your leadership team and key stakeholders to revisit some of the prepare steps.

If necessary, you may want to revise your business case in light of the results of your evaluation, reconnect with employees, and reassess the availability of resources. Each of these points will be necessary in writing your well-being strategy

Before writing your strategy

Before writing your well-being strategy it is useful to regroup after the results of the audit and ask yourself some key questions.

How integrated and holistic can your strategy be?

Understanding the reasonable scope of your strategy will influence how responsibilities can be distributed between departments and team members. Will the strategy sit wholly within the wellness team, or is there an opportunity to embed it into a broader health and safety strategy?

What resources do you have available for implementation?

Whilst you plan, try to keep resourcing in mind to avoid over committing or under delivering. This can include financial resources, time, and individuals and departments involved. Having more resources available to support the project will make it easier to implement your action plan. If you are too ambitious with what you seek to achieve with limited resources, you risk not delivering and losing employee support for your initiative.

TARGETING YOUR STRATEGY

Remember that for most organisations, addressing the Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm pillars will form the basis of their well-being initiative for a number of years. Whilst the Promote Thriving pillar is an important part of the Thrive at Work Framework, it is a very ambitious aim for most organisations. For organisations with resource limitations, focusing on the Mitigate Illness and Preventing Harm areas will ensure legal compliance and build an important foundation upon which you can add activities that promote thriving.

After considering the above points, invite relevant team members to participate in the development of your strategy.

If you already have a well-being strategy

Many organisations using this toolkit will already have a well-being strategy in place. If this is the case, we recommend reviewing your existing strategy to check the following:

Are the key mental health and well-being activities from the Thrive at Work assessment tool in your well-being strategy?

If there are important and strategic well-being related activities that you listed in your assessment, you may consider revising your strategy to include it. It is important that you only add the activities that are strategically important for mental health and well-being.

Does your strategy take an integrated approach – does it contain activities that are designed to mitigate illness, prevent harm and promote thriving?

If your strategy does not currently take an integrated approach, consider restructuring it in line with the Thrive at Work Framework. This will enable your organisation to support a broader range of mental health needs.

Have you included methods by which your organisation can increase the maturity of well-being activities, for example, are there plans to introduce measurement or evaluation of existing activities?

If not, review the example metrics in the Thrive at Work **assessment tool** or learn about new [data collection methods](#) and select at least one metric or employee feedback avenue that may help you track your well-being goals. This will help you understand the impact of your activities; where you are doing well and where your employees may need additional support.

Action planning

Action planning involves organisations converting their well-being strategy to actionable activities to be introduced or progressed.

By now you have successfully:

- prepared your organisation for the introduction of your well-being initiative;
- audited your existing programs and activities;
- identified your focus based on the results of the audit; and
- written or edited your organisation's well-being strategy.

Your next stage will require you to convert your high-level strategy to an actionable plan. Converting your well-being strategy to concrete activities will help you maintain focus and momentum.

Stay focused

Your action planning should be guided by your focus, which you identified at the beginning of the Plan section. Your focus options include:

- ensuring Mitigate Illness and Prevent Harm are adequately addressed;
- ensuring the whole Thrive at Work Framework has been addressed;
- addressing the maturity of your activities;
- addressing those with high impact and ease of implementation; or
- consolidating activities.

RESOURCE

The Thrive at Work assessment tool includes a tab for Action Planning that you can use to keep track of the concrete actions and next steps for your well-being initiative. The [assessment tool](#) is available for download from the website.

Using the action planning template

Your Action Plan requires you to identify your key objectives, and the activities that will be instrumental in achieving them. Using your Action Plan will also help you build in opportunities for maturing your activities, which will help your organisation continually develop.

The action plan is a simple format which can be adapted as needed for your organisation. It is the last tab of the Thrive at Work assessment tool.

Track

Monitoring the outcomes of your mental health and well-being activities will be critical to ensuring the long term success of your mental health strategy.

Tracking outcomes can help:

- support the long-term buy-in from leadership by demonstrating improvements in business outcomes such as: employee engagement, productivity, or absenteeism that may result from your well-being activities;
- create a model of evidence-based continuous improvement by maturing strategic activities that have demonstrated an impact on well-being;
- provide a mechanism to monitor activities and practices across the organisation that can affect mental health; and
- respond to problems or concerns in employee mental health faster and more effectively.

There are two primary methods that can be used to track the impact of your activities over time, which serve different purposes in your organisation.

1. Track the maturity of your activities by re-evaluating progress against the Thrive at Work assessment tool.
2. Track the impact of activities against objective and employee opinion data.

