

# INDICATORS OF A THRIVING WORKPLACE

Work in Progress Survey

2017

Super *friend*<sup>®</sup>

# SUPERFRIEND

SuperFriend is a national mental health foundation focused on creating positive, healthy and safe working environments where every employee can be well and thrive. Our goal is to reduce the high rate of suicide and impact of mental illness on individuals and their workplaces.

We are the only mental health organisation that partners with 'all profit to member' superannuation funds and group life insurers to support the industry's unique needs and respond with tailored solutions. Through our collaborative partnerships, SuperFriend also has the potential to assist 750,000 employers to create thriving workplaces where their staff and their business can thrive.

SuperFriend works with workplaces to support, develop and embed best practices in workplace mental health and wellbeing. SuperFriend guides organisations to build positive, supportive and high performing teams through our suite of workplace programs and resources. We do this by focusing on the positive aspects that are working well in an organisation and building on those to create an optimal environment for all employees. The benefits are a reduction in business costs, staff retention and an increase in engagement, wellbeing, productivity and profitability.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SuperFriend would like to thank Di Marzio Research for undertaking the data collection and analysis for this report. We are also grateful to all the survey participants who took the time to respond to the survey.

## SUGGESTED CITATION

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## FOREWORD

I am very proud to present the **2017 Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Report**. This report provides a snapshot of findings from SuperFriend's third annual survey which tracks the progress of workplace mental health and wellbeing across Australia against the ideal or desired state. The survey uses 38 characteristics or indicators of a workplace environment that are known to be optimal for the mental health of employees and their ability to succeed at work. The 38 indicators cover four fundamental domains – Leadership, Connectedness, Policies & Practices and Capabilities & Culture.

In 2015 and 2016 we surveyed approximately 1,000 workers to understand the current state of workplace mental health and wellbeing, as it compared to the desired state. This year we increased the sample and surveyed approximately 5,000 workers. Business owners, managers and employees in small, medium and large organisations from different industries across Australia completed this year's survey.

With an increased sample size, this has enabled SuperFriend to delve deeper into the data and generate new insights. The key messages from the survey findings will make it easier for businesses to understand and address mental health and wellbeing to promote positive changes in their workplace. Alongside the results, we have provided evidence-based strategies for taking action in workplace mental health and wellbeing.

SuperFriend continues to support research and insights to build the evidence base. The **Indicators of a Thriving Workplace** report will assist business leaders to identify what a mentally healthy workplace looks like, how they can progress their organisation towards it, and what they can do to support their workers to thrive.

Margo Lydon  
CEO, SuperFriend

## WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM READING THIS REPORT?



Business owners and senior leaders.



Managers in specialist roles (e.g. Human Resources, Occupational Health and Safety, Health and Wellbeing).



Champions charged with improving mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.



Practitioners and researchers working in mental health and organisational development.

**The aim of the survey is to measure and track the current state of mental health and wellbeing in Australian workplaces against the desired state of optimal mental health and wellbeing in a workplace.**

# INDICATORS OF A THRIVING WORKPLACE



## LEADERSHIP

The existence of supportive and committed leadership in the organisation that endorses and prioritises initiatives that support a mentally healthy workplace.

1. Managers are accessible when you need them & will listen.
2. Managers give clear guidance on priorities & what is expected of employees.
3. Managers provide regular feedback in a way that helps employees improve their performance.
4. Managers make sure employees have the resources to do the job.
5. Managers support employees having problems with their work performance.
6. There is praise & recognition for good performance & achievement.
7. Managers set a good example for a happy, healthy and productive workplace.
8. There is effective team working & a supportive team environment.
9. Managers support & facilitate flexible working to meet individual needs.
10. There are inspirational leaders who map out positive visions for the organisation & each employee's place in it.
11. Regular reviews make sure people are in the right roles for their capabilities & motivations.
12. Training & development programs help people transition into new roles.



## POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The existence and use of robust policies, strategies and processes that address mental health within an organisational framework. There are clear processes driving policy development and implementation in the workplace.

19. There is access to confidential external support services such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP).
20. There are internal counselling or support services that employees can use.
21. There are workplace programs to improve physical health.
22. There are workplace programs to improve mental health & wellbeing.
23. There are regular workplace health & wellbeing audits & action plans implemented.
24. Has good return to work policies & practices for those who have had time off with mental health problems.
25. Has good return to work policies & practices for those who have had time off with physical health problems.
26. Has effective policies & practices against workplace bullying or harassment.
27. Has managers who are committed to promoting the mental health & wellbeing of staff.



## CONNECTEDNESS

A work environment that is characterised by strong interpersonal and social support, trust and fairness, and inclusiveness.

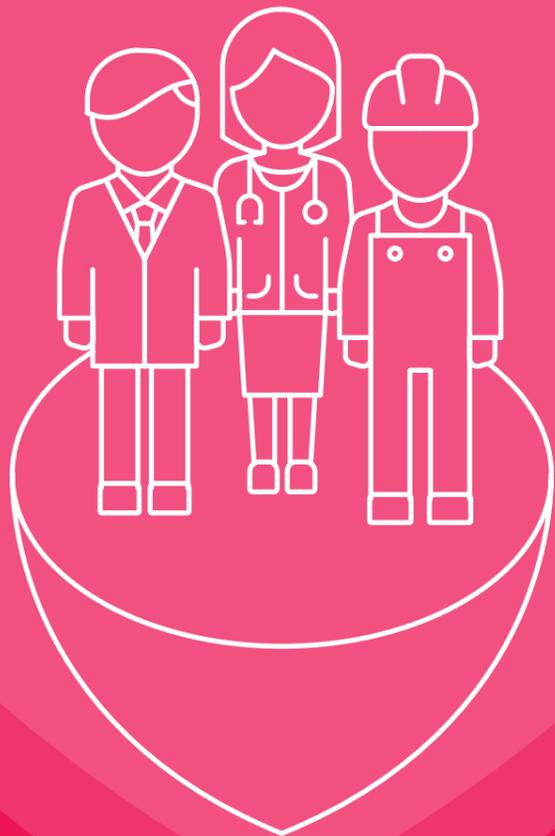
13. People greet each other in the morning, smile, make eye contact & say thank you – it's common courtesy.
14. There is sensitivity to the needs of those who have children or others to care for.
15. Employees are encouraged to identify ways to improve the workplace.
16. It feels like a community at work with people supporting each other beyond just getting the work done.
17. Employees are involved in the planning of work & how it is carried out.
18. Leave is monitored & managed to make sure people get regular holidays.



## CAPABILITY AND CULTURE

The application of knowledge and skills within an organisation to support positive mental health and wellbeing, and to influence the culture through changing practices and improving the environment.

