CREATING A HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, STABLE TEAM THROUGH LEADERSHIP
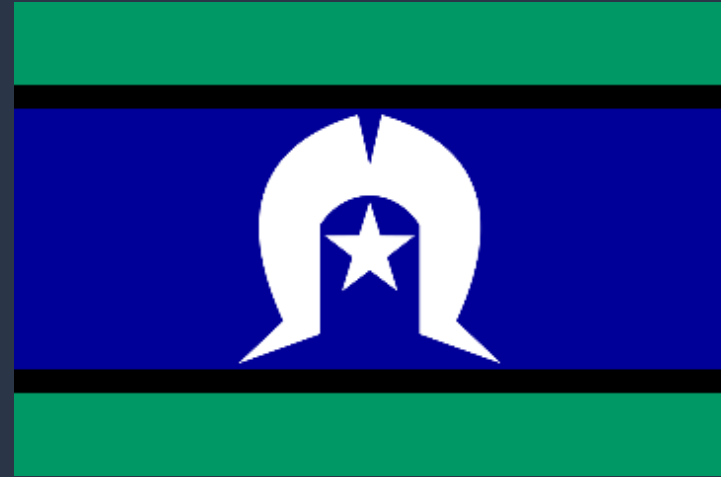
QCOSS acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of Australia. I would like to acknowledge the Jagera and Turrbal peoples as traditional custodians of the land we are gathered upon. I pay respect to the Elders of this land; past and present.

SESSION OUTLINE

- Employee wellbeing

- Psychosocial hazards

- Micro-aggressions, micro-affirmations, and micro-interventions

- Allies and bystanders

- Structural initiatives

1 Employee Wellbeing

"MANAGERS HAVE JUST AS MUCH OF AN IMPACT ON PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH AS THEIR SPOUSE – AND EVEN MORE IMPACT THAN THEIR DOCTOR OR THERAPIST"

Workforce Institute 2023

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Conventional wisdom: drawing attention to differences can help create respect and understanding.

The research says: focusing on difference increases exclusion. Instead, the key is to create the sense of 'one team' through positive social signals.

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

- Employers have a positive duty of care to eliminate/minimise psychosocial hazards

- 50% of our wellbeing at work can be attributed to the quality of relationship with your supervisor

- If you don't feel respected, you won't be engaged at work

- A single incident of a micro-exclusion can lead to an immediate 25% decline in an individual's performance on a team project

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

- Our brains process exclusion the same way it processes physical pain

- We need to feel psychologically safe to voice opinions and be involved in decision making