Re-evaluate using the Thrive at Work assessment tool

To monitor the progress of your well-being strategy, it is recommended that you periodically revisit this implementation process. The regularity of your reviews is up to you and your organisation, however it is recommended that organisations re-evaluate at least annually.

Annually updating your activity audit and reviewing your heat maps will allow you to:

- Re-establish priorities and shift your focus if necessary. For example, if you had initially identified the Prevent Harm pillar as your primary focus during the Plan stage, re-evaluating will allow you to take stock of the new activities in that area and take note of their increased maturity and shift priorities if necessary.
- Maintain your organisation's long-term focus on well-being.
- Report progress to leadership – It can take time for tangible outcomes to become evident following the introduction of mental health and well-being activities. Reporting on the changes in maturity in your heat maps allows you to demonstrate progress.
- Establish and maintain a well-being voice in otherwise unrelated projects. Human resources, OHS, and management are all areas that can have an impact on the well-being of staff. An annual check in with these groups can help ensure that the wellness team is aware of new developments, can provide input into the potential mental health impacts of new activities, and can monitor the outcomes of new programs.

QUICK WIN

Reviewing your well-being activities a year after implementation is a great opportunity to see the progress you have made towards creating a thriving organisation.

If you used the action planning template as an opportunity to introduce and monitor metrics when you planned new activities you may see a jump in the maturity of your heat maps for these building blocks.

Re-evaluating your well-being activities

An organisation's first evaluation tends to be the most complex and difficult, whereas re-evaluating for tracking purposes can be based on the results of previous years.

When re-evaluating ensure that you:

1. Review the list of activities – remove any activities that have been discontinued and add any that have been introduced since the last audit. Where appropriate move activities that were previously 'planned' into 'implemented';
2. Review the maturity of each activity – update any that have changed in maturity since the previous evaluation; and
3. Add any comments if necessary in preparation for the next evaluation.

After reviewing your progress, return to the Plan stage to reassess your focus for the year, develop a new Action Plan based on these new results to continue to improve the mental health and well-being of employees.

Tracking and analysing data

Organisations often have a wealth of data that can be used to help improve employee well-being. Using employee perception and objective organisational data to monitor impact and outcomes can help you make strategic decisions and give you a competitive advantage.

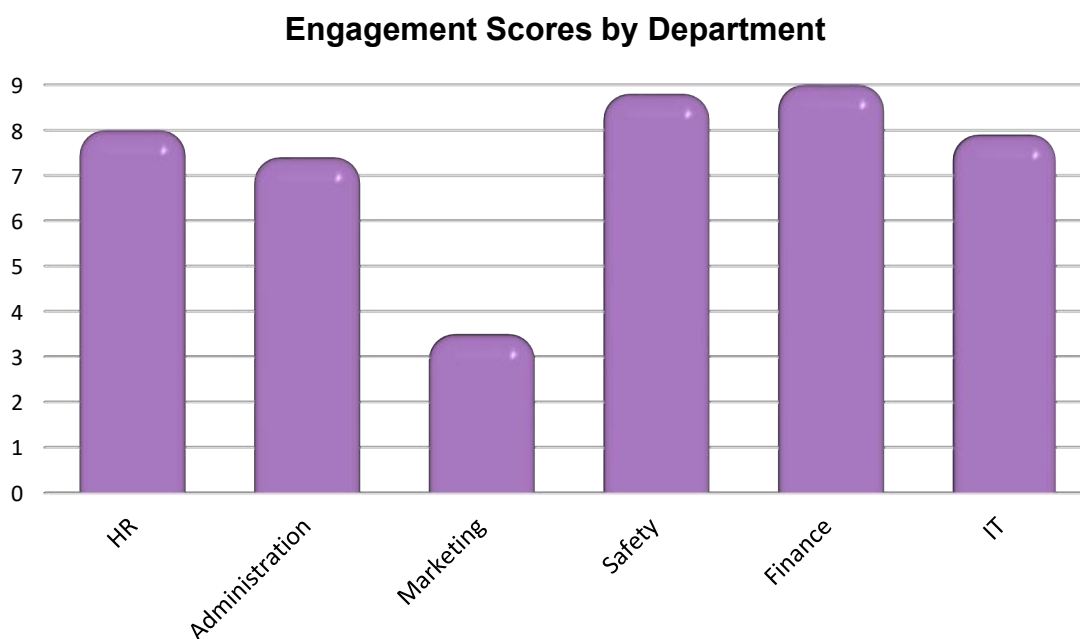
There are a number of ways to track your organisation's progress by analysing collected data. You may choose to:

- compare groups at one point in time; or
- examine one or more trends across time.