28. People are effectively supported through change.
29. Managers have the knowledge & skills to be able to effectively support employees with complex mental health issues.
30. Mental health awareness training is provided for all employees.
31. Employees with mental health problems, like anxiety or depression, feel comfortable discussing their mental health issues with their manager.
32. Training is provided for all managers in how to support employees with mental health issues.
33. The culture encourages open discussion about issues that affect mental health & wellbeing.
34. People with known mental health issues would have an equal chance of employment or promotion.
35. Workloads are monitored & managed to avoid excessive hours & burnout.
36. Efforts are made to help employees find purpose & meaning in their work.
37. The culture encourages open discussion about issues that affect work performance.
38. There is support available to help people optimise their work-life balance.



## A SNAPSHOT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES

Around 45% of Australians will experience a mental health condition over their lifetime. Each year approximately one in five Australians report experiencing a mental health issue.<sup>1</sup> Given that most Australians are employed at some point in their life, it is expected that every Australian worker will be directly or indirectly affected by mental illness in the workplace.

The workplace provides an ideal setting to promote mental health and wellbeing. By promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, all Australian workers are supported to thrive at work, whether they are experiencing mental health issues or not. Encouraging positive mental health is good for both the employee and the organisation.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. National Survey of Mental Health and Well-being: summary of results 2007. ABS cat no. 4326.0. [cited 2017 Aug 8]. Available from: <http://www.abs.gov.au>

### MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK



### IS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING A PROBLEM IN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACES?



**X2**

Workers in large businesses (200+ employees) are **twice** as likely to believe mental health is a problem in their workplace compared to small businesses (2-19 employees).

**64% versus 32%**

### WORK STRESS

Work-related stress is a major risk for depression and anxiety. While some stress is a normal part of life, work stress is defined as stress caused by not having the right resources or capabilities to match the expectations of the job.<sup>2</sup>



### STAFF TURNOVER



### PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACES

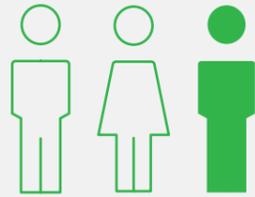
**X2**

Workers are **twice** as likely to believe that laws and regulations make sure employers maintain work environments that are **physically** safe (**41%**) in comparison to maintaining work environments that are **psychologically** safe. (**21%**)

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. Stress at the workplace [Internet]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017 [cited 2017 Aug 8]. Available from [http://www.who.int/occupational\\_health/topics/stressatwp/en/](http://www.who.int/occupational_health/topics/stressatwp/en/)

# WHAT IS PREVENTING EMPLOYERS FROM TAKING ACTION?

## THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS



**1 IN 3**

Believe that stigma prevents employers taking action to promote mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

*“People are scared of being marginalised in terms of work opportunities if they admit to having any mental health issues.”*



49%

Believe that employers have a **lack of understanding** around mental health and wellbeing issues.



44%

Believe employers **focus more on physical health / OHS** than mental health.



42%

Believe managers **lack skills and training** to address mental health and wellbeing issues.



39%

Believe employers **don't have enough time** and everyone is too busy.



34%

Believe employers **don't know where to start** to improve mental health and wellbeing.



30%

Believe the **perceived costs** prevent employers from doing more.



28%

Believe a **culture of compliance** prevents employers from taking action because they only do what they have to do.

# BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

There is growing evidence to support the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing, to create workplaces where employees are encouraged to thrive<sup>3</sup> whether they are experiencing a mental health issue or not.<sup>4</sup> Thriving and positive workers are more committed to their organisation's goals, build better relationships with their peers, are more creative and innovative, are inclined to deliver increased discretionary effort and are therefore more productive.

*“Mental health plays such an important part in an efficient and successful company. Having happy employees reduces absenteeism and increases productivity at all levels.”*



61%

Believe it would **improve productivity**.



58%

Believe it would **reduce absenteeism**.



56%

Believe that it would **improve staff retention**.



49%

Believe it would **reduce compensation claims** and associated costs.



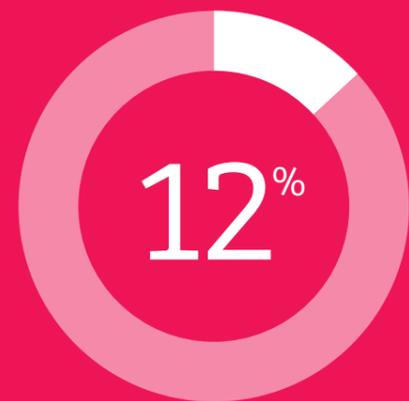
39%

Believe it would provide employers with the ability to **attract and recruit new employees**.

<sup>3</sup> SuperFriend. Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace [Internet]. Melbourne: SuperFriend; 2015 [cited 2017 Aug 8]. Available from: <https://www.superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/>

<sup>4</sup> Keyes C. Promoting and protecting mental health as flourishing: A complementary strategy for improving national mental health. American Psychologist. 2007; 62(2): 95-108.

# WHAT ARE THE BEST ORGANISATIONS DOING TO HELP THEIR EMPLOYEES THRIVE?



The findings from the survey identified a group of workers who reported that 80% or more of the desired state indicators were definitely present at their workplace. This group of workers represented 12% of the total survey sample.

The key characteristics of this group help to identify what the best organisations are doing to promote optimal mental health and wellbeing and support their employees to thrive.

## In the 'best' organisations, there are:



Employees who are friendly and courteous (**92%**).



Managers who are accessible and who listen (**86%**).



Policies and practices against workplace bullying and harassment (**82%**).

## These organisations also:



Prioritise work life balance and are sensitive to the needs of those who have children or others to care for (**85%**).

