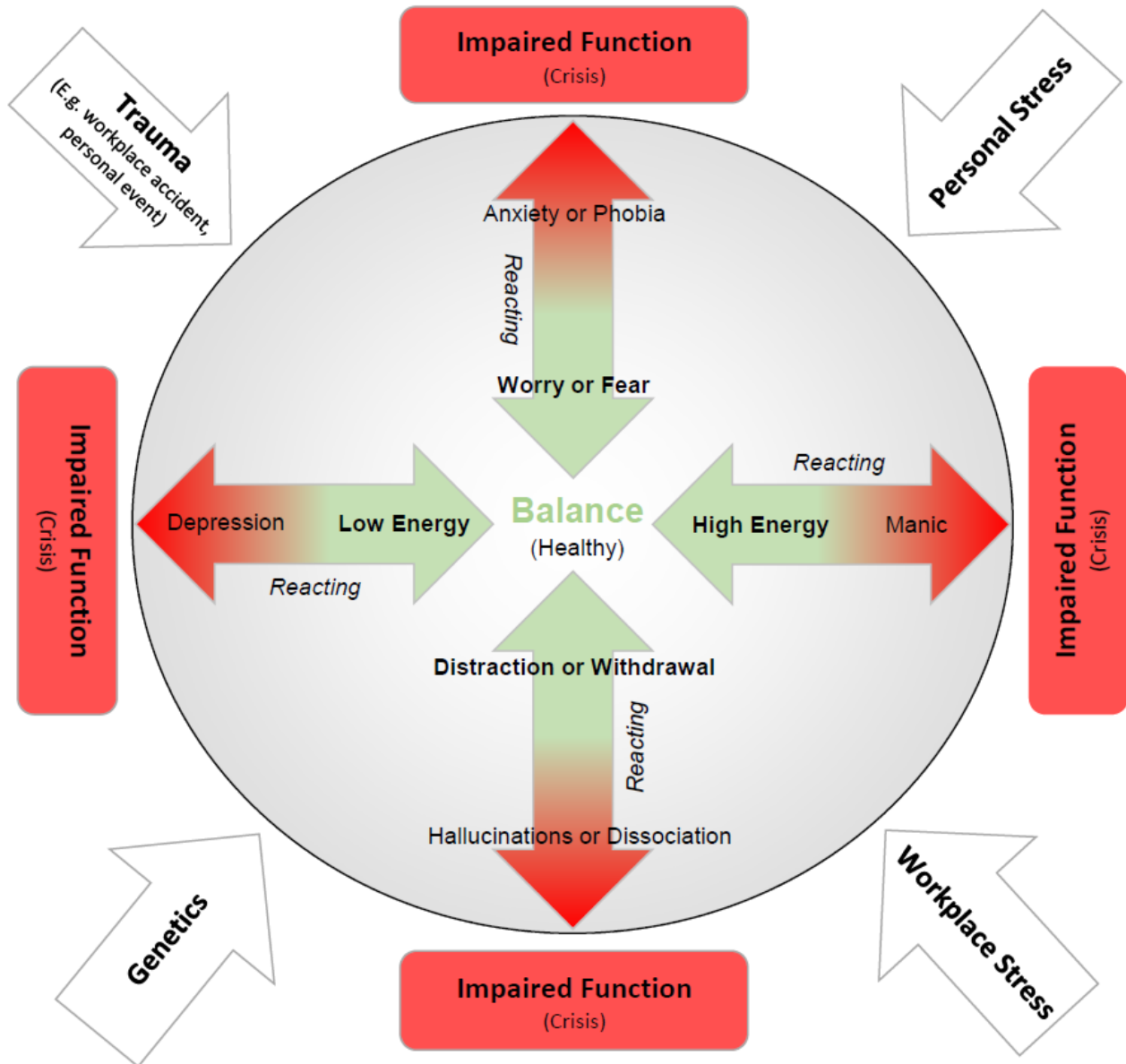


## Mental Health Continuum



## Psychosocial Risk Factors in the Workplace

Psychosocial risk factors are workplace factors that can affect the mental well-being or mental health of employees. If these factors are not properly in place, they can cause a psychosocial hazard that may have physical effects by overwhelming an individual's coping mechanisms and impacting their ability to work in a healthy and safe manner. The first 13 workplace factors were adapted from [Guarding Minds @ Work](#).

1. **Psychological Support:** A workplace where co-workers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns, and respond appropriately as needed.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

2. **Organizational Culture:** A workplace characterized by trust, honesty and fairness.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

- 3. Clear Leadership & Expectations:** A workplace where there is effective leadership and support that helps employees know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization and whether there are impending changes.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

- 4. Civility and Respect:** A workplace where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public. Civility and respect are based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging their dignity.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

5. **Psychological Demands:** A workplace where the psychological demands of any given job are documented and assessed in conjunction with the physical demands of the job. Psychological demands of the job will allow organizations to determine whether any given activity of the job might be a hazard to the worker's health and well-being.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

- 6. Growth & Development:** A workplace where employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

- 7. Recognition and Reward:** A workplace where there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?



- 8. Involvement and Influence:** A workplace where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

9. **Workload Management:** A workplace where tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

10. **Engagement:** A workplace where employees enjoy and feel connected to their work and where they feel motivated to do their job well.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

11. **Balance:** A workplace where there is recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family and personal life.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

12. **Psychological Protection:** A workplace where psychological safety is demonstrated when employees feel able to put themselves on the line, ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes and problems, or propose a new idea without fearing negative consequences to themselves, their job or their career.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

**13. Protection of Physical Safety:** A workplace in which employee's psychological, as well as physical safety is protected from hazards and risks related to the worker's physical environment.

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

## 14. Any other chronic stressor that may be identified by workers

Why is this important?

What happens when it is lacking in the workplace?

## About PF1: Psychological Support

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF1: Psychological Support?

GM@W defines PF1: Psychological Support as present in a work environment where coworkers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns, and respond appropriately as needed. Equally important are the employees' perceptions and awareness of organizational support. When employees perceive organizational support, it means they believe their organization values their contributions, is committed to ensuring their psychological well-being and provides meaningful supports if this well-being is compromised.

### Why is Psychological Support important?

The more employees feel they have psychological support, the greater their job attachment, job commitment, job satisfaction, job involvement, work mood positivity, desire to remain with the organization, organizational citizenship behaviours (discretionary behaviours that are beneficial to the organization and are a matter of personal choice), and job performance. For some organizations, the most important aspect of psychological support may be that it is especially helpful in protecting against traumatic stressors at work. When adequate psychological support is present, employees experiencing psychological distress in the workplace will be more likely to seek, and receive, appropriate help. They will be better equipped to stay safe and productive at work while they recover, and, if work absence is required, will be more likely to have a quicker and more sustainable work return.

### What happens when employees lack psychological support?

Employee perceptions of a lack of psychological support from their organization can lead to increases in absenteeism, withdrawal behaviours, strain, conflict and turnover. Strain can then lead to greater issues such as fatigue, headaches, burnout and anxiety. Lack of psychological support can also result in loss of productivity, increased costs and greater risk of accidents, incidents and injuries.

