Framework for a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace

Improving Organizational Results and Individual Psychological Well-being - Staff and Faculty Contribution

Psychologically healthy and safe workplaces are not solely the responsibility of the employer. The University community is responsible for ensuring the infrastructure and framework is in place to ensure all members can thrive. However, the success of the caring culture is directly dependent on the will of the people. Everyone plays a significant role in creating and sustaining a healthy work environment. Understanding the impact you can have in the workplace is essential.

How do I contribute and what am I responsible for?

1. **Psychological Support**: *Psychological support is present in a work environment in which coworkers and supervisors are supportive of individuals' psychological health and safety, and respond appropriately to health issues as needed.*

As individuals, we all need to monitor our own psychological health and ask for assistance when we are experiencing difficulties. It is equally important to understand what resources are available, and how to access programs and services that can assist in your workplace so that periods of stress and high demand are not harmful. We all have a responsibility to be aware of our mental well-being and take responsibility for it so that we can actively engage in our work. Self-care allows you to maintain your own health and create an environment where you and your colleagues are able to support one another in the workplace.

2. **Organizational Culture:** *Organizational culture is the degree to which a work culture is characterized by trust, honesty and fairness.*

You can positively influence your workplace culture with an appropriate and professional level of honesty, and careful consideration of your behaviour towards others. Choosing to be direct, kind and respectful will set the tone that you are accountable for your workplace behaviours and hold others to a similar standard. Your contribution is your ongoing engagement and participation in achieving workplace goals. Understanding and respecting the scope of your role and its limits can minimize conflict with colleagues and assist in helping them feel respected.

3. **Leadership and Expectations:** *Clear leadership and expectations are evident when individuals know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization, and whether there are impending changes that will affect them.*

You have the ability and responsibility to enquire and seek clarity, in a respectful manner, if you are uncertain of your role. Checking in with your supervisor and colleagues to identify how your roles relate to one another can reduce frustration. Choosing to trust that you will be given appropriate information to complete your tasks can reduce tension, and shows your trust in those in a leadership role.

4. **Civility and Respect:** *Civility and respect is present in work environments where individuals are respectful and considerate in their interactions. It is based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others.*

Your colleagues may not be your best friends, but demonstrating respect and treating everyone in your work environment fairly and equitably contributes to workplace health. Civility and respect are fostered when individuals behave in a way that builds relationships and provides grace to others. Examples include: being empathetic to a colleague who may be having a bad day, and not gossiping to others or creating harm. Our work environment supports the natural mindset of treating others fairly, and respecting and honouring differences in identities, opinions and work styles.

5. **Psychological Competencies and Requirements:** *Psychological competencies and requirements are present in work environments where there is a good match between individuals' interpersonal and emotional competencies, their job skills and the position they hold.*

You are aware of your strengths and take pride in them. You also are aware of your limitations, and look for ways to improve in these areas. You also acknowledge the strengths and skills of your colleagues and seek out their support while volunteering to assist others. Your interpersonal strengths and skills contribute to providing a better work environment for all.

6. **Growth and Development:** *Staff members receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills. Feedback is given to help individuals grow and develop.*

You seek opportunities to receive regular feedback, both positive and negative, and adjust your behaviour or performance accordingly. Within your working group you bring forward your ideas when appropriate and provide constructive feedback to colleagues to help foster growth in others.

7. **Recognition and Reward:** *Appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of individuals occurs in a fair and timely manner.*

You participate in milestone celebrations and openly acknowledge the contributions of others through peer to peer recognition. Acknowledging contributions creates an environment where people take pride in their work, and feel their work is valued.

8. **Involvement and Influence:** *Staff members are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made. Opportunities for involvement can relate to an individual's specific job, the activities of a team or department, or issues involving the organization as a whole.*

You share input regularly but recognize the limits of your influence and involvement. You expect that your concerns will be handled appropriately even if you are not privy to how or why things are done. You have control over your personal work space to meet your work needs. You allow those around you to make decisions about how they conduct their work.

9. **Workload:** *Effective workload management is present if tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available.*

You are aware of your working style and manage your workload appropriately. You regularly advise your supervisor of any challenges that may influence your ability to meet work demands, make constructive suggestions for improved efficiency, and ask for assistance if you are having difficulty prioritizing. Colleagues respect the working style of one another, and limit interruptions and disruptions.

10. **Engagement:** *Staff members enjoy and feel connected to their work, and feel motivated to do their job well.*

The pride and commitment you take in your work is a choice that requires your consistent effort. This effort results in your ongoing, active involvement with your workplace, supervisors and colleagues. You recognize work may not always be fun, but by committing to the successful completion of your work, you contribute to the overall success of your team and the organization.

11. **Balance:** *Individuals are supported in making choices that balance the demands of work, family and personal life.*

You see yourself and your colleagues as more than just their jobs. You acknowledge there are responsibilities associated with all aspects of your life, and you adjust to meet each of these demands as necessary. You choose to use your breaks and personal time wisely to recharge and engage in appropriate self-care. Your commitment to caring for yourself allows you the energy and strength to thrive in an ever-changing, fast-paced environment.

12. **Psychological Protection:** *Workplace psychological safety is demonstrated when workers feel they can ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes or propose new ideas without fearing negative consequences.*

You are aware of differences in your workplace and respect all equally. You choose to support and stand up for the views of others in a respectful manner. Your genuine care for others allows you to foster a safe environment for others to approach you with their concerns.

13. **Protection of Physical Safety:** *Attention to the work environment creates the security needed to reduce the impact of physical risks on psychological health.*

You do not take unnecessary risks. You support others in being aware of their physical surroundings. You are aware of the tools you need to do your job safely, ask for them when you do not have what is needed, inform your supervisor when safety or security issues arise, and know the necessary

precautions to take. In the event of a workplace incident/accident you have the knowledge of how, when and to whom to report the events.