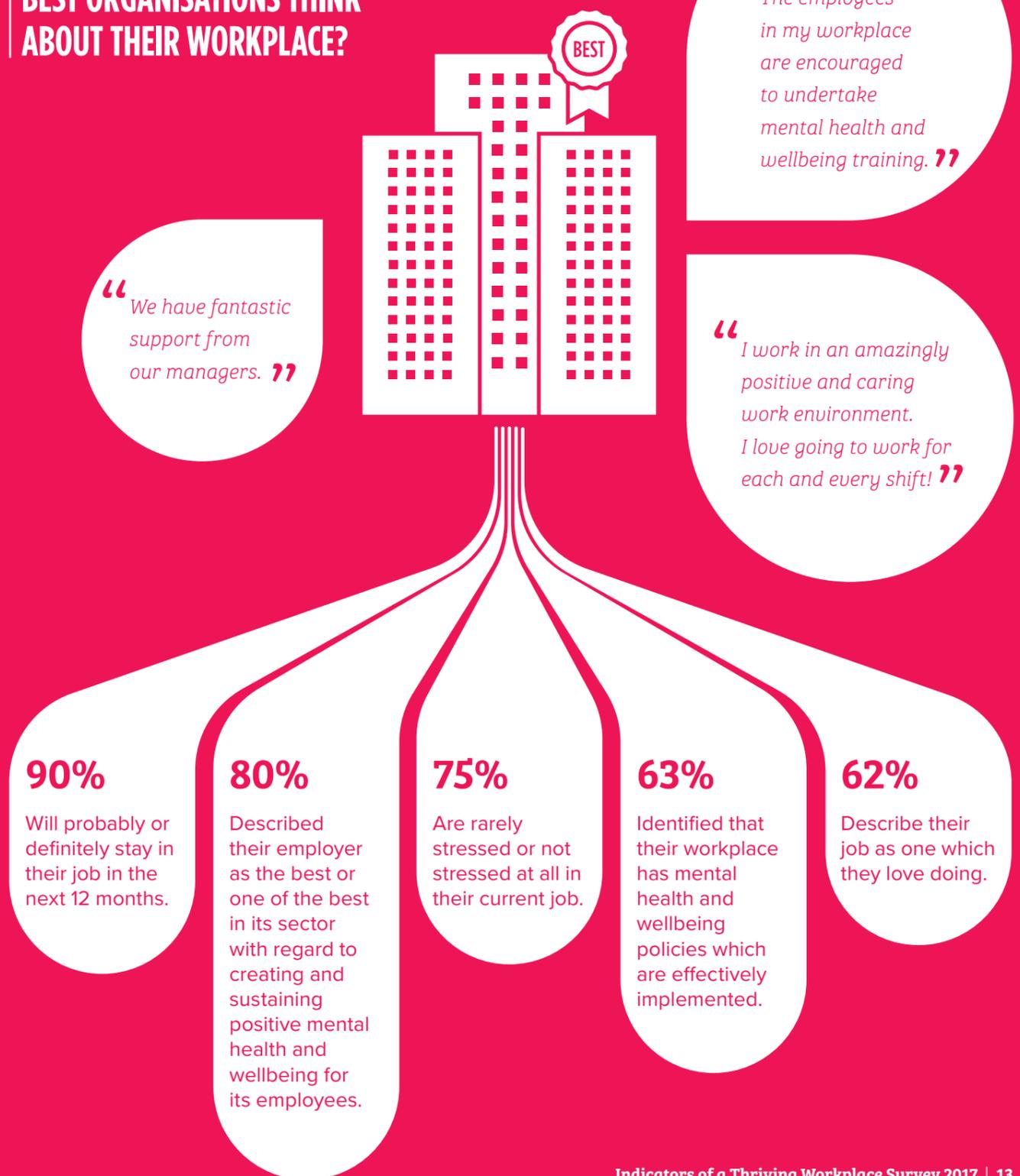


Make an effort to help employees find purpose and meaning in their work (**84%**).



Create a culture which encourages open discussion about issues that affect mental health and wellbeing (**80%**).

## WHAT DO WORKERS IN THE BEST ORGANISATIONS THINK ABOUT THEIR WORKPLACE?



## ARE WE THERE YET?

This survey measures the current state of mental health and wellbeing in Australian workplaces against the desired state using 38 indicators.

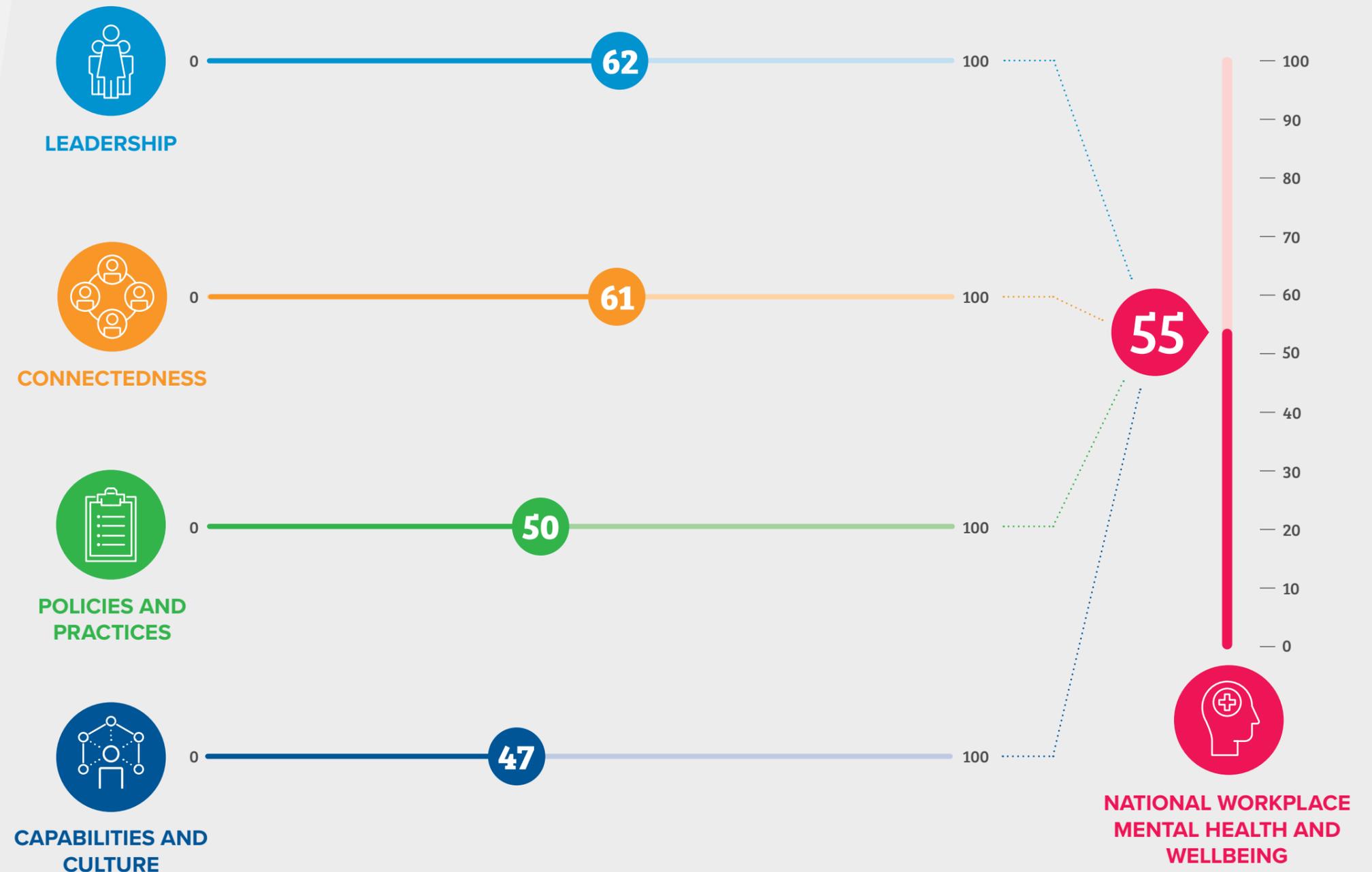
Index scores have been used to show the progress towards the desired state of workplace mental health and wellbeing. An index score of 100 represents the desired or optimal state of mental health and wellbeing in a workplace.

