POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURES

Committed to building a positive and safe workplace culture

PHASE 2: ACTION PLAN TO 2024

New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

OUR JOURNEY

Chief Executive comittment

Chief Executives at PSLT Retreat make joint commitment to develop and implement a programme of work to improve the culture across the public sector. Ray Smith and Rebecca Kitteridge appointed as co-sponsors.

Literature review

Te Kawa Mataaho provide findings from commissioned literature review by Allen + Clarke of the behavioural interventions that contribute to the creation of positive workplace culture.

Forum / activity mapping

Project team hosted agency forum for H&S and HR practitioners and leaders to complete stocktake of activities and initiatives currently in place in their agency (aligning to framework elements).

Workbook released

Positive Workplace Cultures Agency Planning Workbook released, including change framework.

Programme alignment

Project team met with Papa Pounamu leads and Te Kawa Mataaho to identify how the key workstreams of Positive Workplace Cultures intersect with work already completed by agencies under their Papa Pounamu priority.

2019 ... 2024

Model Standards released

The Public Services Commissioner released Positive and Safe Workplaces model standards. These outline the minimum expectations for workplace behaviour.

COVID-19 disruptions

Due to COVID-19, many of the planned initiatives and engagements were postponed or cancelled as agencies were required to rapidly refocus on COVID-19 response efforts.

Activity mapping

Te Kawa Mataaho collate data from agency annual reports to create comprehensive spreadsheet of activity across the sector relating to positive workplace culture.

Programme launch

Positive Workplace Cultures programme launched to sector senior leaders at Parliament

Action plan developed

Utilising the findings from the activity mapping exercises, engagement with the sector and alignment work across the sector, the Phase 2 (2022-2024) action plan was developed to address key areas.

PHASE 2: PROGRAMME TO 2024

The Positive Workplace Cultures programme continues to be a system-wide programme to support chief executives and their agencies to create work environments that people enjoy working in, are respected for who they are, and contribute to the maximum of their potential. The programme continues to go beyond the minimum expectations outlined in the model standards, aiming to create workplaces where people can thrive and inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, harassment and discrimination are responded to appropriately. A positive workplace culture furthers development, enhances productivity through engagement as well as uplifting understanding and respect.

Our sector engagement over the past two years identified areas of strength and opportunities for growth. Recognising the complementary programmes underway (e.g. *Papa Pounamu* and the *Government Health and Safety Lead)* the Positive Workplace Cultures programme will prioritise in 2022-24 enabling **positive workplace relationships and behaviours** to drive positive culture.

OBJECTIVES

The programme will support agencies to:

1. **Identify and enable positive workplace behaviours and relationships**
2. **Detect and respond to negative behaviours and relationships**

WORK STREAMS

The areas of focus to achieve these objectives:

1

Leading positive work and teams

Leaders are equipped to lead and enable positive working environments by addressing both interpersonal relationships and work-related factors.

2

Creating Safe systems of work

Work is prioritised, planned, resourced and delivered in a way that is healthy and safe for workers, conducive to a positive working environment, and effective at responding to issues.

3

Monitoring, learning and continuous improvement

Agencies have established means for gathering feedback, both positive and negative, in order to respond and learn.

WORK STREAMS

	Leading positive work and teams	Creating safe systems of work	Monitoring, learning and continuous improvement
What is this workstream about?	***Leaders are equipped to lead and enable positive working environments by addressing both interpersonal relationships and work-related factors.***	***Work is prioritised, planned, resourced and delivered in a way that is healthy and safe for workers, conducive to a positive working environment, and effective at responding to issues.***	***Agencies have established means for gathering feedback within the organisation, both positive and negative, in order to respond and learn.***
Why is it important?	**Workers are influenced and directed by leaders, so quality leadership is key to fostering positive behaviours and relationships. Leaders need to be well-equipped and supported in fostering this culture; worker engagement and participation helps to provide this. Therefore, leadership capability, resourcing and organisational support are essential to creating capable, accountable leaders who enable positive workplace culture and provide clear communication.**	**Poor work design and work environments can negatively impact culture by increasing pressures placed on workers, leading to unacceptable behaviours, ineffective communication, and poor workplace relationships. Therefore, it is important that agencies proactively design better work and work environments.**	**Without regular and effective measures, organisations aren't able to learn and adapt to the ever-changing work climate, including the relationships and behaviours within it. Monitoring enhances the effectiveness of changes by ensuring and communicating that they are working and adjusting them where they do not, enabling a positive change to negative circumstances.**
What should agencies come away with?	• How to identify potential leaders and ensure recruitment and succession processes support this • How to train and support leaders to lead teams effectively and enable a positive work environment	• How do work factors enable positive behaviours and relationships • How to implement a range of interventions to ensure work is set up to support a positive culture or respond when issues arise • How to build a culture of openness and curiosity about poor workplace behaviours and relationships	• What are the best mechanisms for gaining insights and assurance around climate, culture and psychological health and safety • How to use data and insights gained to learn, adjust, and respond.
Prompts for Annual Report	**How has your agency ensured that people leaders and senior leaders are equipped and supported to lead and enable positive working environments?** *This could address recruitment of people leaders, upskilling of people leaders and support of people leaders.* Recommended section: HR / OD / People / Leadership Development / Diversity & Inclusion	**How has your agency ensured that work is mentally healthy by prioritising and creating safe systems of work relating to psychological health and safety?** *This could include efforts relating to the improvement of psychological H&S, work-by-design.* Recommended section: Health and Safety / Wellbeing	**How does your agency monitor the current state of mentally healthy work and positive workplace culture? How has this information been used to enable continuous improvement?** *This could include data and insights mechanisms within H&S/wellbeing functions and use of validated measures* Recommended section: Health and Safety / HR / Assurance