### How can Psychological Support be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Psychological Support** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Psychological Support**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Psychological Support** can be enhanced.



### Further information about Psychological Support:

- American Psychiatric Foundation. (2012). *Partnership for workplace mental health*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/>
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation. (2007). When Something's Wrong: Strategies for the Workplace. In *Education & Awareness*. Retrieved from <http://cprf.ca/education/workplace.html>
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500-507. Retrieved from [http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/22\\_Perceived\\_Organizational\\_Support.pdf](http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/22_Perceived_Organizational_Support.pdf)
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Health and Safety Executive. (2012). Work related stress – together we can tackle it. In *Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>
- International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies. (2001). Psychological support. In *World Disaster Report 2001*. Retrieved from [http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org/html/resources/2C/2C4783F0-083B-4382-8DED-D99AEC37B0F2/pspmanual\\_module1.pdf](http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org/html/resources/2C/2C4783F0-083B-4382-8DED-D99AEC37B0F2/pspmanual_module1.pdf)
- Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(4), 698-714. Retrieved from [http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/01\\_Perceived\\_Organizational\\_Support.pdf](http://eisenberger.psych.udel.edu/files/01_Perceived_Organizational_Support.pdf)
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF1: Psychological Support. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

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## About PF2: Organizational Culture

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF2: Organizational Culture?

GM@W defines PF2: Organizational Culture as the degree to which a work environment is characterized by trust, honesty, and fairness. In general, organizational culture has been described as "a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group." These assumptions are a mix of values, beliefs, meanings and expectations that group members hold in common and that they use as behavioural and problem-solving cues. The critical task is to determine which of these assumptions enhance the psychological health and safety of the workplace and the workforce.

### Why is Organizational Culture important?

Organizational trust is imperative for any positive and productive social processes within any workplace. Trust is a predictor of cooperative behaviour, organizational citizenship behaviours, organizational commitment, and employee loyalty, all of which in turn help retain and attract employees. When an organization has a health-focused culture, employee well-being, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are all enhanced. A work culture with social support also enhances employee well-being and can provide a positive environment for employees who may be experiencing psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety.

### What happens when a workplace does not have good organizational culture?

Culture 'sets the tone' for an organization; if that culture is negative it can undermine the effectiveness of the best programs, policies and services intended to support the workforce. An unhealthy culture creates more stress in the workplace, which lowers employee well-being. If an organization has a culture of 'profit at all costs' and constant chaotic urgency, it can create an environment in which burnout is the norm.

### How can Organizational Culture be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Organizational Culture** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Organizational Culture**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Organizational Culture** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Organizational Culture:

- Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation. (2007). When Something's Wrong: Strategies for the Workplace. In *Education & Awareness*. Retrieved from <http://cprf.ca/education/workplace.html>
- Findler, L., Wind, L., & Mor Barak, M. E. (2007). The challenge of workforce management in a global society: Modeling the relationship between diversity, inclusion, organizational culture, and employee well-being, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Administration in Social Work, 31*(3), 63-94. doi: 10.1300/J147v31n03\_05
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Härtel, C. (2008). How to build a healthy emotional culture and avoid a toxic culture. In N. M. Ashkanasy & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Research companion to emotion in organizations* (pp. 575-588). Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Hodge, B.J., & Anthony, W. P. (1988). *Organizational theory*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Lansisalmi, H., Peiro, J., & Kivimaki, M. (2000). Collective stress and coping in the context of organizational culture. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology, 9*(4), 527-559. doi: 10.1080/13594320050203120
- Schein, E. (1990). Organizational culture. *American Psychologist, 45*(2), 109-119. Retrieved from <http://www.machon-adler.co.il/readers/reader56.pdf>
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF2: Organizational Culture. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>
- The Health Communication Unit. (2009). *Organizational culture: From assessment to action*. Retrieved from [http://www.thcu.ca/Workplace/pdf/2009\\_03\\_10\\_Organizational\\_Culture.pdf](http://www.thcu.ca/Workplace/pdf/2009_03_10_Organizational_Culture.pdf)
- Zhang, A., Tsui, A., Song, L., Li, C., & Jia, L. (2008). How do I trust thee? The employee-organization relationship, supervisor support, and middle manager trust in the organization. *Human Resource Management, 47*(1), 111-132. doi: 10.1002/hrm.20200

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## About PF3: Clear Leadership & Expectations

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

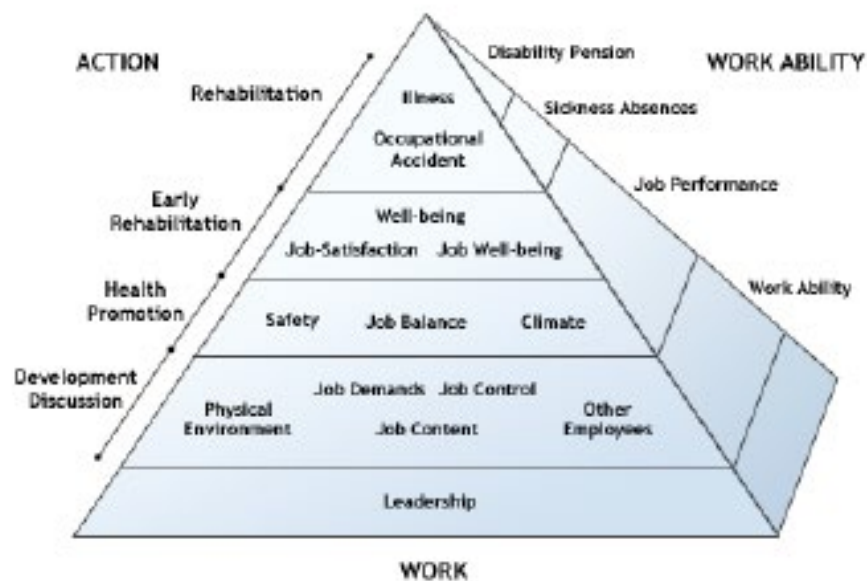
Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF3: Clear Leadership & Expectations?

GM@W defines PF3: Clear Leadership & Expectations as present in a work environment where there is effective leadership and support that helps employees know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization, and whether there are impending changes. There are many types of leadership, each of which impacts psychosocial health and safety in different ways. The most widely accepted categorizations of leadership are instrumental, transactional and transformational. Of these, transformational leadership is considered the most powerful. Instrumental leadership focuses primarily on producing outcomes, with little attention paid to the 'big picture,' the psychosocial dynamics within the organization, and, unfortunately, the individual employees. Transformational leaders are seen as change agents who motivate their followers to do more than what is expected. They are concerned with long-term objectives and transmit a sense of mission, vision and purpose. They have charisma, give individualized consideration to their employees, stimulate intellectual capabilities in others, and inspire employees.