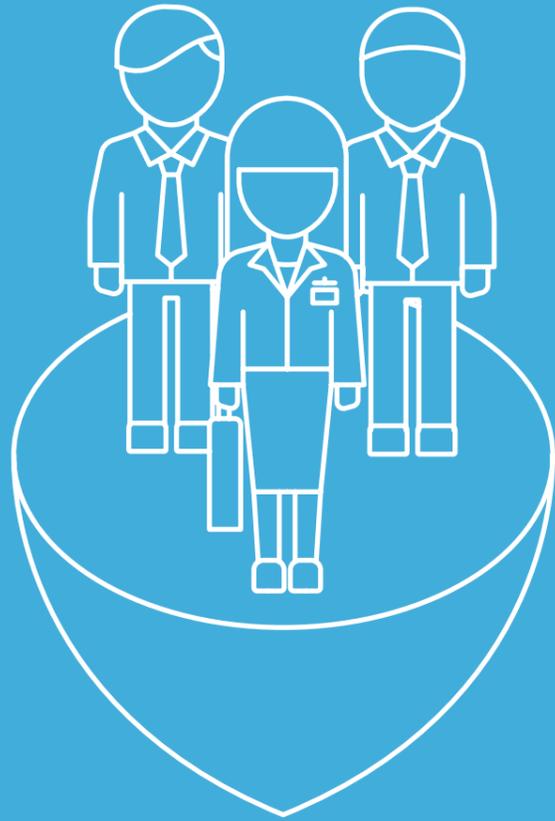
According to the 2017 results, the **national workplace mental health and wellbeing index score is 55**. This suggests that workers believe that we are just over halfway towards optimal mental health and wellbeing in workplaces in Australia.

The four key domains of workplace mental health and wellbeing indicate that workers perceive the areas of **Leadership** and **Connectedness** to be more progressed in workplaces than **Policies and Practices** and **Capabilities and Culture**.

## 2017 PROGRESS TOWARDS THE DESIRED STATE OF WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

The national workplace mental health and wellbeing index score is **55**. **100 represents optimal mental health and wellbeing in a workplace.**



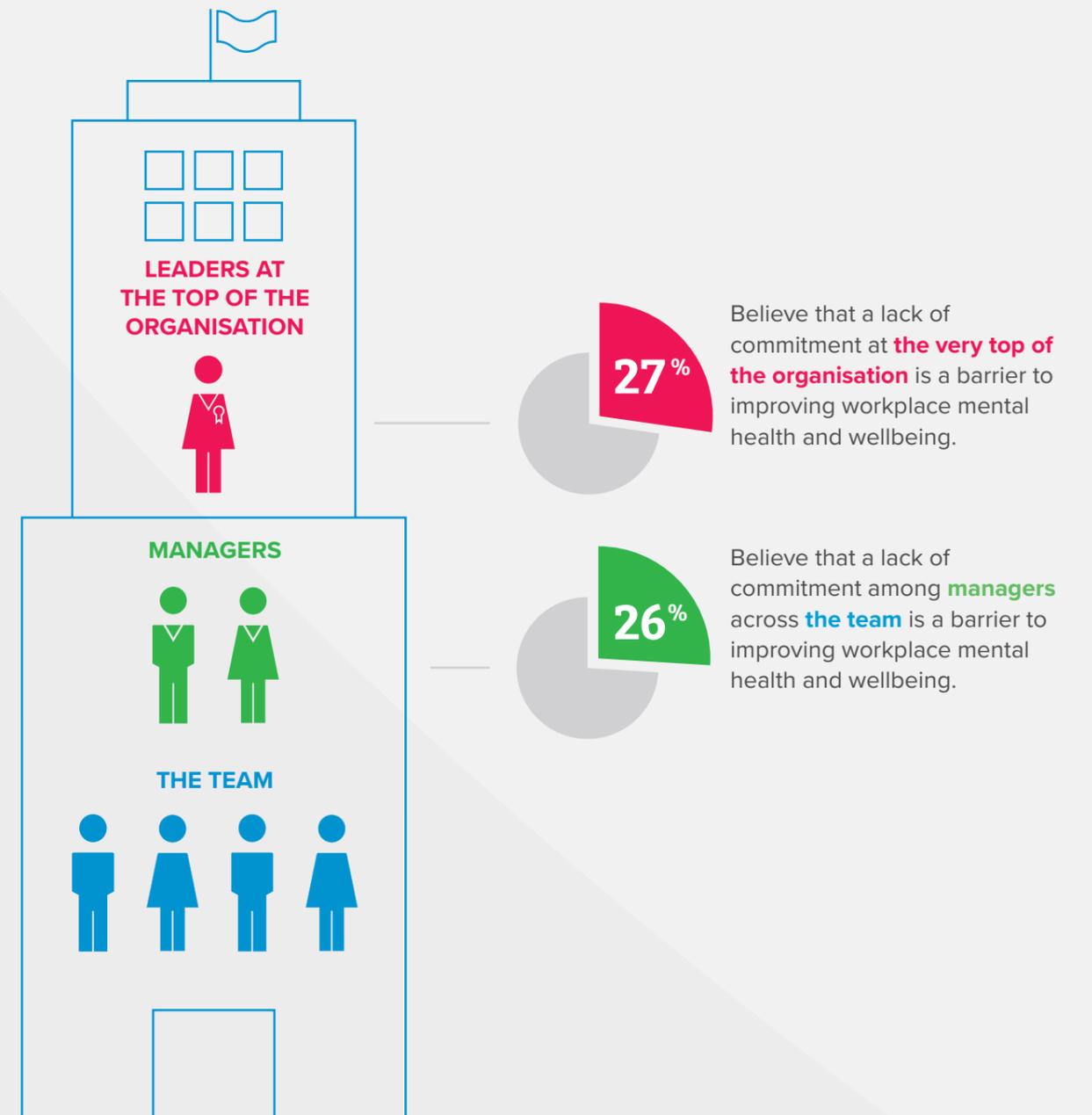


## LEADERSHIP

The existence of supportive and committed leadership in the organisation that endorses and prioritises initiatives that support a mentally healthy workplace.

## POSITIVE LEADERSHIP IS GOOD FOR WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Leadership plays an important role in the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. The behaviours of managers and senior leaders are directly related to happy, successful and effective teams and individuals.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup>Hankan, O, Nancy L, Howard, A. Doing well and doing good: the relationship between leadership practices that facilitate positive emotional climate and organizational performance. Journal of Managerial Psychology. 2008;23(2):186-203.

