

Building Healthy Organisations: The New Frontier

Keynote presentation by Graham Lowe, Ph.D.

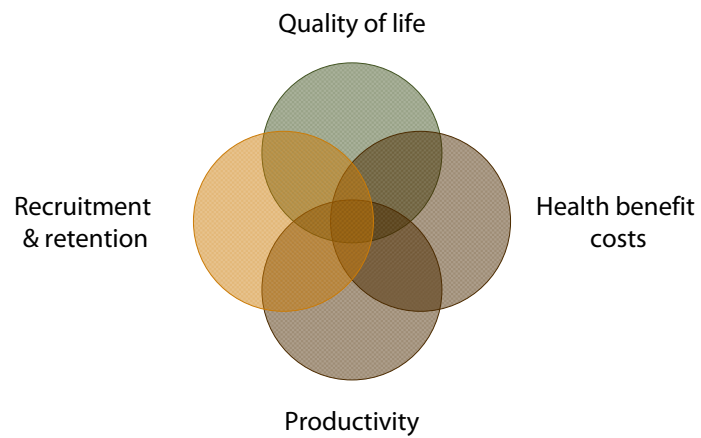
**8th National Conference on Workplace Health
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Outline

1. Building on workplace health promotion
2. The healthy organisation frontier
3. Why culture matters
4. How to move down this path

1. Building on workplace health promotion

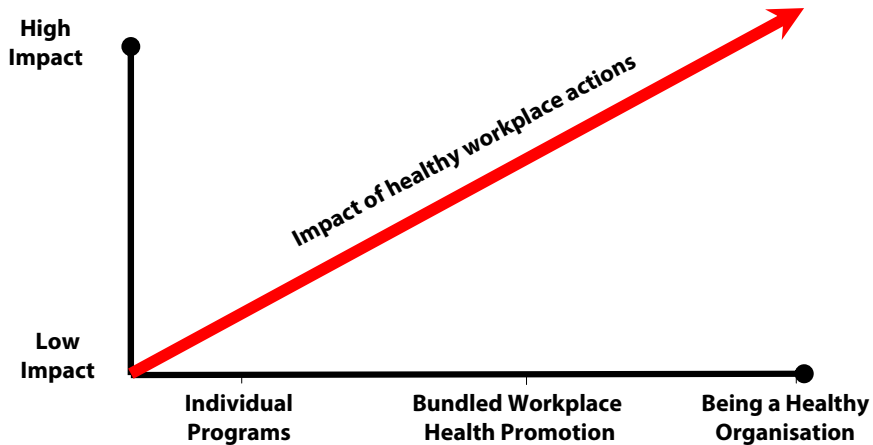
Pressures to create healthier workplaces



Workplace health promotion evidence

1. Comprehensive work-site health promotion and disease management programs targeted at high-risk groups have clinical and cost pay-offs.
2. Comprehensive interventions reduce health benefit costs and absenteeism.
3. Healthy employees in healthy work environments can improve organisational performance.
4. Health and productivity “drivers” are found in organisational cultures, systems, and processes.

Strategic impact of health and wellness



Comparing 2 perspectives

DIMENSION:	Workplace Health Promotion	Healthy Organisation
Target	Individual	Organizational
Change model	Health promotion	Organisation development
Scope and focus	Program-based	Systemic and holistic
Timeframe	Short and medium term	Long term
Individual benefits	Reduced health risks	Quality of life and capabilities
Organisational benefits	Lower employee costs	Higher performance
Links to strategy	Part of HR plan	How the business operates
Responsibility	Formal roles	Shared responsibility

2. The healthy organisation

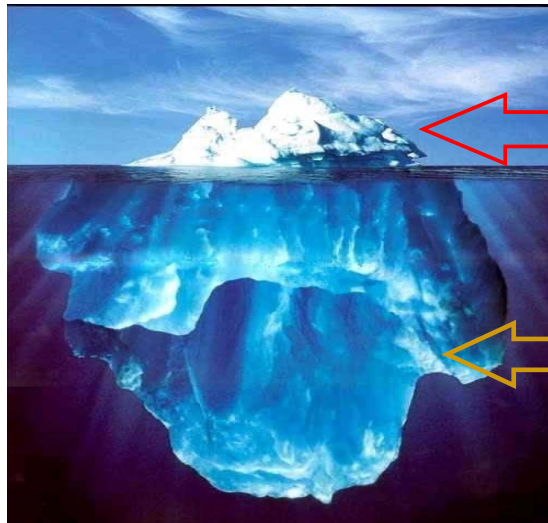
A simple idea

US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health defines a healthy work organisation as:

"...one whose culture, climate and practices create an environment that promotes both employee health and safety as well as organizational effectiveness."