Comparing Groups

Collecting the same data for multiple groups allows you to compare the groups on their scores.

For example, if engagement scores are collected for each department in the organisation you can then graph the scores by group to examine similarities and differences. In the example below, a quick look at the bar chart highlights that the marketing team has much lower engagement scores than other organisational departments.



There are a number of ways here we can try and find out why the marketing team has lower scores, such as:

- ➔ Examining the marketing team's engagement data in more detail (e.g. scores by item or sub-category, as examined below).
- ➔ Selecting a number of marketing team employees to conduct interviews with.
- ➔ Run a marketing team focus group to find out common themes that may be impacting on engagement levels and then using that information to make strategic decisions.

Given we already have engagement data for the marketing team, we may choose to more closely examine that first, by looking at individual item scores. In the example below we have graphed the highest and lowest item scores for the marketing team. Immediately, we can see that while the marketing team feels they have a good work-life balance and a sense of belonging, they do not feel as if they have much autonomy or gain much enjoyment from their roles. We still can't say specifically what is causing the low scores, but now that we have an area to focus on, we may choose to follow-up with a focus group to help inform future changes.

Highest and Lowest Marketing Team Engagement Scores by Item

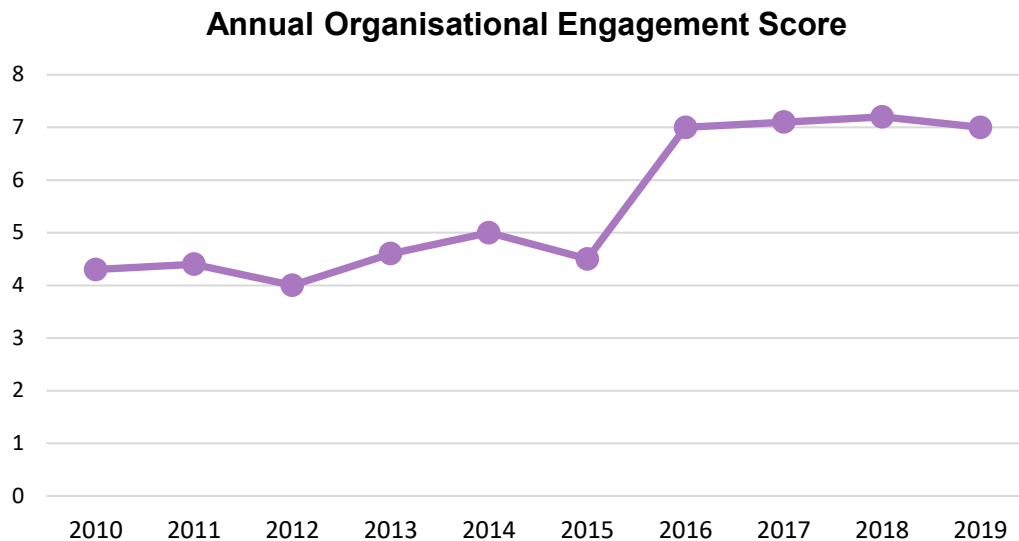


Tracking data over time

By measuring the same things on a regular basis (for example bi-annually, annually, or biennially) and looking at the data together, you can start to identify trends over time.

In the example below we have graphed organisational engagement scores for each year from 2010 to 2019. By looking at this data across time we can see that from 2010 to 2015 engagement scores were similar, varying from 4 to 5 out of 10. However, in 2016 engagement scores increased from 4.5 to 7 out of 10, and haven't changed much since. Overall, this data

shows us that compared to previous years this organisation is showing a good pattern of improvement, but there is still some room for improvement.