- Workplaces that encourage employees to voice opinions and be involved in decision making have 1/3 lower employee turnover
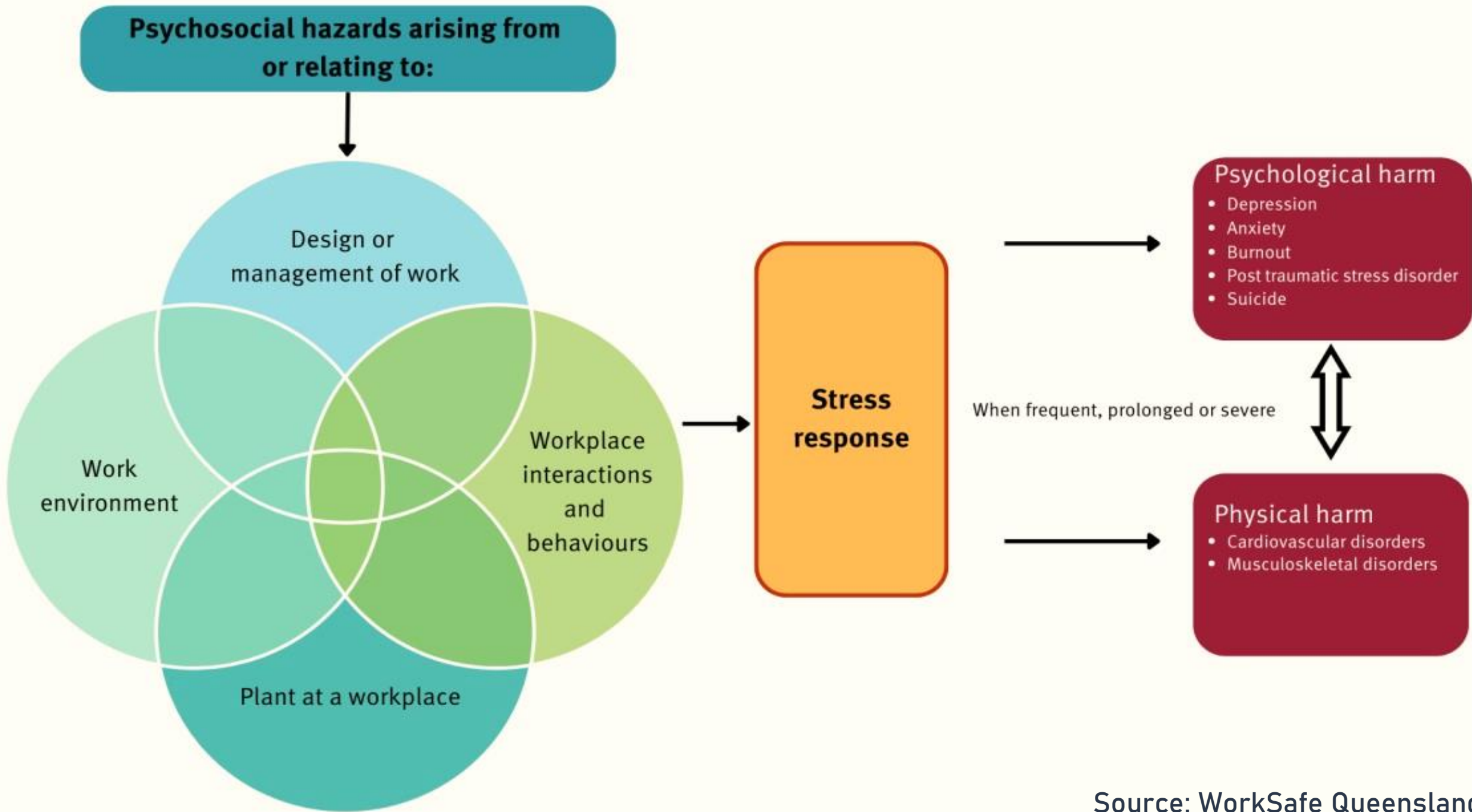
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Psychosocial Hazards

"EMPLOYERS HAVE A <u>POSITIVE DUTY</u> TO TAKE REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONATE ACTION TO ENSURE WORKERS ARE NOT EXPOSED TO PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE."

Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice

DEIB RELATED PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS

- Poor support

- Poor organisational justice

- Poor or inconsistent reward and recognition

- Unfair or unclear performance management/appraisal

- Inconsistency of applied procedures

- Bias of work procedures

- Lack of respect

- Inaccessible PPE/environment

- Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment

- Victimisation

- Communication barriers

- Being an "only"

- Social or physical isolation

- Lack of social support

- Poor relationships/ interpersonal conflicts

Psychosocial hazards arising from or relating to:

- Design or management of work
- Work environment
- Workplace interactions and behaviours
- Plant at a workplace

→ **Stress response**

When frequent, prolonged or severe →

Psychological harm
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Burnout
- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Suicide

Physical harm
- Cardiovascular disorders
- Musculoskeletal disorders

Source: WorkSafe Queensland

"SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS UNWELCOME SEXUAL CONDUCT WHICH MAKES A PERSON FEEL OFFENDED, HUMILIATED AND/OR INTIMIDATED WHERE THAT REACTION IS REASONABLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES."

IN 2024 WE STILL HAVE THIS ISSUE...

98.5% of employers have a policy or strategy on the prevention and response to sexual harassment, harassment on the grounds of sex or discrimination

HOWEVER...

IN 2024 WE STILL HAVE THIS ISSUE...

- 1.3 million Australian women were sexually harassed in the last 12 months

- 46% of migrant and refugee women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 5 years

- 26% of women who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months experienced it at work

- 1 in 7 people use technology to sexually harass a colleague, with a quarter doing so to humiliate or frighten their target

"EMPLOYERS HAVE A **POSITIVE DUTY** TO TAKE REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONATE ACTION TO **ELIMINATE** AND RESPOND TO **PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS** IN THE WORKPLACE INCLUDING SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VICTIMISATION IN THE WORKPLACE."