## LEADERSHIP INDICATORS

There are 12 indicators included in the survey to measure leadership. These indicators can be grouped into **three key areas**:

- 1 Managers who are accessible, attentive, flexible and helpful.
- 2 Managers setting a positive example while providing direction.
- 3 Managers offering feedback, rewards and recognition.

The following show the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes, definitely' for each indicator.

### ACCESSIBLE, ATTENTIVE, FLEXIBLE AND HELPFUL



Managers are accessible when you need them and will listen.



Managers support and facilitate flexible working to meet individual needs.



Managers make sure employees have the resources to do the job.



There is effective team working and a supportive team environment.



Managers support employees having problems with their work performance.



Training and development programs help people transition into new roles.

### SETTING A POSITIVE EXAMPLE AND PROVIDING DIRECTION



Managers give clear guidance on priorities and what is expected of employees.



Managers set a good example for a happy, healthy and productive workplace.



There are inspirational leaders who map out positive visions for the organisation and each employee's place in it.

### OFFERING FEEDBACK, REWARDS AND RECOGNITION



There is praise and recognition for good performance and achievement.



Managers provide regular feedback in a way that helps employees improve their performance.



Regular reviews make sure people are in the right roles for their capabilities and motivations.

# HOW FAR HAVE WE PROGRESSED TOWARDS POSITIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE WORKPLACE?

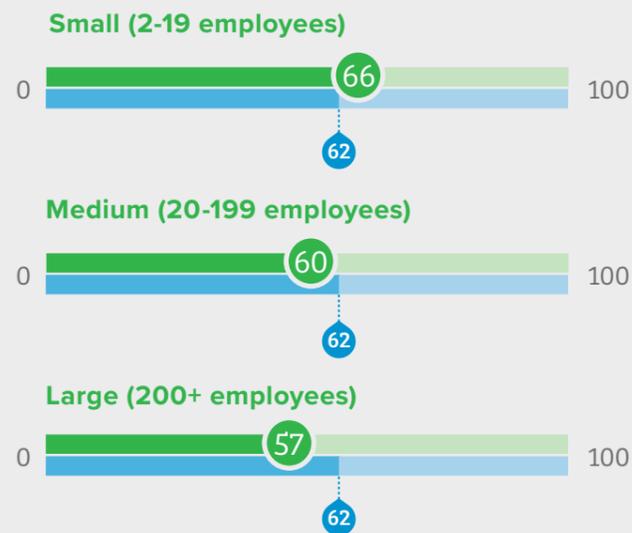
Perceptions about the current state of leadership for mentally healthy workplaces are different depending on work role and business size. Business owners and workers in small businesses are more likely to rate the **Leadership** in their workplace above the national average. Employees and workers in large businesses tend to rate the **Leadership** in their workplace below the national average.

**National index score for Leadership is 62**  
100 represents optimal Leadership.

## WORK ROLE



## BUSINESS SIZE



NOTE: Index Scores measure the perceived progress of Australian workplaces towards the desired state of a mentally healthy workplace where 100 represents optimal mental health and wellbeing.

**X2**

Workers who describe their job as one they love doing, **rank the leadership in their workplace twice as favourably** as workers who describe their job as terrible.

“ *In corporate culture it's talked about but no action is taken. It's always talk, a policy is written but it has no substance. It's never on the CEO's radar of importance.* ”

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO CREATE A THRIVING WORKPLACE



## PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING TRAINING

Provide mental health and wellbeing training to managers and leaders across the organisation.



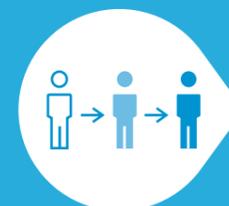
## OFFER REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Create feedback, reward and recognition systems to ensure that feedback is appropriate and achievements are acknowledged.



## FOSTER COMPETENCY AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Support employee growth by developing skills and identifying career opportunities.



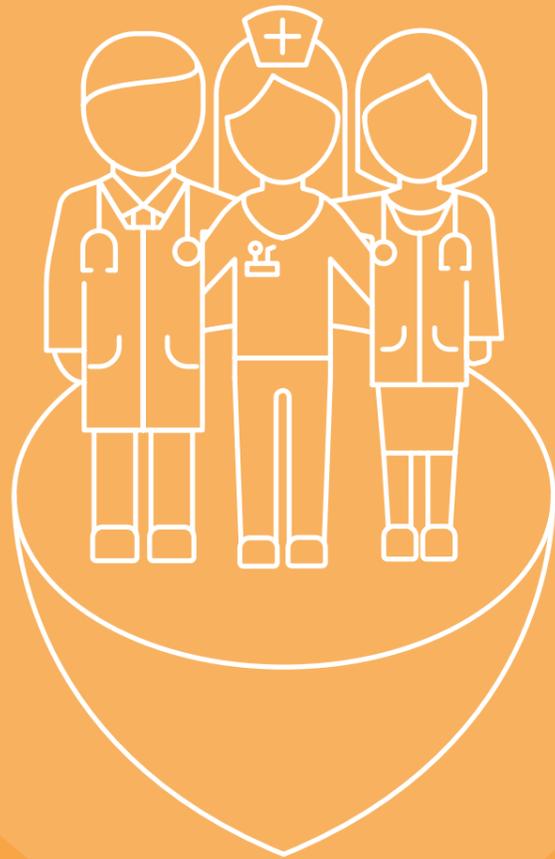
## ACKNOWLEDGE ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Support employees through times of change using an appreciative approach to change, by learning from and building on previous successes.

SuperFriend provides Mental Health and Wellbeing Training to managers and staff with the confidence, skills, strategies and tools to ensure they are supported, safe and productive at work.

[superfriend.com.au/how-can-we-help/mentally-healthy-workplaces/mental-health-wellbeing-training-staff-managers/](https://superfriend.com.au/how-can-we-help/mentally-healthy-workplaces/mental-health-wellbeing-training-staff-managers/)





## CONNECTEDNESS

A work environment that is characterised by strong interpersonal and social support, trust and fairness, and inclusiveness.

## SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENTS ASSIST EMPLOYEES TO THRIVE

A workplace environment which is civil and respectful encourages employee wellbeing. Work relationships and experience of work are important indicators of a mentally healthy workplace.<sup>6</sup>



### 1 IN 4 WORKERS

report having a great job which they love doing.

## CONNECTEDNESS INDICATORS

There are six indicators included in this survey to measure connectedness within a workplace.

The following show the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes, definitely' for each indicator.

### CONNECTEDNESS



People greet each other in the morning, smile, make eye contact and say thank you – it's common courtesy.



There is sensitivity to the needs of those who have children or others to care for.



Employees are encouraged to identify ways to improve the workplace.



Leave is monitored and managed to make sure people get regular holidays.