### Why is Clear Leadership & Expectations important?

Leadership is the foundation of a health pyramid (see below)<sup>1</sup>. Effective leadership increases employee morale, resiliency and trust, and decreases employee frustration and conflict. Good leadership leads to individuals being 40% more likely to be in the highest category of job well-being, a 27% reduction of sick leave, and a 46% reduction in early retirements with disability pensions. A leader who demonstrates a commitment to maintaining his or her own physical and psychological health can influence the health of employees (sickness, presenteeism, absenteeism), as well as the health of the organization as a whole (vigour, vitality, productivity).



<sup>1</sup> The term "job well-being" used in the pyramid refers to health aspects that are related to work, such as burnout (Kuoppala et al., 2008).

### **What happens when clear leadership and expectations are lacking in the workplace?**

Leaders who are more instrumental in their approach (rather than transformational) are more likely to find staff health complaints including general feelings of malaise, irritability and nervousness. Similarly, leaders who do not demonstrate visible concern for their own physical and psychological health set a negative example for their staff and can undermine the legitimacy of any organizational program, policy and/or service intended to support employees. Middle managers are at greater risk due to the fact that they must be leaders and be led simultaneously. This role conflict can lead to feelings of powerlessness and stress.

### **How can Clear Leadership & Expectations be improved?**

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Clear Leadership & Expectations** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Clear Leadership & Expectations**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Clear Leadership & Expectations** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Clear Leadership & Expectations:

- Boumans, N. P. G., & Landeweerd, J. A. (1993). Leadership in the nursing unit: relationships with nurses' well-being. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 18, 767-775. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1993.18050767.x>
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Health and Safety Executive. (2012). Work related stress—together we can tackle it. In *Guidance*. Retrieved from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>
- Howell, J., & Avolio, B. (1993). Transformational leadership, transactional leadership, locus of control, and support for innovation: Key predictors of consolidated-business-unit performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(6), 891-902. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.78.6.891
- Kuoppala, J., Lamminpää, A., Liira, J., & Vainio, H. (2008). Leadership, job well-being, and health effects: A systematic review and a meta-analysis. *Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*, 50(8), 904-915. doi: 10.1097/JOM.0b013e31817e918d
- McConville, T., & Holden, L. (1999). The filling in the sandwich: HRM and middle managers in the health sector. *Personnel Review*, 28(5/6), 406-424. doi: 10.1108/00483489910286738
- Quick, J., Macik-Frey, M., & Cooper, C. (2007). Managerial dimensions of organizational health: The healthy leader at work. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44(2), 189-205. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00684.x
- Stordeur, S., Vandenberghe, C., & D'hoore, W. (2001). On examining the moderators of leader behaviors in nursing: An investigation of substitutes for, and neutralizers and enhancers of, leadership. In J. de Jonge, P. Vlerick, A. Bussing & W. B. Schaufeli (Eds.), *Organizational psychology and health care at the start of a new millennium* (pp. 85-104). Munich, Germany: Rainer Hampp Verlag.
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF3: Clear Leadership and Expectations. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

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## About PF4: Civility & Respect

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF4: Civility & Respect?

GM@W defines PF4: Civility & Respect as present in a work environment where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public. Civility and respect are based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging their dignity.

### Why is Civility & Respect important?

A civil and respectful workplace is related to greater job satisfaction, greater perceptions of fairness, a more positive attitude, improved morale, better teamwork, greater interest in personal development, engagement in problem resolution, enhanced supervisor-staff relationships, and reduction in sick leave and turnover. Organizations characterized by civility and respect create a positive atmosphere marked by high spirits and work satisfaction. This allows people to enjoy the environment, whether they are staff, clients or customers.

### What happens when civility and respect are missing from the workplace?

When a workplace lacks civility and respect, this can lead to emotional exhaustion amongst staff. In addition to health problems, an incivil and disrespectful workplace is associated with greater conflict and job withdrawal. A work environment that is incivil and disrespectful also exposes organizations to the threat of more grievances and legal risks.

Probably the most extreme example of disrespectful behaviour is bullying. Exposure to workplace bullying is associated with psychological complaints, depression, burnout, anxiety, aggression, psychosomatic complaints and musculoskeletal health complaints. Bullying not only affects those directly involved, but also affects bystanders, as they too experience higher levels of stress. A number of provinces currently have, or are considering, legislation to address such behaviours.

### How can Civility & Respect be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Civility & Respect** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Civility & Respect**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Civility & Respect** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Civility & Respect:

- Belton, L., & Dyrenforth, S. (2007). Civility in the workplace: Measuring the positive outcomes of a respectful work environment. *Healthcare Executive*, 22(5): 40, 42-43. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17892116>
- Crocker, M., & Henderson, C. (2008). A 12-step managerial civility recovery model. *People & Strategy*. Retrieved from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_6768/is\\_3\\_31/ai\\_n31909630/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_6768/is_3_31/ai_n31909630/)
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Ramarajan, L., Barsade, S., & Burack, O. (2008). The influence of organizational respect on emotional exhaustion in the human services. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3(1), 4-18. Retrieved from <http://people.hbs.edu/lramarajan/RamarajanBarsadeBurack.pdf>
- Legacy Business Cultures. (2012). *Respectful Workplace*. <http://www.respectfulworkplace.com/articles/>
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF4: Civility and Respect. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>
- Vartia, M. (2001). Consequences of workplace bullying with respect to the well-being of its targets and the observers of bullying. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 27(1), 63-69. Retrieved from [http://www.sjweh.fi/download.php?abstract\\_id=588&file\\_nro=1](http://www.sjweh.fi/download.php?abstract_id=588&file_nro=1)

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## About PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements?

GM@W defines PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements as present in a work environment where there is a good fit between employees' interpersonal and emotional competencies and the requirements of the position they hold. This means that employees not only possess the technical skills and knowledge for a particular position, but they also have the psychological skills and emotional intelligence to do the job. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, impulse control, persistence, self-motivation, empathy and social deftness. Of note is the fact that a subjective job fit has been found to be more important than an objective job fit, meaning it is more important for employees to feel they fit their job, rather than being assessed and matched to the job.

### Why is Psychological Competencies & Requirements important?

A fit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold is associated with fewer somatic health complaints, lower levels of depression, greater self-esteem and a more positive self-concept. It is also associated with enhanced performance, job satisfaction and employee retention.

### What happens when there is a misfit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold?

A misfit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold may result in job strain. This strain can be expressed as emotional distress and arousal, excessive cognitive rumination, defensiveness, energy depletion and lower mood levels. Organizationally, competencies and requirements misfit is linked to a reduction of applicants in the recruitment and training process, lack of enjoyment and engagement, poor productivity, conflict, and greater voluntary turnover.

### How can Psychological Competencies & Requirements be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If Psychological Competencies & Requirements is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve Psychological Competencies & Requirements. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how Psychological Competencies & Requirements can be enhanced.