3

Micro-aggressions
Micro-affirmations
Micro-interventions

MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

- Consistently mispronouncing or not knowing a person's name
- Allowing the same few people to speak at meetings
- Greeting some people but not others
- Commenting on a person's culture or religion in a way that makes them feel excluded

MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

- Confusing two people of the same race for each other

- Assuming someone with a disability needs help, is 'slow' or hard of hearing

- Asking where someone is from/where they learned English

- Holding meetings in places or at times that are not accessible

MICRO-AFFIRMATIONS

- Use a person's name
- Allow staff to speak equitably at meetings
- Greet your team
- Ensure team events are accessible
- Recognise religious or cultural traditions that are important to your team members
- Giving credit to everyone involved in a job
- Expressing praise and gratitude
- Giving feedback that is fair, specific, timely, consistent and clear

TACKLING MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

1. Make the invisible, visible
2. Educate the perpetrator
3. Disarm the micro-aggression

5

Allyship

"ALLYSHIP IS AN ACTIVE AND CONSISTENT EFFORT TO USE YOUR PRIVILEGE AND POWER TO SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE FOR PEOPLE WITH LESS PRIVILEGE."

"PRIVILEGE IS THE UNEARNED ADVANTAGE WE GET FROM BEING PART OF A DOMINANT GROUP WHOSE NEEDS HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN PRIORITISED."

UNEARNED ADVANTAGE
AKA PRIVILEGE

- I'm not usually mocked for my accent
- My religion's holidays are commonly marked on school and work calendars
- People refer to me by the right pronoun
- I can expect a public bathroom to be available to me
- I'm not usually the only person of my race in the room

- I don't avoid certain places because I am worried about my safety or about being sexually harassed
- I can assume people won't think I'm incompetent because of the way I look
- I don't often worry whether a new environment is physically safe or accessible
- I'm not asked to explain my sexual orientation or gender

USING YOUR UNEARNED ADVANTAGE
TO BE AN ALLY

- Do you organise meetings?
- Do you attend meetings?
- Do you have input in screening CVs or interviewing candidates?
- Do you have a role that others may aspire to?

- Do you give input into team social events or conferences?
- Do you write or review position descriptions?
- Do you participate in casual conversations at work?
- Do you interact with people with influence in your organisation?