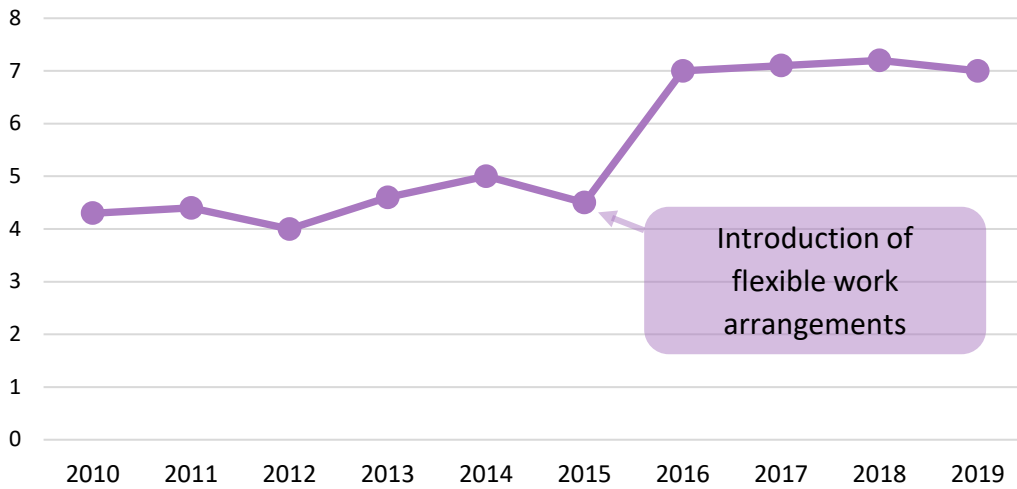
Tracking interventions

Tracking data over time is also useful for monitoring the effectiveness of activities, as changes after the implementation of activities can be monitored.

For example, if you decide to implement flexible work arrangements you may notice differences in the level of employee engagement, compared to previous years where no flexible work was not available to employees. While you cannot guarantee that the introduction of flexible work arrangements is the reason for the boost in employee engagement, you may conclude that it is likely the program is having a positive impact and is worth continuing. Alternatively, if employee engagement decreased following the introduction of flexible work arrangements, you may conclude that it is likely the functions are not having a beneficial impact and require readjusting or replacing.

To explore this further you can gather employee perceptions data specific to how they felt about the introduction of flexible work arrangements. By doing this you can more accurately assess whether changes in employee engagement were likely because of the flexible work arrangements, or may be due to something else that is unrelated.

Annual Organisational Engagement Score



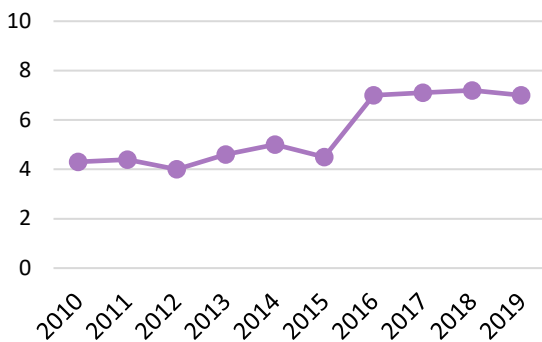
Combining data

If your organisation already has multiple sources of data it is useful to combine data from numerous sources. Having a more holistic approach to evaluation may provide you with more insights into how your organisation is positioned.

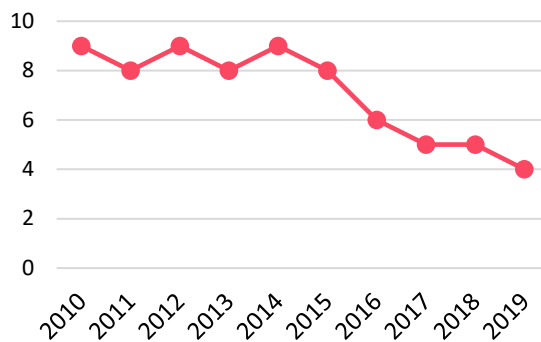
For example, data collected by Human Resources may be kept separate to data collected by Health and Safety. However, each piece of data alone only shows a part of the whole organisational story and combining data sources will give a whole of organisation view.

In the example used above, employee engagement scores may have increased following the introduction of flexible work arrangements. You may be interested to see whether this increase in engagement corresponds with other organisational outcomes of interest, such as safety incidents (e.g., lost time injury frequency rates (LTIFR)).