Source: S. Y. Lim and L. R. Murphy. The relationship of organizational factors to employee health and overall effectiveness. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine* Supplement, May, 1999: 64.

Getting at root causes



- Turnover, absenteeism, injury, disability, benefit costs
- Low employee commitment and satisfaction

**WORK
ENVIRONMENT**

Example: reducing work stress

Employee control ↔ Job demands



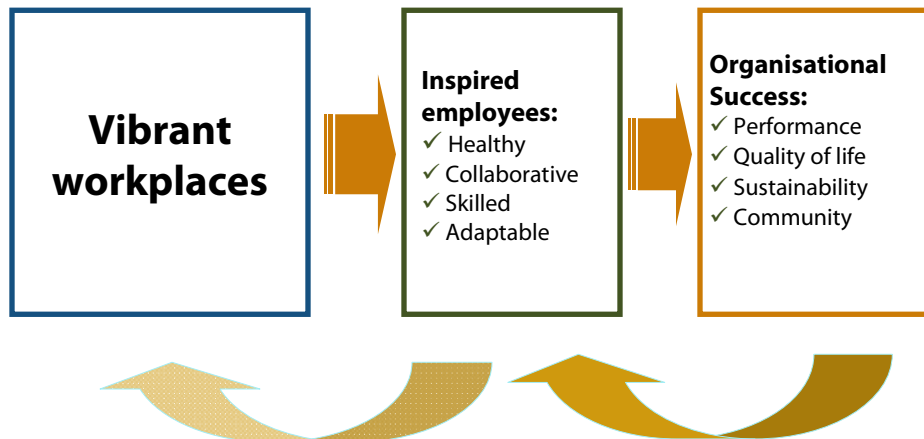
Management standards for work stress

The UK Health and Safety Executive takes a preventative approach to reducing stress risks in 6 areas:

- ✓ Demands
- ✓ Control
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Roles
- ✓ Change

Source: Health and Safety Executive, UK (www.hse.gov.uk/stress/research.htm)

The logic of a healthy organisation



Ingredients of a vibrant workplace

Key drivers of wellbeing and performance:

- ✓ Trust, respect and fairness
- ✓ 2-way communication
- ✓ Autonomy
- ✓ Adequate resources
- ✓ Supportive supervisors
- ✓ Growth and development
- ✓ Challenging, interesting work
- ✓ Recognition and rewards

Evidence linking people & performance

Common elements identified in employee research by Gallup Organization, Great Place to Work Institute, Hewitt Associates, Towers Perrin, Sirota Consulting:

- ✓ Relationships with coworkers and managers
- ✓ Communication and input
- ✓ Learning and development opportunities
- ✓ Recognition
- ✓ Job resources
- ✓ Fair and effective processes



These factors also
define a vibrant
workplace

People and performance

“High performance organizations tap the ideas, skill, and effort of all their people.”

Jeffrey Pfeffer, Stanford University

3. Why culture matters

Culture and performance

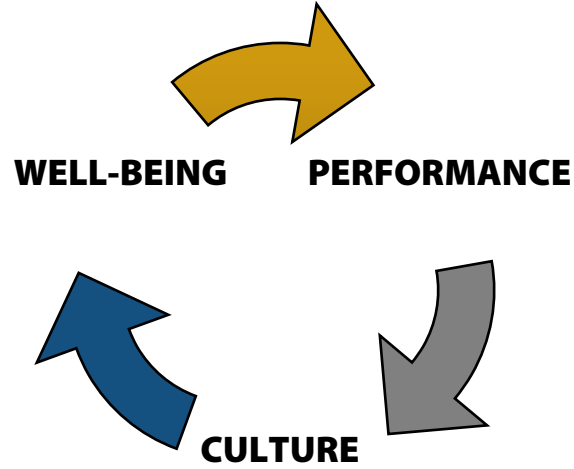
Culture will drive strategy.