It feels like a community at work with people supporting each other beyond just getting the work done.



Employees are involved in the planning of work and how it is carried out.

<sup>6</sup>New Economics Foundation. Wellbeing at work: a review of the literature [Internet]. London: NEF; 2014 [cited on 2017 Aug 8]. Accessible at: <http://neweconomics.org/2014/03/wellbeing-at-work/>

# HOW FAR HAVE WE PROGRESSED TOWARDS A WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS CONNECTED AND SUPPORTIVE?

The national index score for Connectedness is **61**  
100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.

## WORK ROLE



## BUSINESS SIZE



NOTE: Index Scores measure the perceived progress of Australian workplaces towards the desired state of a mentally healthy workplace where 100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.

X2

Workers who report being happy in their current job rank **connectedness in their organisation twice as high** as those who say they do not like their job.

X2

Connectedness is viewed **twice** as favourably by workers who **describe their employer as the best or one of the best in the sector** compared to workers who describe their employer as the worst or one of the worst in the sector.

“Interaction with managers in wellbeing activities is a positive way to learn strategies to cope with stressful workloads or environments.”

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO CREATE A THRIVING WORKPLACE



## FOSTER A CULTURE OF CARE

Promote a culture of care across the organisation, where all employees feel valued.



## ENSURE ORGANISATION-WIDE CONSULTATION

Adopt a participatory approach to mental health and wellbeing, with regular consultation and feedback encouraged at all levels of the organisation.



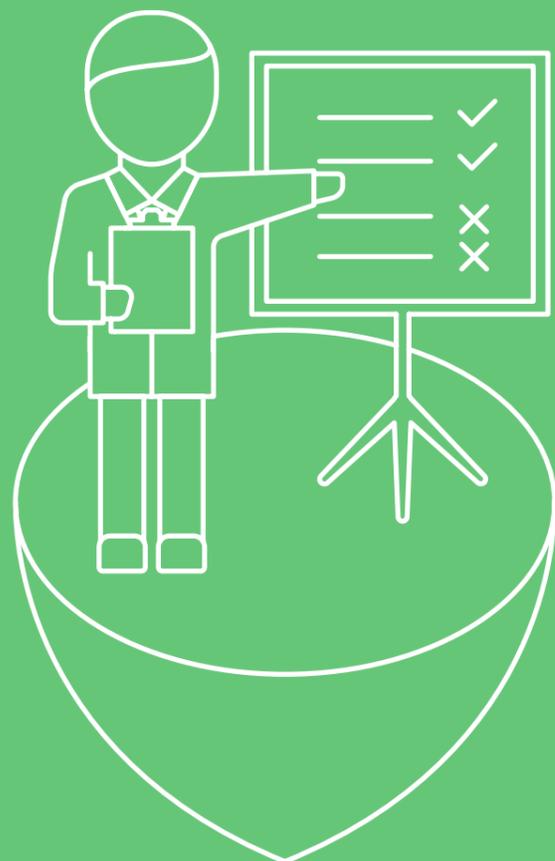
## PROVIDE ACTION-BASED SOLUTIONS

Ensure that suggestions to improve the health and wellbeing of employees are actioned and communicated with staff.



## CREATE SPACES TO CONNECT

Create informal places for people to interact at work away from their desks or workstations.



## POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The existence and use of robust policies, strategies and processes that address mental health within an organisational framework. There are clear processes driving policy development and implementation in the workplace.

## A FRAMEWORK OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES SUPPORTS GOOD MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS THE ORGANISATION

A thriving workplace has a mental health and wellbeing strategy in place to support and promote good mental health and wellbeing for **all employees**. The strategy is effectively communicated and implemented consistently throughout the organisation and updated regularly.<sup>7</sup>



### 1 IN 2 WORKERS

are not aware of any workplace mental health and wellbeing policies in place at their workplace.



### ONLY 1 IN 6 WORKERS

believe the mental health and wellbeing policies at their workplace are being implemented effectively.

## POLICIES AND PRACTICES INDICATORS

There are nine indicators included in the survey to measure if an organisation's policies and practices support mental health and wellbeing.

The following show the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes, definitely' for each indicator.



Have effective policies and practices against workplace bullying or harassment.



Have good return to work policies and practices for those who have had time off with physical health problems.



Have good return to work policies and practices for those who have had time off with mental health problems.



There is access to confidential external support services such as Employee Assistance Programs.



There are internal counselling or support services that employees can use.



Have managers who are committed to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff.



There are workplace programs to improve physical health.



There are regular workplace health and wellbeing audits and action plans implemented.



There are workplace programs to improve mental health and wellbeing.

<sup>7</sup> SuperFriend. Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace [Internet]. Melbourne: SuperFriend; 2015 [cited 2017 Aug 8]. Available from: <https://www.superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/>

# HOW FAR HAVE WE PROGRESSED TOWARDS WORKPLACES OFFERING POLICIES AND PRACTICES WHICH SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING?

The national index score for Policies and Practices is **50**

100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.

## WORK ROLE



## BUSINESS SIZE



NOTE: Index Scores measure the perceived progress of Australian workplaces towards the desired state of a mentally healthy workplace where 100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.

**X3**

Workers who described their workplace as the best in the sector in terms of creating and sustaining positive mental health and wellbeing were nearly **three times more likely to report good policies and practices** are in place compared to workers who described their workplace as the worst in its sector.

**X4**

**Business owners are four times more likely than employees** to report that their workplace has mental health and wellbeing policies which are being implemented effectively.

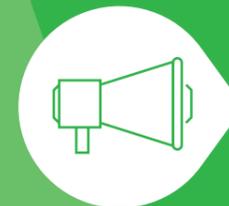
“My workplace has good policies and programs in place for employee mental health and wellbeing, however the degree of help and support can vary.”

# SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO CREATE A THRIVING WORKPLACE



## DEVELOP A MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

Develop, implement and promote a mental health and wellbeing strategy across the organisation which includes the promotion of positive mental health.



## OFFER PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Provide a variety of mental health and wellbeing programs that are consistent with the mental health and wellbeing strategy implemented within the organisation.



## MANAGEMENT SHOULD WALK THE TALK

Senior leaders should actively participate in programs offered by the organisation to raise awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing.



## CONDUCT REGULAR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING AUDITS

Conduct an annual mental health and wellbeing audit to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement in the organisation.

Wellbeing Works is a 90-minute interactive workshop run by SuperFriend. It assesses your current activities contributing to positive mental health and wellbeing so you can gain an understanding of your organisations strengths and opportunities for improvement.

[superfriend.com.au/how-can-we-help/mentally-healthy-workplaces/wellbeing-works-program/](http://superfriend.com.au/how-can-we-help/mentally-healthy-workplaces/wellbeing-works-program/)





## CAPABILITIES AND CULTURE

The application of knowledge and skills within an organisation to support positive mental health and wellbeing, and to influence the culture through changing practices and improving the environment.