### Further information about Psychological Competencies & Requirements:

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Carless, S. (2005). Person-job fit versus person-organization fit as predictors of organizational attraction and job acceptance intentions: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 78(3), 411-429. doi: 10.1348/096317905X25995
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Scroggins, W. (2008). The relationship between employee fit perceptions, job performance, and retention: Implications of perceived fit. *Employee Responsibilities & Rights Journal*, 20(1), 57-71. doi: 10.1007/s10672-007-9060-0
- Shaw, J., & Gupta, N. (2004). Job complexity, performance and well-being: When does supplies-values fit matter? *Personnel Psychology*, 57(4), 847-879. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2004.00008.x
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF5: Psychological Competencies and Requirements. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

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## About PF6: Growth & Development

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF6: Growth & Development?

GM@W defines PF6: Growth & Development as present in a work environment where employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills. Such workplaces provide a range of internal and external opportunities for employees to build their repertoire of competencies, which will not only help with their current jobs, but will also prepare them for possible future positions.

### Why is Growth & Development important?

Employee development increases goal commitment, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Employees feel that organizations care when they support growth and development, and skill acquisition and career development directly enhance employee well-being. It is important to ensure that growth opportunities extend beyond learning specific technical skills necessary for job performance, also including opportunities to learn personal and interpersonal skills that are critical to successfully caring for oneself and relating to others.

### What happens when employees don't have opportunities for growth and development?

Employees who are not challenged by their work will grow bored, their well-being will suffer, and their performance will drop. When staff do not have opportunities to learn and improve their interpersonal and psychological skills, the result can be conflict, disengagement and distress.

### How can Growth & Development be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Growth & Development** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Growth & Development**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Growth & Development** can be enhanced.

**Further information about Growth & Development:**

- Briscoe, D. (1987). The 10 commandments of development. *Training & Development Journal*, 41(8), 54.
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## About PF7: Recognition & Reward

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF7: Recognition & Reward?

GM@W defines PF7: Recognition & Reward as present in a work environment where there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner. This includes appropriate and regular financial compensation, as well as employee or team celebrations, recognition of years served, and/or milestones reached.

### Why is Recognition & Reward important?

Recognizing and rewarding employees motivates them, fuels their desire to excel, builds their self-esteem, encourages employees to exceed expectations, and enhances team success. This, in turn, provides staff with more energy and enthusiasm and a greater sense of pride and participation in their work. In addition, employees who receive recognition are more likely to treat colleagues and customers with courtesy, respect and understanding.

### What happens when employees don't receive appropriate recognition and reward?

When employees believe that their efforts are not appreciated it can undermine their confidence in their work and trust in the organization. At the least, employees are likely to feel demoralized; alternatively, they may quit. An imbalance between effort and reward is a significant contributor to burnout and emotional distress leading to a range of psychological and physical disorders.

### How can Recognition & Reward be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Recognition & Reward** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Recognition & Reward**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Recognition & Reward** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Recognition & Reward:

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
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- Harrell, R. (2001). Employee recognition brings excellence to the forefront. *Health Care Registration: The Newsletter for Health Care Registration Professionals*, 11(1), 10-11.
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- Nelson, B. (2002). The rewards of recognition. *Leader to Leader*, 23, 16-19.
- Nelson, B. (2002). Tips to make employee recognition a habit. *Health Care Registration: The Newsletter for Health Care Registration Professionals*, 11(12), 11-13.
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## About PF8: Involvement & Influence

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF8: Involvement & Influence?

GM@W defines PF8: Involvement & Influence as present in a work environment where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made. Opportunities for involvement can relate to an employee's specific job, the activities of a team or department, or issues involving the organization as a whole.

### Why is Involvement & Influence important?

When employees feel they have meaningful input into their work they are more likely to be engaged, to have higher morale, and to take pride in their organization. This, in turn, increases their willingness to make extra effort when required. Job involvement is, thus, associated with increased psychological well-being, enhanced innovation, and organizational commitment.

### What happens when employees lack involvement or influence?

If employees do not believe they have a voice in the affairs of the organization, they are likely to feel a sense of indifference or helplessness. Job alienation, or non-involvement, is associated with cynicism and distress, greater turnover, and burnout.

### How can Involvement & Influence be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Involvement & Influence** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Involvement & Influence**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Involvement & Influence** can be enhanced.

**Further information about Involvement & Influence:**

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Elloy, D., Everett, J., & Flynn, W. (1991). An examination of the correlates of job involvement. *Group & Organization Studies*, 16(2), 160-177. doi: 10.1177/105960119101600204
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## About PF9: Workload Management

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF9: Workload Management?

GM@W defines PF9: Workload Management as present in a work environment where tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available. This is the psychosocial factor that many working Canadians describe as being the biggest workplace stressor (i.e., having too much to do and not enough time to do it). Research has demonstrated that it is not just the amount of work that makes a difference, but also the extent to which employees have the resources (time, equipment, support) to do the work well.

### Why is Workload Management important?

Most employees are not only willing to work hard, but experience a 'good day's work' as fulfilling and rewarding. Workload management is important because there is a unique relationship between job demands, intellectual demands and job satisfaction. Job demands reduce job satisfaction, whereas intellectual demands, or decision-making latitude, increase job satisfaction. Even when there are high demands, if employees also have high decision-making ability, they will be able to thrive. Having high decision-making latitude also allows for positive coping behaviours to be learned and experienced.

### What happens when employees can't manage their workload?

If any system is subject to excess load without respite it will break. This is as true for people as it is for equipment. Increased demands, without opportunities for control, result in physical, psychological and emotional fatigue, and increase stress and strain. This has a negative influence on performance. Emotionally fatigued individuals also have a diminished sense of personal accomplishment and an increased sense of inadequacy. One of the main reasons employees feel negatively about their jobs and their employers is excessive workload.

### How can Workload Management be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Workload Management** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Workload Management**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Workload Management** can be enhanced.

**Further information about Workload Management:**

- Barnes, C., & Van Dyne, L. (2009). 'I'm tired': Differential effects of physical and emotional fatigue on workload management strategies. *Human Relations*, 62(1), 59-92. doi: 10.1177/0018726708099518
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
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## About PF10: Engagement

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF10: Engagement?

GM@W defines PF10: Engagement as present in a work environment where employees feel connected to their work and are motivated to do their job well. Employee engagement can be physical, emotional and/or cognitive.

Physical engagement is based on the amount of exertion an employee puts into his or her job. Physically engaged employees view work as a source of energy. Emotionally engaged employees have a positive job outlook and are passionate about their work. Cognitively engaged employees devote more attention to their work and are absorbed in their job. Whatever the source, engaged employees feel connected to their work because they can relate to, and are committed to, the overall success and mission of their company.

Engagement is similar to, but should not be mistaken for: job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, and intrinsic motivation.

### Why is Engagement important?

Not only is employee engagement important for individual satisfaction and psychological health, but it also leads to positive outcomes for the organization. The three-year Total Return to Shareholders (TRS) for companies with engaged workforces can be double that of the average company. In addition to profitability, employee engagement is related to greater customer satisfaction, enhanced task performance, greater morale, greater motivation, and increased organizational citizenship behaviours (discretionary behaviours that are beneficial to the organization and are a matter of personal choice).

