Fact sheet
Positive work environments

- Organisations are only as strong as their people, and the culture of an organisation has a significant impact on the wellbeing of their employees.

- A positive work culture is associated with higher morale and lower stress, can act as a protective factor for mental wellbeing and improve organisational performance and productivity.

- Creating a mentally healthy workplace is about creating a safe, supportive and strong workplace culture. It takes time and is an ongoing journey.

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to creating a positive work environment. Every workplace has different needs, resources and priorities.

- Adapt the tools you already have and integrate a mental health and wellbeing focus to the programmes and work already underway (i.e. don't reinvent the wheel).

A positive work environment and culture looks like...

✔ **Positive emotional climate**
Cultivating and expressing positive emotions

✔ **Education and awareness**
Educating employees on mental health and wellbeing

✔ **Effective communication**
Communications based on trust, respect and civility

✔ **Not tolerating bullying or harassment**

✔ **Collaborative teamwork**
Working well together to share knowledge and achieve goals

✔ **Diversity and inclusion**
Engaging the strengths of a diverse workforce

Getting started

Ask these questions:

Where are we starting from and where do we want to go?
Assess what is needed and wanted from staff and management. Set goals and priorities and identify target audiences and resources.

When assessing need and identifying priorities, ask some more questions:

How does this impact mental wellbeing?

*Is it **safe**?*

*Is it **supportive**?*

*Will it **strengthen** wellbeing?*

Safe
Manaakitanga
Psychologically healthy environment

Supportive
Āwhinatia
Fair & empathetic approaches

Strong
Kia Tautoko
Boosting mental wellbeing & resilience

WORKING WELL

Mental Health Foundation OF NEW ZEALAND
mauri tū, mauri ora

Leadership commitment: Workplace mental health is an organisational priority

- Communicate the importance of mental wellbeing regularly.
- Engage in two-way conversations about mental health at work.
- Model psychologically safe and healthy behaviour.
- Involve staff in creating and implementing wellbeing plans.

Encourage communication around mental health and wellbeing

- Ensure all leaders, from top management to team leaders, talk about mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage two-way supportive conversations at work, including one-on-one discussions, team discussions and when someone might be struggling.
- Provide regular information and resources on mental health and wellbeing for staff, throughout all stages of employment.

Mental health and wellbeing policy and processes

- Focus on how the organisation ensures a mentally safe workplace.
- Show a commitment to strengthening staff wellbeing and resiliency.
- Communicate clearly what supports are available for all staff experiencing mental health problems.
- Ensure all other policies and processes reflect the organisation's commitment to being a mentally healthy workplace.

Check progress against wellbeing objectives

- Include mental health and wellbeing measures in staff surveys.
- Check in regularly on how staff feel and think about work.
- Report back on progress and celebrate successes.

Lived values are essential

At the heart of a positive culture is the need to trust and be trusted, and the need to respect and be respected. Everyone in the organisation needs to understand and be able to demonstrate your agreed values.

Consider:

- How is trust built to support positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors?
- Is respect shown through courtesy, kindness and politeness?
- Do people feel encouraged to express their opinions and ideas?
- Is civility promoted and stigma, discrimination and bullying rejected?
- Is teamwork valued and collaborative ideas and practices rewarded?
- Is diversity, differences and similarities, valued?