Positive Workplace Cultures

Key deliverables 2023-2024

Agency Leads

Workshop: Leading positive work and teams

- Expert speaker overview
- Table activity, discussion and sharing
- Next steps: homework and executive briefing

(60 mins)

Workshop: Creating safe systems of work

- Expert speaker overview
- Table activity, discussion and sharing
- Next steps: homework and executive briefing

(60 mins)

Workshop: Monitoring, learning and continuously improving

- Expert speaker overview
- Table activity, discussion and sharing
- Next steps: homework and executive briefing

(60 mins)

Guidance

Key principles guide

Training and supporting leaders to effectively lead teams is critical for enabling a positive culture workplace culture. This guide explores:

- Identifying and recruiting people leaders
- Training and supporting people leaders
- Managing work and teams
- Accountability for positive workplace culture.

Key principles guide

- How do work factors influence workplace culture.
- How to implement a range of interventions to ensure work is set up to support a positive culture and respond when issues arise.
- How to build a culture of openness and curiosity about workplace behaviours and relationships

Key principles guide

What are the most effective mechanisms for gathering feedback on culture within an organisation? And how do we respond and learn using this information?

- What are the best mechanisms for gaining insights and assurance around climate, culture and psychological health and safety
- How to use data and insights gained to learn, adjust, and respond.

Case studies

Agency case study 1

- Creating great teams through leadership development
- Leadership investment: capabilities and expectations

Agency case study 2

- Building a trusted bullying and harassment process
- Designing mentally healthy work: job design for positive culture

Agency case study 3

- Gathering data and insights on workplace wellbeing and culture
- Mechanisms for feedback: multiple channels

Public Service Reviews

- Key themes and lessons learnt
  - Fire and Emergency NZ
  - Parliamentary Services
  - Te Kawa Mataaho
  - Corrections and Justice
  - Others

PROGRAMME REPORTING

Agencies are required to share within their Annual Report the progress they have made in their efforts to build positive culture within their workplace. We recommend using the reporting prompts below to provide insight into the developments, activities, and initiatives in place to support this.

REPORTING PROMPTS

1. **How has your agency/department ensured that leaders and workers understand and enact the vision and values of the organisation?** *This could address how you've ensured workplace behaviours are acceptable and upheld.*

   Recommended section: HR / People / OD

2. **How has your agency ensured that people leaders and senior leaders are equipped and supported to lead and enable positive working environments?** *This could address recruitment of people leaders, upskilling of people leaders and support of people leaders.*

   Recommended section: HR / People / OD / Leadership Development / Diversity & Inclusion

3. **How has your agency ensured that work is mentally healthy by prioritising and creating safe systems of work relating to psychological health and safety?** *This could include efforts relating to the improvement of psychological H&S, work-by-design.*

   Recommended section: Health and Safety / Wellbeing

4. **How does your agency monitor the current state of mentally healthy work and positive workplace culture? How has this information been used to enable continuous improvement?** *This could include data and insights mechanisms within H&S/wellbeing functions and use of validated measures*

   Recommended section: Health and Safety / HR / Assurance

**Some of these prompts may relate to activity that you report on under the Papa Pounamu requirements. Where applicable, you may like to highlight how such activity meets the requirements of both programmes.*