### What happens when employees aren't engaged?

A recent poll in the U.S. found that the economic impact of disengaged workers is an estimated \$300 billion annually in productivity losses. Furthermore, disengaged workers can lead to greater economic impact from psychological and medical consequences. In addition to financial hardships, a workforce that is not engaged is more likely to demonstrate greater employee turnover, workplace deviance (in the form of withholding effort), counterproductive behaviour, and withdrawal behaviours.

### How can Engagement be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Engagement** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Engagement**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Engagement** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Engagement:

- Corace, C. (2007). Engagement: Enrolling the quiet majority. *Organization Development Journal*, 25(2), 171-175.
- Gallup Management Journal. (2006). *Unhappy workers are unhealthy too*. Retrieved from <http://gmj.gallup.com/content/14545/gallup-study-unhappy-workers-unhealthy-too.aspx>
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F., & Keyes, C. L. M. (2003). *Well-being in the workplace and its relationship to business outcomes: A review of the Gallup studies*. Retrieved from <http://media.gallup.com/documents/whitePaper--Well-BeingInTheWorkplace.pdf>
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- Rich, B. L. (2007). *Job engagement: Construct validation and relationships with job satisfaction, job involvement and intrinsic motivation*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida).
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## About PF11: Balance

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF11: Balance?

GM@W defines PF11: Balance as present in a work environment where there is recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family and personal life. This psychosocial factor reflects the reality that everyone has multiple roles: as professors, parents, partners, etc. This complexity is enriching and allows fulfillment of individual strengths and responsibilities, but conflicting responsibilities can lead to role conflict or overload.

### Why is Balance important?

A work environment where employers recognize the need for work-life balance makes employees feel valued and happier both at work and at home. When employers recognize that work-life balance is important, they realize the need for greater workplace flexibility. This flexibility helps minimize conflict by allowing employees to accomplish the tasks necessary in their daily lives. Balance reduces stress and the possibility that home issues will spill over into work, or vice versa. Balance allows staff to maintain their concentration, confidence, responsibility, and sense of control at work. Organizationally, this translates into enhanced employee commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviours (discretionary behaviours that are beneficial to the organization and are a matter of personal choice) and job performance. In turn, balance is associated with enhanced well-being and reduced stress. These effects have been demonstrated over time, showing a direct causal relationship to physical and psychological health.

### What happens when balance is compromised?

Job stress is on the rise, surging from 20 percent in 1990 to 33 percent in 2000. Employees with higher job stress are more likely to be dissatisfied with work and be absent either physically or mentally. One source of stress is conflict between work and family roles. When work-family conflict occurs, health and well-being are undermined. This imbalance can lead to constant tiredness, bad temper, and inability to progress. These can, in turn, lead to additional stress-related illness, as well as higher cholesterol, depressive symptoms, and overall decreased health. The impact on the organization is increased costs due to benefit payouts, absenteeism, disability, and turnover.

### How can Balance be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Balance** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Balance**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Balance** can be enhanced.

### Further information about Balance:

- Byrne, U. (2005). Work-life balance: Why are we talking about it at all? *Business Information Review*, 22(1), 53-59. doi: [10.1177/0266382105052268](https://doi.org/10.1177/0266382105052268)
- Casey, P., & Grzywacz, J. (2008). Employee health and well-being: The role of flexibility and work-family balance. *Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 11(10), 31-47. doi: [10.1080/10887150801963885](https://doi.org/10.1080/10887150801963885)
- Gallup Management Journal. (2006). Unhappy workers are unhealthy too. Retrieved from <http://gmj.gallup.com/content/14545/gallup-study-unhappy-workers-unhealthy-too.aspx>
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
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- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF11: Balance. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

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## About PF12: Psychological Protection

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF12: Psychological Protection?

GM@W defines PF12: Psychological Protection as present in a work environment where employees' psychological safety is ensured. Workplace psychological safety is demonstrated when workers feel able to put themselves on the line, ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes and problems, or propose a new idea without fearing negative consequences to themselves, their job or their career. A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to employee psychological health due to negligent, reckless or intentional acts.

### Why is Psychological Protection important?

When employees are psychologically protected they demonstrate greater job satisfaction, enhanced team learning behaviour and improved performance. Employees are more likely to speak up and become involved. They show increased morale and engagement and are less likely to experience stress-related illness. Psychologically protected workplaces also experience fewer grievances, conflicts and liability risks.

### What happens when employees' psychological safety is not protected?

When employees are not psychologically safe they experience demoralization, a sense of threat, disengagement and strain. They perceive workplace conditions as ambiguous and unpredictable. The organization is at a much greater threat from costly, and potentially crippling, legal and regulatory risk. This can, in turn, undermine shareholder, consumer, and public confidence in the organization.

### How can Psychological Protection be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Psychological Protection** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Psychological Protection**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Psychological Protection** can be enhanced.

**Further information about Psychological Protection:**

- American Psychiatric Foundation. (2012). *Partnership for workplace mental health*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/>
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from [http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce\\_Employers\\_Guide\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf)
- Government of Canada (2012). *Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety*. Retrieved from <http://www.ccohs.ca/>
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- Roussin, C. (2008). Increasing trust, psychological safety, and team performance through dyadic leadership discovery. *Small Group Research*, 39(20), 224-248. doi: 10.1177/1046496408315988
- Schepers, J, de Jong, A., Wetzels, M., & de Ruyter, K. (2008). Psychological safety and social support in groupware adoption: A multi-level assessment in education. *Computers & Education*, 51(2), 757-775. Retrieved from [http://jlsite.onward.nl/pdf/JeroenSchepers.nl%20-%20Schepers,%20De%20Jong,%20Wetzels,%20De%20Ruyter%20\(2008\).pdf](http://jlsite.onward.nl/pdf/JeroenSchepers.nl%20-%20Schepers,%20De%20Jong,%20Wetzels,%20De%20Ruyter%20(2008).pdf)
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF12: Psychological Protection. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

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## About PF13: Protection of Physical Safety

### What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

### What is PF13: Protection of Physical Safety?

GM@W defines PF13: Protection of Physical Safety as present in a work environment where management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees. Appropriate actions may include: policies to protect employees' physical safety; training in safety-related protocols; rapid and appropriate response to physical accidents or situations identified as risky; and clearly demonstrated concern for employees' physical safety.

### Why is Protection of Physical Safety important?

Employees who perceive the workplace as protective of physical safety will feel more secure and engaged at work. Research has shown that when employees have higher levels of confidence in safety protection at work, they experience lower rates of psychological distress and mental health problems. The sense of physical safety protection is enhanced by: adequate training with regard to physical safety, trust that the employer minimizes physical hazards, confidence that the employer responds quickly and effectively to safety incidents, and the opportunity to have meaningful input into workplace policies and practices. The protection of physical safety is also an important bridge between traditional Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) and the new area of Psychological Health and Safety. This factor is linked to the concept of "safety climate": "employees' perceptions of the importance of safety and how it is operationalized within the working environment"<sup>1</sup>. Protection of Physical Safety is especially important in workplaces with high levels of safety-sensitivity.