6 WAYS TO BE AN ALLY

1. Advocate for others

2. Share opportunities

3. Recognise and challenge systemic inequity

4. Listen to other people's experiences

5. Offer your support whenever possible

6. Interrupt discrimination
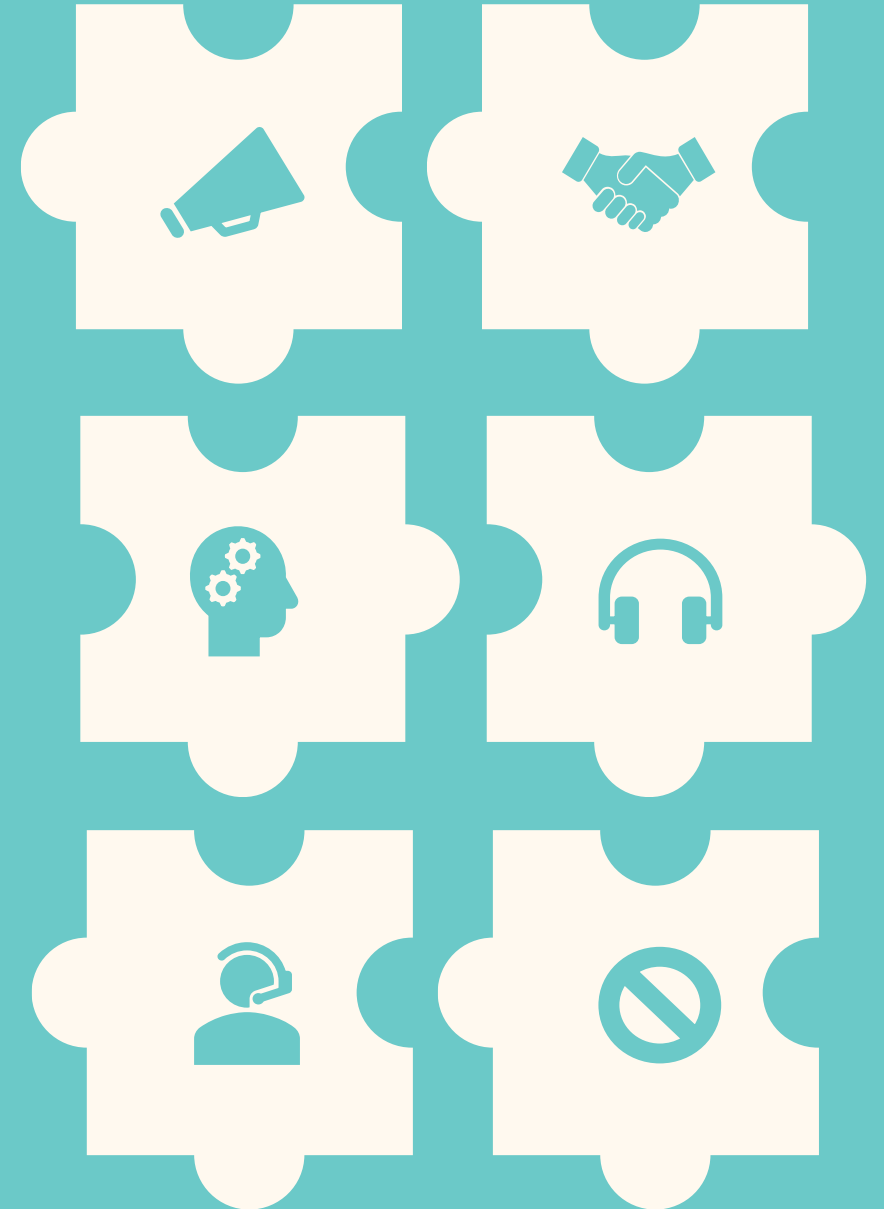
Bystander

Bystander: A person who witnesses discrimination or injustice but chooses not to intervene or take action to address the situation.

Active Bystander: Someone who not only witnesses discrimination or injustice but also takes proactive steps to intervene, support, or address the situation.

Upstander: An individual who actively stands up against discrimination, harassment, or injustice and takes action to support and advocate for those who are targeted or marginalised.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ACTION

- Your privileges and identities will influence how easily you can be an active bystander or upstander

- These actions will be more difficult for some than others

- Some workplaces will have mechanisms through which to express concerns without repercussions, and some may not

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE BYSTANDER

- Do you educate yourself?
- Do you trust your instincts?
- Do you intervene safely?
- Do you use your voice?
- Do you offer support?

- Do you create distractions?
- Do you seek help?
- Do you listen actively?
- Do you reflect and learn?

HOW TO IDENTIFY AN UPSTANDER

- Speak up (report incidents)

- Lead by example (promote inclusion)

- Support the targeted individual

- Intervene (only when safe)

- Challenge bias and stereotypes

- Educate others

3 Structural Initiatives

CHOOSING WHERE TO FOCUS
DEIB INVESTMENTS

- Migrant workers are underutilised in the labour market, and the issues they experience are not represented

- Disability workforce – people with a disability aged between 15–24 are more likely to be underemployed by 23%

DEIB COMMITTEES
ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

Typical roles:

- Define the organisation's goals and accountability

- Provide diverse representation and executive support

- Open communication and community engagement

Main function:

- Provide a line of sight to management on the implementation of DEIB initiatives

- Hold management to account for deliverables on DEIB initiatives

- Engage the organisation and get buy-in at a grassroots level of DEIB initiatives

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Employee Resource Group (ERG) definition:

"Employee-led group that aims to provide support, foster diversity, and promote an inclusive workplace environment."

- Reflective representation and leadership advocacy

- Empowerment and equity in professional opportunities

- Policy influence and cultural responsiveness

- Networking, support, and inclusive community building

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL
EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP

- Executive buy-in

- Link the ERG to business objectives and share the results

- Develop and reward your ERG leaders

- Make ERGs accessible to all

- Encourage communication and collaboration between ERGs

ORGANISATION SPONSORSHIP

- This is not a HR matter but a whole of organisation matter

- Strategic alignment and resource allocation

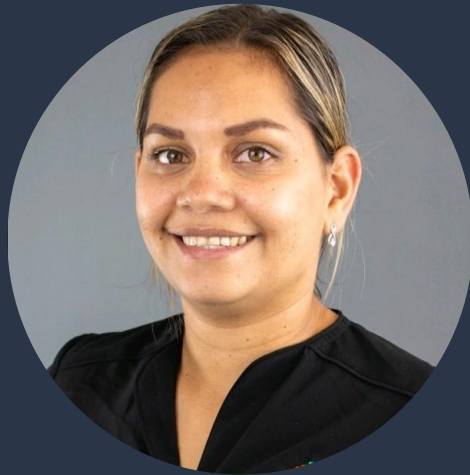- Cultural and behavioural modelling

- Sustainability and accountability

CREATE A HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, STABLE TEAM THROUGH LEADERSHIP

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Managing Director & Founder
Elephant in the Room Consulting

THANK YOU

Join us at the final session of our series

"Supporting Diverse Workforces"