



# Job crafting for workplace wellbeing

Organisational toolkit

Mentally healthy workplaces are good for people, and they're good for business. Healthier and happier employees are more productive, take less sick days and are less likely to quit their jobs.

Businesses who have a mentally healthy workforce are more profitable. Workplaces receive a return of \$2.30 for every dollar spent on mental health. The return can be as high as \$14.50 for every dollar spent in small business and industries such as construction, energy and communications.

Australians increasingly expect wellbeing to be a focus for their employer. Employees are more willing to take charge of their mental health, with many renegotiating with their employer what they "receive" in exchange for their work.

Every workplace, employee and sector has an opportunity to shape our future working lives. **Here's what leaders can do.**

## One: Create psychologically healthy workplaces

Psychologically safe workplaces encourage healthy risk-taking and promote learning, innovation and collaboration. People in psychologically safe workplaces are more prepared to speak up, ask for help and take initiative.

It's a core safeguard for workplace wellbeing, and a powerful tool that organisations can use to boost productivity, decrease turnover and reduce burnout.

### Increasing psychological safety

- 1. Be human:** As leaders, it's important to acknowledge that we don't know everything. When we learn, grow or try new things, mistakes are inevitable along the way. Everyone struggles but may not want to show or admit this in the workplace. By owning up to your own mistakes, you're showing that struggling is not a sign of weakness, and you're humanising your own learning process. You can also build a safer foundation for the organisation to innovate.
- 2. Invite feedback** – welcome criticism: Proactively inviting input, including constructive criticism, empowers people to express themselves and builds a culture of mutual respect and trust in leadership.
- 3. Make it routine:** Creating regular or dedicated forums for sharing normalises a psychologically safe workplace culture. This can also be built into existing meetings, such as opening weekly team meetings with key learnings or challenges from the week prior or ahead.

## Two: Support job crafting

### 1. Have open conversations

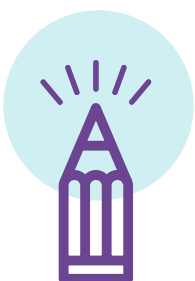
Job crafting can benefit both the individual and the organisation. Chances are, your employees are going to adapt their job with or without your support. Open and welcome conversations about job crafting across all levels of the organisation are more likely to ensure employees' attempts to job craft are also beneficial to the wider organisation and team.

### 2. Personalise and formalise

Embedding job crafting into formal work process, such as performance reviews, normalises and encourages meaningful engagement.

Include questions in performance reviews that invite collaboration and reflection, such as:

- What would you like to do more of at work?
- What parts of your role are the most satisfying?
- How could you better utilise your strengths in your role or the wider organisation?
- What would you like to do less of, and how could we fill this gap if it was removed?
- Are there any projects or teams you could see yourself engaging with more?



Job crafting involves strategies where an employee can shape their job to align with their strengths, values and interests.

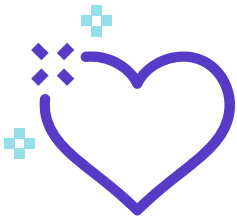
### 3. Harness creativity

Some workplaces have less scope for autonomy with crafting tasks or relationships. By understanding and identifying these barriers, you can support other methods of job crafting to increase engagement – like cognitive crafting (thoughts and beliefs) or creating opportunities for playful work design by embedding fun or challenge, without compromising professionalism or quality, as part of the existing task.

### 4. Train and grow

Provide managers and supervisors with training on how to recognise and support employee-led job crafting initiatives, including the wellbeing benefits at both an individual and organisational level.





## Three: Channel healthy passion

Passion drives your workforce. When in harmony with people's inner goals and values, passion contributes to workplace wellbeing. All consuming, or obsessive passion, while sometimes helpful, often conflicts with other areas of life, and increases the risk of stress and burnout.

You can experience both harmonious or obsessive passion at the same time, or interchangeably at different periods.

While obsessive passion may be helpful at times, it can come at a cost to workplace wellbeing and your bottom line. Workers who experience stress and burnout take four times as many sick days and are 1.5 times less productive than their psychologically health colleagues.

### Is it harmonious or obsessive passion?



#### A harmoniously passionate worker

- ✓ Freely chooses to engage in their work, rather than feeling an uncontrollable urge to do so.
- ✓ Loves their job and experiences sustained enjoyment and concentration from working each day.
- ✓ Is able to mentally "switch off" after work, and enjoy engaging in hobbies, sports, or spending time with family and friends.
- ✓ Has a secure sense of who they are, what they want, and what they can achieve, and work does not overpower other areas of their life.



#### An obsessively passionate worker

- Feels an uncontrollable urge to engage in their work.
- Struggles to separate themselves from work, or mentally switch off from work, even though they may enjoy their job.
- Might frequently bring work home with them, work late into the night, potentially to the point that it impacts their sleep and others areas of life.
- May use work as a self-protective strategy or a source of pride, and as such;
- May react defensively when criticized and when things go wrong.

**Managers can protect workers against burnout by creating psychologically safe workplaces, supporting job crafting and channelling harmonious passion.**

## Seek support

If you feel the stress and emotional and mental challenges associated with your work is getting too much, a psychologist may be able to help. Psychologists are highly trained and qualified professionals skilled in helping people with a range of mental health concerns, including the psychological difficulties that can come with working and your workplace.

If you are referred to a psychologist by your GP, you might be able to get a Medicare rebate. You may also be able to receive psychology services via telehealth so you don't need to travel to see a psychologist. Ask your psychologist or GP for details. There are number of ways to access a psychologist. You can:

- use the Australia-wide [Find a Psychologist™](#) service. Go to [findapsychologist.org.au](http://findapsychologist.org.au) (within "search by issue" you can go to the "work/ community" list and select "work stress") or call 1800 333 497.
- ask your GP or another health professional to refer you.





The APS has partnered with the University of Melbourne's Centre for Wellbeing and Science which has conducted research into employee wellbeing amongst Australian workers across different industries. The research has informed the guidance in this information sheet. To read the full report and more resources on workplace mental health and wellbeing, visit [psychweek.org.au/2021-resources](http://psychweek.org.au/2021-resources)

To read our employee tip sheet visit [psychweek.org.au/2021-resources](http://psychweek.org.au/2021-resources)



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