OR

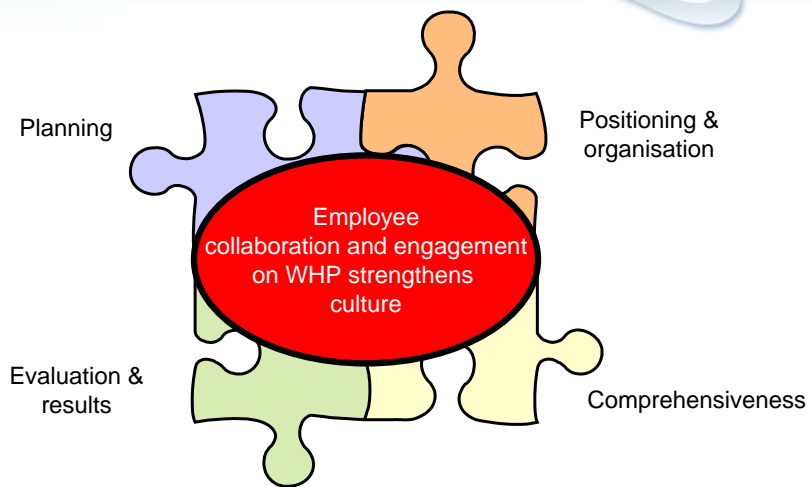
Culture will drag strategy.

Source: Al Stubblefield, CEO of Baptist Health, on the importance of creating and maintaining a people-centred culture. *The Baptist Health Care Journey to Excellence*. Wiley, 2005.

21st-century HR strategy



SINGAPORE HEALTH AWARD 2008



Benefits of healthy cultures

Cultures based on integrity, fairness and respect support employee well-being:

- ✓ Look forward to coming to work
- ✓ Feel they make a difference
- ✓ Work-life balance
- ✓ Psychologically healthy work environment
- ✓ Friendly coworkers
- ✓ Fun at work

Source: Based on employee survey results for Great Place to Work® Institute Canada's 2007 list of Best Workplaces in Canada, comparing winners and other participants. See: www.greatplacetowork.ca



- It takes a team to care for a patient.



- Purple promise: people, service, profit.



- Employee-first philosophy.



- Staff are valued and empowered.

4. How to move down this path

Another look at health promotion

World Health Organization defines health promotion as:

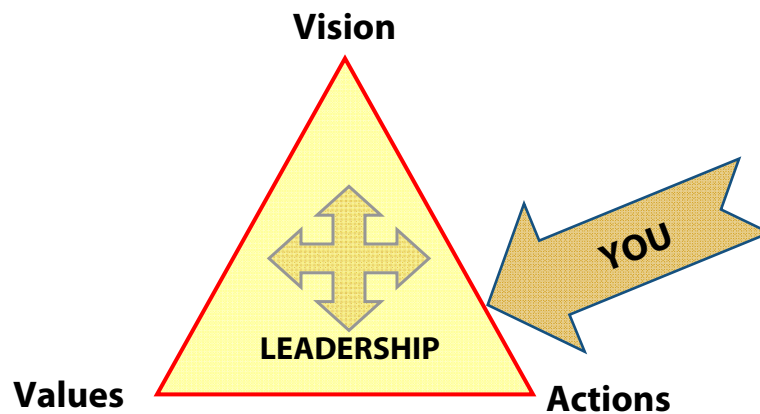
“...the process of enabling individuals and communities to increase control over the determinants of health and thereby improve their health.”

WHP is OD (organisational development)

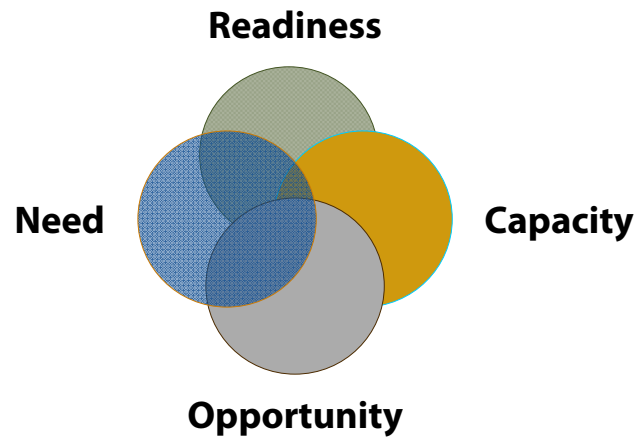
Workplace health promotion provides opportunities for employees to...

- Be actively involved in creating a better work environment
- Take ownership for improvements
- Link personal and organisational goals
- Show mutual caring and support

Progress is a shared responsibility



Implementing change in your context



Use a healthy change process

- Models the goals
 - Values-based
 - Participatory
 - On-going learning
- } **Link to strategy**

Final points

1. Build on successes.
2. Focus on drivers.
3. Communicate and educate.
4. Create shared responsibility.
5. Small steps bring progress.

For more information and resources:

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