Safety climate is consistent with, and part of, the larger culture or climate of the organization. Correspondingly, a psychologically safe climate is one where there is a shared and enduring belief in, and commitment to, the importance of promoting and protecting the physical and psychological safety of all involved by taking actions to identify and address risks. It involves the complex interaction between events in the workplace or organizational environment; management commitment and leadership; employee perceptions, thoughts and knowledge; and individual and organizational behaviours or practices. Safety culture is therefore dynamic and aspirational rather than fixed. As one author noted, "Like a state of grace, a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained"<sup>2</sup>.

### What happens when employees' physical safety is not protected?

Workplaces that fail to protect physical safety are likely to be more dangerous. Also, workers who do not see the workplace as protecting physical safety will feel less secure and less engaged, and this will increase their vulnerability to psychological distress and potential mental health problems.

<sup>1</sup> Cooper, M.D., & Phillips, R.A. (2004). Exploratory analysis of the safety climate and safety behavior analysis. *Journal of Safety Research*, 35, 497-512.

<sup>2</sup> Reason, J. (1997). *Managing the risks of organizational accidents*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate.

## How can Protection of Physical Safety be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If Protection of Physical Safety is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve Protection of Physical Safety. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how Protection of Physical Safety can be enhanced.

## Further information about Protection of Physical Safety:

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[www.guardingmindsatwork.ca](http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca)

## Risk Factor Assessment Tools

Adapted from Guarding Minds @ Work  
Organizational Review Worksheet



[http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/info/  
gmaw\\_resources/assessment\\_tools](http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/info/gmaw_resources/assessment_tools)

## 1. Psychological Support

A workplace where co-workers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns, and respond appropriately, as needed.

### Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Absenteeism/leave data
- Data on costs, reasons and rates for benefits utilization
- Existing employee survey data (e.g. on stress/mental health concerns)
- Complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes
- H&S and human rights law and return to work and accommodation policies and procedures.

### Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Mental Health Awareness:

- Supervisors/managers trained to identify and/or support employees with mental health concerns.
- Employees provided with education and/or information on mental health issues.

#### Employee Benefits:

- Access to psychologists or other regulated mental health professionals
- Employee and Family Assistance Programs
- Prescription Drugs
- Short-term disability or sick leave
- Long-term disability

#### Return to work:

- Policies to assist employees who remain at work while dealing with mental health problems
- Regular communication with off-work employees
- Formal return to work policies and programs



## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	4 strongly agree	3 Somewhat agree	2 Somewhat disagree	1 Strongly disagree
Our workplace offers services or benefits that adequately address employee psychological and mental health				
Our supervisors would say or do something helpful if an employee looked distressed while at work				
Employees feel supported in our workplace when they are dealing with personal or family issues				
Our workplace supports employees who are returning to work after time off due to a mental health condition				
People in our workplace have a good understanding of the importance of employee mental health				

## Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths\*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the employee survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
  
2. Do issues related to psychological support present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
  
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of psychological support (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
  
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 2. Organizational Culture

### A workplace characterized by trust, honesty and fairness.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Staff feedback (e.g. suggestions, meeting records, exit interviews)
- Existing employee survey data (on staff engagement/morale)
- Turnover rates
- Customer/client feedback
- Collective Agreement provisions, policies and complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes

#### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Accountability:

- Challenging interpersonal situations dealt with quickly and effectively
- Management held accountable for decisions
- Transparency in decision-making

#### Communication and Trust

- Regular communication and input from staff on management decision-making processes
- Staff trust management
- Work environment is characterized by trust, honesty, tolerance and fairness
- Employees trust each other



## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
All people in our workplace are held accountable for their actions.				
People at work show sincere respect for others' ideas, values and beliefs.				
Difficult situations at work are addressed effectively.				
Employees feel that they are part of a community at work.				
Employees and management trust each other.				

**Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_**

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the employee survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to organizational culture present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of organizational culture (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

### 3. Clear Leadership and Expectations

A workplace where there is effective leadership and support that helps employees know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization and whether there are impending changes.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Organization vision/mission statements
- Staff feedback (e.g. employee suggestions, meeting records, exit interviews)
- Formal performance evaluations of managers/leaders
- Existing employee survey data (on leadership)
- Collective agreement language and Complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes

#### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Effective Leadership and Management

- Management accountability (e.g. performance agreements)
- Promotion decisions consider leadership style
- Management training in leadership skills
- Regular performance reviews for leaders/managers

#### Clear and Effective Communication

- Mechanisms for regular communication with staff (e.g. newsletters, regular meetings, intranet updates)
- Staff informed in a timely fashion of impending changes
- Opportunities for dialogue between staff and managers/leaders

#### Clear Job Roles and Responsibilities

- Clear and current job descriptions
- Regular performance evaluations for employees
- Job demands analysis

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
In their jobs, employees know what they are expected to do.				
Leadership in our workplace is effective.				
Staff are informed about important changes at work in a timely manner.				
Supervisors provide helpful feedback to employees on their performance.				
Our organization provides clear, effective, communication.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to clear leadership and expectations present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of clear leadership and expectations (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 4. Civility and Respect

A workplace where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and public. Civility and respect are based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging their dignity.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Current policies/processes pertaining to staff relations (e.g. harassment policy)
- Collective Agreement provisions, H&S and Human Rights law
- Stated mission statement and/or code of conduct
- Employee complaints/grievances (documented and undocumented)
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes
- Data on conflict (e.g. complaints/grievances, mediation proceedings, external consultations).

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Respectful Workplace

- Employee training, education and resources on staff relations (e.g. conflict)
- Management training on staff relations (e.g. conflict, mediation)
- Zero tolerance for inappropriate workplace behaviour
- Minimal conflict between employees and/or management

#### Appropriate Resolution of Workplace Conflict (internal)

- Documentation of incidents of inappropriate employee behaviour
- Effective complaint process(es)/resolutions

#### Mechanisms to Address Inappropriate Customer/Client Behaviour

- Supports and training for staff on difficult customers/clients
- Investigation and documentation of incidents of inappropriate behaviour by customers/clients

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
People treat each other with consideration and respect in the workplace.				
Our workplace effectively handles “people problems” that exist between staff.				
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.				
Unnecessary conflict is kept to a minimum in our workplace.				
Our workplace has effective ways of addressing inappropriate behaviour by customers and/or clients.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to civility and respect present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of civility and respect (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**



## 5. Psychological Demands

A workplace where psychological demands of any given job are documented and assessed in conjunction with the physical demands of the job. Psychological demands of the job allow organizations to determine whether any given activity of the job might be a hazard to the worker's health and well-being.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Recruitment and selection procedures
- Job descriptions
- Personnel testing (e.g. selection tests)
- Performance evaluation results
- Collective agreement provisions, H&S and Human Rights legislation and complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Hiring/Promotion

- Detailed job descriptions that include interpersonal/emotional competencies required for the job
- Comprehensive hiring process (e.g. interviews, questionnaire's/testing)
- Promotion decisions that consider psychological demands of the job

#### Support for Interpersonal/Emotional Competencies Development

- Job analysis that identifies psychological demands of the job
- Orientation to interpersonal/emotional job demands
- Training on interpersonal/emotional skills required

#### Good Fit Between Employee and their Position

- Supervision/mentorship opportunities for new staff
- Supervision/mentorship opportunities for staff in positions that challenge their interpersonal/emotional competencies
- Consideration of opportunities for accommodation or alternate positions in cases of poor job fit.