## EMPLOYEES THRIVE IN THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

Evidence suggests that strategies such as the promotion of flexible working arrangements support employees to prioritise and maintain their mental health both at work and at home.<sup>8</sup> Designing jobs for positive mental health also promotes positive mental health and contributes to empowered and productive employees.<sup>9</sup>



**39%**

Believe there is a strong moral case for employers to care for their employees' mental health and wellbeing.



**28%**

Believe a culture of compliance is a key barrier to improving workplace mental health and wellbeing.



**33%**

Believe that employers have more important issues to address which prevent them from doing more to improve workplace mental health and wellbeing.

<sup>8</sup> Jenkins S, Bhanugopan R, Lockhart P. A framework for optimizing work-life balance practices in Australia: perceived options for employee support. *Journal of Employment Counseling*. 2016; 56(3)pp:112-129.

<sup>9</sup> Grant A, Fried Y, Juillerat T. Work matters: job design in classic and contemporary perspectives. In: Editor S, Zedeck. *APA Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Vol. 1 Building and Developing the Organization. Washington DC: American Psychological Association; 2011. pp: 417-453.

## CAPABILITIES AND CULTURE INDICATORS

There are 11 indicators included in this survey to measure organisational capabilities and culture.

The following show the proportion of respondents who answered 'yes, definitely' for each indicator.

### CAPABILITIES



Management have the knowledge and skills to be able to effectively support employees with complex mental health issues.



Training is provided for all managers in how to support employees with mental health issues.



Mental health awareness training is provided to all employees.

### CULTURE



There is support available to help people optimise their work-life balance.



The culture encourages open discussion about issues that affect work performance.



People are effectively supported through change.



Efforts are made to help employees find purpose and meaning in their work.



Workloads are monitored and managed to avoid excessive hours and burnout.



The culture encourages open discussion about issues that affect mental health and wellbeing.



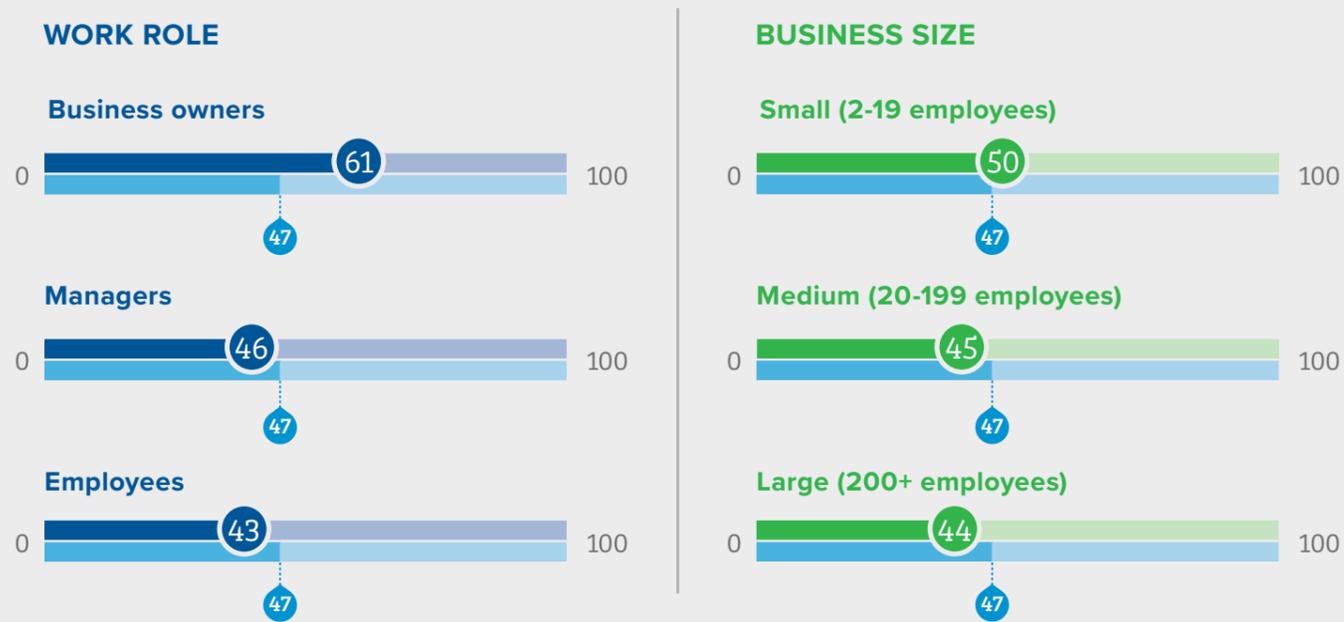
People with known mental health issues would have an equal chance of employment or promotion.



Employees with mental health problems, like anxiety or depression, feel comfortable discussing their mental health issues with their manager.

# HOW FAR HAVE WE PROGRESSED TOWARDS CREATING CULTURES AND BUILDING CAPABILITIES WHICH PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN WORKPLACES?

The national index score for Capabilities and Culture is **47**  
100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.



NOTE: Index Scores measure the perceived progress of Australian workplaces towards the desired state of a mentally healthy workplace where 100 represents optimal workplace mental health and wellbeing.

“ I wish my company would look into the work-life balance issues that so many are facing today. ”

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO CREATE A THRIVING WORKPLACE



### PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Promote flexible working arrangements to enhance employees' sense of control over their work.



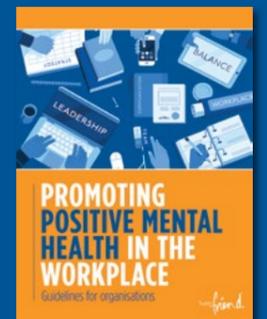
### USE A STRENGTHS BASED APPROACH

Managers should assist employees to identify and develop their strengths for growth and development opportunities.



### CUSTOMISE JOB ROLES

Managers should consider customising jobs to increase job control and job satisfaction for employees.



Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace - Guidelines for Organisations

[superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/](http://superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/)

# NEXT STEPS

The **Indicators of a Thriving Workplace Survey** report provides insights into the current state of mental health and wellbeing in Australian workplaces. In this third edition, the indicators have been grouped into four key domains of workplace mental health and wellbeing to improve the translation of the survey findings so that businesses can understand and utilise the findings from this research.

# HOW TO TAKE ACTION



The 38 desired state indicators can be used to rate your organisation and benchmark against the national results in this report. This will help you to understand which of the key domains and specific indicators require action in your workplace.