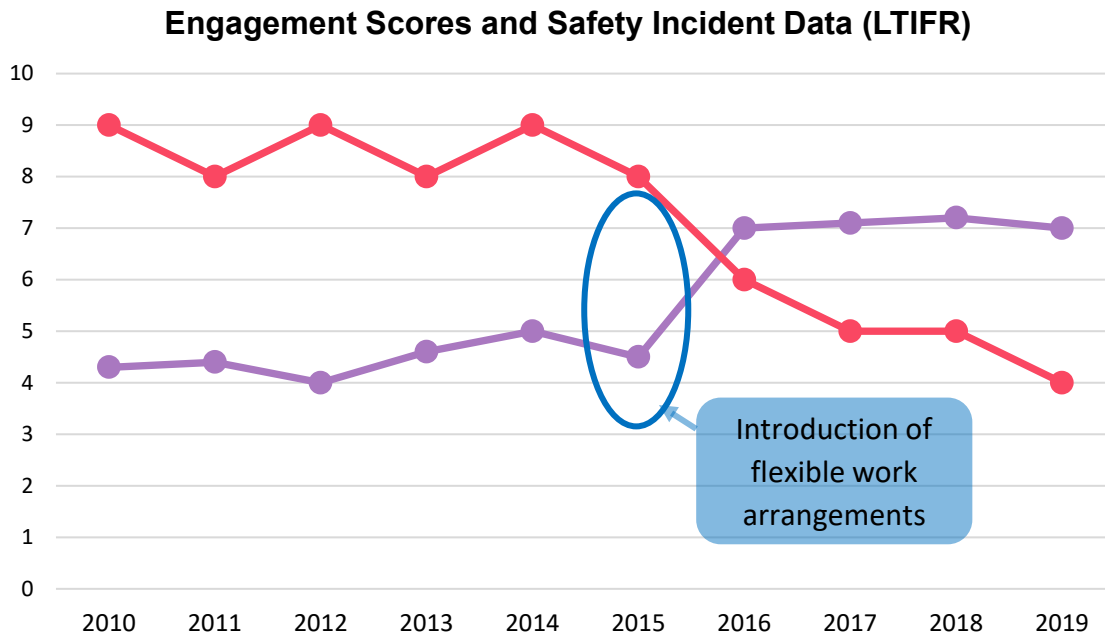
Annual Organisational Engagement Score



Safety Incident Data - LTIFR



If we put those two sources of data together in the same graph, we find that engagement and safety improved after the introduction of flexible work arrangements. Thus, combining data can be a more strategic way to see if activities impact a number of outcomes to give more holistic insights.



TIP

While we are unable to determine if flexible work arrangements caused an increase in engagement and reduction in safety incidents, we can track this further to see if the improved engagement and safety outcomes is sustained and perhaps investigate further the relationship between these variables. It is likely that the introduction of flexible work arrangements positively influenced engagement scores, and improved engagement had positive flow on effects to safety. However, we would need to test this using more sophisticated analyses.

Privacy and Confidentiality

When collecting, analysing and reporting data it is important that you maintain the privacy and confidentiality of your employees.

Not only is it a legal requirement, but you will have higher participation rates and more genuine feedback if you maintain confidentiality and consistently demonstrate respect for employee's privacy. You can ensure privacy and confidentiality by following the below guidelines during collection, reporting and retention phases.

Collection

Avoid asking for identifiable data and/or linking identifiable information to actual employee responses. For example, sometimes you may need to collect email addresses to send out and receive a survey, but it is important to make sure the email address and/or participant name is not recorded against the survey responses, in a way that can be used to identify individuals.

- Always inform employees on the purposes of collecting data.
- Only collect data which is necessary.
- Employees should have access to and knowledge of the organisations policies relating to collection, reporting and retention of data.
- Apart from where collection is required by legislation, employees should always have the option to opt-out of taking part in data collection.
- Always seek consent for the collection, use and disclosure of employee perception data.

Reporting

- Try not to report data for small groups of participants due to the possibility of jeopardising anonymity. If you need to report data for groups under 10 participants, make sure that it is presented at a high enough level to ensure no one individual's results can be linked to them.
- Do not report names, or any other identifiable characteristics.
- Reported data should be as accurate, complete and up-to-date as possible.

Retention

- Personal information should only be retained for as long as is necessary to fulfill its collection purpose.
- Personal or sensitive information should be protected by security safeguards (such as passwords, or stored in locked files).





Next Steps and References



**Thrive
at work**

Next Steps

The Thrive at Work initiative has been built for and piloted in, the business community. The Thrive at Work Framework has been developed with flexibility in mind for both small and large businesses, and can be undertaken through any one of four tiered approaches (below).

Choose your approach to Thrive at Work

Self-guided

Conduct an audit of your organisation using our assessment tool and use our resources and templates to help you build a strategy and action plan for well-being. Use as few or as many of our resources as suits your business.

Virtual assistance

While taking the self-guided route, you may need a small number of phone or email connections with a FOWI Psychologist – for example an overview of the Thrive at Work Framework and audit tool, guidance on completing the tool, assistance in assessing actions or setting metrics. If you would like to take this approach, please [contact us](#).

Facilitated

A Psychologist from FOWI can guide you through the Thrive at Work Framework in the way that is right for your organisation. This might include some, or all of: meeting to assess your needs, facilitating workshops to complete the audit, or guiding you through scoring, action planning or evaluation. If you would like to take this approach, please [contact us](#).

Train the trainer

FOWI will run public Masterclasses or Psychologists from FOWI can run in-house workshops – to build capability inside your organisation around delivery of the Thrive at Work process. This enables you to complete the Thrive at Work process independently as many times as you like – over years, across business units, geographies or teams. If you would like to take this approach, please [contact us](#).

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