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Hiring/promotion decisions consider “people skills” necessary for specific positions.				
Our organization hires people who “fit” well.				
Employees have the social and emotional skills needed to do their jobs well.				
Supervisors and managers believe that social skills are as valuable as other skills.				
Positions make good use of employee’s personal strengths.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to psychological demands present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of psychological competencies? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 6. Growth and Development

A workplace where employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional, and job skills.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Training/development policies (e.g. purpose, \$ amount, frequency and who has access)
- Collective agreement provisions
- Documentation of internal/external opportunities for training and development
- Participation rates for staff training and development sessions
- Statistics on internal promotion rates
- Complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Performance Feedback

- Performance evaluations include employee training/development plans
- Feedback on areas for interpersonal/emotional skills development

#### Training, Development and Advancement Opportunities

- Staff input into training needs for advancement/promotion
- Opportunities for job shadowing and/or new skill development
- Dedicated time and funds for training, growth and development

#### Promotion Decisions

- Existing staff have opportunities for promotion/advancement
- Promotion decisions consider interpersonal/emotional skills of candidates

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Employees receive feedback at work that helps them grow and develop.				
Supervisors are open to employee ideas for taking on new opportunities and challenges.				
Employees have opportunities to advance within their organization.				
Our organization values employees' ongoing growth and development.				
Employees have the opportunity to develop their "people skills" at work.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to growth and development present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of growth and development? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 7. Recognition and Reward

A workplace where there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Information on pay equity.
- Compensation formulas.
- Employee recognition and/or reward systems.
- Collective Agreements.
- Complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Recognition

- Demonstrated appreciation for staff
- Regular recognition events (e.g. breakfasts, celebrations)
- Celebration of individual and/or team successes and accomplishments

#### Reward

- Adequate compensation
- Regular pay increases
- Profit-sharing / stock option opportunities
- Non-monetary rewards

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Immediate supervisors demonstrate appreciation of employees' work.				
Employees are paid fairly for the work they do.				
The organization appreciates (and compensates) for extra effort/time put in by employees.				
Our organization celebrates our shared accomplishments.				
Our workplace values employees' commitment and passion for their work.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)



1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to recognition and reward present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of recognition and reward? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 8. Involvement and Influence

A workplace where employees are included in the discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Job descriptions
- Staff feedback (e.g. employee suggestions, meeting records, exit interviews)
- Complaints/grievances
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes
- Performance evaluation data
- Organizational charts

### Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Involvement

- Encouragement of staff to discuss with supervisors/managers how their work is done
- Mechanisms for soliciting employee feedback (e.g. UMC, regular meetings and e-mails)
- Regular staff, safety and/or team meetings
- Timely communication of information about changes that may impact employees' work

#### Influence

- Staff control, as appropriate, over how work tasks are organized
- Solicitation of employee input on how to make improvements to work

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Employees are able to talk to immediate supervisors about how they do their work.				
Employees have some control over how they organize their work.				
Employee opinions and suggestions are considered at work.				
Employees are informed of important changes that may impact how their work is done.				
Our workplace encourages input from all staff on important decisions related to work.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to involvement and influence present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of involvement and influence? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 9. Workload Management

A workplace where tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect?

- Collective Agreement provisions
- Accurate records of hours worked
- Processes for task and project assignment
- Staff feedback about workload and work pace
- Minutes of UMC and H&S Committee meetings
- Complaints/grievances
- Data on job-related errors, incidents, accidents, injuries and related illness

### Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Workload Expectations

- Explicit and reasonable workload expectations
- Written job descriptions that include productivity expectations
- Compensation for overtime work

#### Flexibility and Equity

- Deadlines modifiable as necessary
- Workload assigned equitably
- Staff flexibility, as appropriate, to prioritize tasks

#### Supports

- Timely mechanisms for dealing with short-term increases in workload
- Equipment, support and resource needs dealt with in a timely fashion
- Systems in place to cover staff shortages (e.g. vacation, sick, vacancies)

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	4 strongly agree	3 Somewhat agree	2 Somewhat disagree	1 Strongly disagree
The amount of work employees are expected to do is reasonable for their positions.				
Employees can talk to their supervisors about the amount of work they have to do.				
Employees have the equipment and resources needed to do their jobs well.				
Employees' work is free from unnecessary interruptions and disruptions.				
Employees have control over prioritizing tasks and responsibilities when facing multiple demands.				

**Score results (5 to 20)** \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to workload management present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of workload management? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 10. Engagement

A workplace where employees enjoy and feel connected to their work and where they feel motivated to do their job well.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Absenteeism and turnover rates (and reasons)
- Existing employee survey data (on engagement)
- Staff feedback (e.g. UMC meetings, section/department meetings, exit interviews)
- UMC and H&S Committee meetings
- Collective Agreement provisions
- Complaints/grievances
- Measures of quality and/or productivity

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Commitment and Effort

- Staff willingness to “go the extra mile” at work, when needed
- Staff participation in optional job-related activities (e.g. workplace committees)
- Employees willingness to help others (e.g. cover shifts, mentor)

#### Employee Satisfaction

- Staff participate in organizational social events (e.g. BBQ’s, holiday parties)
- Positive morale observed even in times of change
- Low levels of turnover
- Few complaints/grievances



## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Employees enjoy their work.				
Employees are willing to give extra effort at work if needed.				
Employees describe work as an important part of what they do.				
Employees are committed to the success of the organization.				
Employees are proud of the work they do.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to engagement present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of engagement? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 11. Balance

A workplace where there is recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family and personal life.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Collective Agreement provisions (e.g. leave, accommodation, hours of work and overtime, flexible work arrangements)
- Accurate records of hours worked (including overtime)
- Data on use of vacation and compensatory leave
- Absenteeism leave data (i.e. family leave, sick leave)
- Data on costs reasons and rates for benefit utilization
- Complaints/grievances
- Human Rights and H&S law
- UMC and H&S committee minutes

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Flexibility

- Flexible work arrangements where possible (e.g. job-sharing, telework)
- Opportunities to earn time off during peak periods (e.g. compensatory time)
- Mechanisms to track employee usage of allotted time off

#### Supports

- Comprehensive benefits for employees and their families
- Personal and family supports through work (e.g. daycare, fitness facility, health education)
- Management exhibits and supports positive work-life balance behaviour