The strategies included in each of the key sections of this report are a first step for you to plan and implement actions known to be effective in creating a mentally healthy workplace. These strategies have been sourced from SuperFriend's **Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace: Guidelines for Organisations**. These evidence based guidelines have been developed for organisations to use to promote positive mental health in the workplace. This resource provides practical tips on how to build a workplace environment where employees can thrive, resulting in greater employee engagement and productivity. The guidelines can be downloaded from

 <https://www.superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/>



If you are looking for other suggestions to create a mentally healthy workplace, the **additional resources** section provides helpful strategies also known to be effective in workplaces.



## ONE IN THREE WORKERS

Believe employers do not know where to begin taking action and promoting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## SUPERFRIEND

SuperFriend has produced resources in conjunction with mental health experts to provide simple, practical information to assist you to improve the mental health of your workplace.

 <https://www.superfriend.com.au/resources/>

The suggested actions to create a thriving workplace in this report have been developed from SuperFriend's **Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace: Guidelines for Organisations**. This document provides additional information and advice about how employers can promote positive mental health in the workplace.

 <https://www.superfriend.com.au/resources/promoting-positive-mental-health-in-the-workplace/>

## HEADS UP

The Heads Up website provides workers and businesses with information, resources and advice about how to create a mentally healthy workplace. The website has been developed by the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance and beyondblue.

 <https://www.headsup.org.au>

## VICTORIAN WORKPLACE MENTAL WELLBEING COLLABORATION

The resource center lists practical resources to promote positive mental wellbeing in the workplace. These resources are categorised into six pillars of Promoting Positive Mental Health in the Workplace Guidelines used in this report.

 <http://leadingwellvic.com.au/>

## GREAT-WEST LIFE CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

This website provides tools and resources to assist employers with the management of workplace mental health issues including psychological health and safety and job-specific strategies. While the Centre is Canadian, it provides useful information that can be applied to Australian workplaces.

 <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

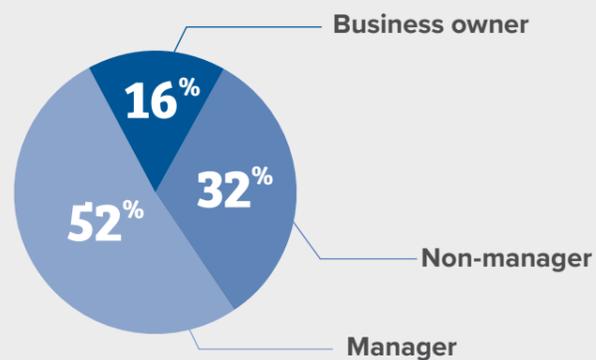
# SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Indicators of a **Thriving Workplace Survey** was completed online by 5,017 Australian workers in April 2017. The sample was weighted by gender, age, location, work role, business size and business sector, maintaining consistency with prior sampling in 2015 and 2016.

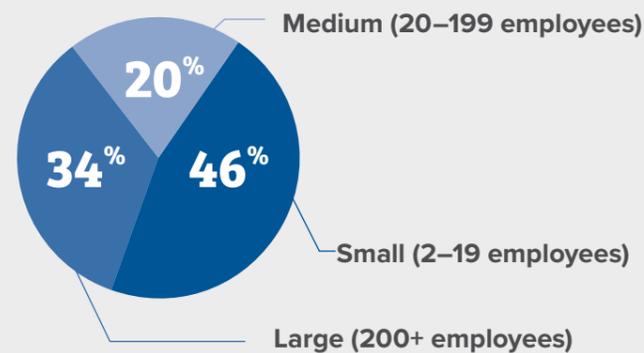
## PARTICIPANTS



## WORK ROLE



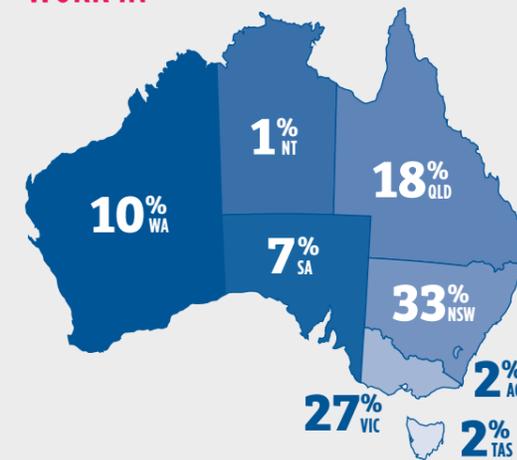
## EMPLOYEES IN ORGANISATION



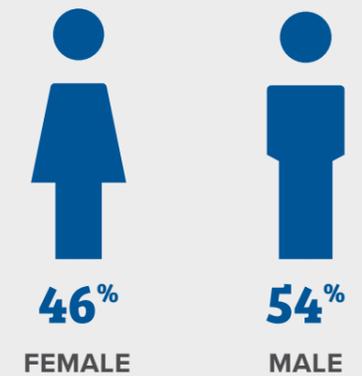
## INDUSTRY

Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	14%
Retail trade	13%
Other Services	10%
Health Care & Social Assistance	9%
Manufacturing	7%
Construction	6%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	6%
Accommodation & Food Services	5%
Administrative & Support Services	5%
Financial & Insurance Services	5%
Wholesale trade	4%
Education & Training	4%
Arts & Recreation Services	2%
Public Administration & Safety	2%
Information Media & Telecommunications	2%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	2%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	1%
Mining	1%

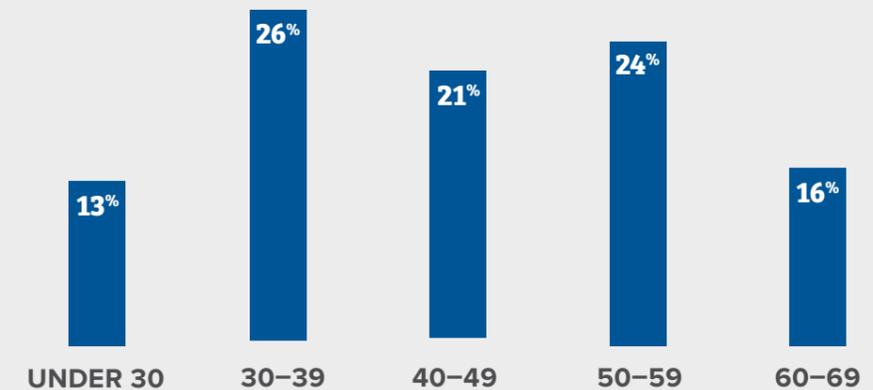
## WORK IN



## GENDER



## AGE



The survey asked respondents to rate the extent to which each of the 38 *desired state characteristics* of a mentally healthy workplace are currently present in their own workplace.

The 5 point scale is:

Yes definitely      Yes probably      Probably not      Definitely not      Don't know

Analysis techniques included factor and multivariate segmentation analysis. To help measure performance, an index score (out of 100) was applied to measure the current progress of Australian workplaces against the desired state indicators.



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