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	4 strongly agree	3 Somewhat agree	2 Somewhat disagree	1 Strongly disagree
Our workplace encourages employees to take their entitled breaks (e.g. scheduled work breaks, sick time, vacation, parental leave and earned days off).				
Employees are able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.				
Our workplace promotes a healthy work-life balance.				
Employees can talk to their supervisors when they are having trouble maintaining work-life balance.				
Employees have energy left at the end of most workdays for their personal life.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to balance present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of balance? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## 12. Psychological Protection

A workplace where psychological safety is demonstrated when employees feel able to put themselves on the line, ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes and problems, or propose a new idea without fearing negative consequences to themselves, their job or their career.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Data on lengths, costs and reasons for absences from work
- Collective agreement provisions, policies and procedures related to staff relations (e.g. harassment, discrimination and violence)
- Human Rights and H&S legislation
- UMC and H&S minutes
- Documentation of incidents of inappropriate behaviour by customers/clients
- Complaints/grievances, mediation, litigation rates

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Risk Management/Policies and Procedures

- Organizational ethics, values and privacy statements
- Policies and provisions to address harm to employees (e.g. harassment, discrimination, violence)
- Annual review of policies, processes and procedures
- Zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour

#### Risk Response/Prevention of Unnecessary stress and harm

- Execution and consistent administration of policies and provisions pertaining to harassment, discrimination and violence
- Mechanisms for conflict resolution and redress
- Staff training on harassment, discrimination and violence at work.

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
Our workplace is committed to minimizing unnecessary stress at work.				
Immediate supervisors care about employees' emotional well-being.				
Our organization makes efforts to prevent harm to employees from harassment, discrimination and violence.				
Employees would describe our workplace as being psychologically healthy.				
Our workplace deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g. harassment, discrimination, violence).				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to psychological protection present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of psychological protection? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**



## 13. Protection of Physical Safety

A workplace in which employees' psychological, as well as physical safety is protected from hazards and risks related to the workers' physical environment.

Information that may be helpful to refer to or collect:

- Collective agreement provisions, Labour Standards, H&S and Human Rights law
- Workplace and/or industry safety policies
- UMC and H&S Committee minutes
- Safety inspection reports
- Accident, workplace-related illness data and incident reports (including near misses)

### **Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit (select all that apply)

#### Safety Programs and Policies

- H&S committees are active and meet regularly
- All workers are able to access designated H&S representatives
- Safety programs, provisions and policies are reviewed regularly (with particular attention to their impact on employee psychological health).
- Safety requirements, programs and policies are current and communicated to all staff, including new hires
- Regular, documented workplace inspections are conducted to identify physical hazards (with particular attention to their impact on employee psychological health)
- Measures are taken to eliminate or control identified hazards
- Staff and/or their representatives, have input into the development of safety policies and practices
- Job descriptions include details for physical hazards to which workers may be exposed (with particular attention to those that may be hazardous to psychological health)

#### Equipment and Training

- The work environment does not negatively impact psychological health (e.g. crowding, isolation, noise, lighting)

- Employees are trained to understand how physical hazards can affect psychological health and safety
- Staff receive training on how to identify, report and investigate physical hazards
- Staff have the equipment needed to reduce the impact of physical risks on psychological health (e.g. proper lighting, noise reduction, panic alarms, ventilation)

### Response to Safety Incidents

- Accident, workplace-related illness and incident investigation protocols are reviewed regularly and updated as needed
- Accident and incident investigation protocols are effective
- H&S Committee recommendations are acted on promptly
- Management recognizes the impact of incidents and workplace-related illness on employee's psychological and physical health.
- Policies, equipment and training are reviewed and revised, if needed, in response to safety incidents
- Timely and effective supports are available following a critical incident (e.g. defusing, debriefing, EAP Programs, psychological treatment).

Employee Survey:

<b>Please answer questions below with respect to your workplace</b>	4 strongly agree	3 Somewhat agree	2 Somewhat disagree	1 Strongly disagree
Management takes appropriate action to protect employees' physical safety at work.				
Our workplace offers sufficient training to help protect employees' physical safety at work (e.g. emergency preparedness, safe lifting, violence prevention).				

When accidents occur or risks are identified, our workplace responds effectively.				
Employees have the equipment, and tools they need to do their job in a physically safe way (e.g. protective clothing, adequate lighting, ergonomic seating).				
Our workplace responds appropriately when workers raise concerns about physical or psychological safety.				

**Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_**

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to protection of physical safety present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of protection of physical safety? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

**14. Any other chronic stressor that may be identified by workers  
(please describe)**

**What information may be helpful to refer to or collect to support your concern:**

**Assessment Questions – Organizational supports:**

How would you describe your workplace/work unit as it pertains your concern/issue – please list any workplace conditions that may apply:

Work functions, tools and support:

Work atmosphere:

Labour Relations:

## Employee Survey:

<b>Please create 5 specific statements that would reflect a workplace that deals effectively with your issue, and then rate each one according to whether or not your employer is able to meet these commitments .</b>	<b>4 strongly agree</b>	<b>3 Somewhat agree</b>	<b>2 Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>1 Strongly disagree</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

### Score results (5 to 20) \_\_\_\_\_

Significant concerns = 5 to 10

Moderate concerns = 10 to 13

Minimal concerns\* = 14 to 16 (although minimal, it is important to attend to)

Relative strengths \*\* = 17 to 20 (although relative strength – you should look for areas of concern and address them)

1. Is there a difference between the outcomes of the organizational assessment and the survey results? If yes, what may be contributing to the difference (e.g. lack of communication)?
2. Do issues related to psychological protection present a greater risk factor to particular groups of employees? Please list them here (e.g. shift workers, specific jobs, new employees).
3. What are the strengths in your workplace in terms of psychological protection? (what do you do well and should keep doing)?
4. What could your workplace do to improve in this area (what could you do more of and what could you do less of)?

**Is further action required? Yes  No**

## The Employers' Agenda is NOT the Workers' Agenda

<b>EMPLOYER'S AGENDA</b>	<b>WORKER'S AGENDA</b>
Looking for cheap solutions	Sustainable efforts may require investment
Looking for quick and easy fix, to minimize impact on productivity	Consultation and collaboration to develop solutions relevant to the workplace will have long term benefits
Aimed at blaming workers	Pushing to educate people that it's not their fault (placing blame isn't a solution).
Faults a person's individual characteristics	Emphasizes workplace factors
<b>Examples:</b>	<b>What this looks like:</b>
<p>EAP – designed to help employees cope with work demands imposed by management</p> <p>Stress management programs – easy to implement but difficult to measure their effectiveness</p> <p>Wellness Programs – emphasize the employee's obligation to take responsibility for their mental health</p>	<p>The Unions role is to develop PREVENTION-BASED solutions (with worker involvement) so all exposed workers are benefiting from the control</p> <p>These will be more sustainable and effective than isolated, individual measures</p> <p>WE want to address the underlying causes</p>