

Addressing bullying and harassment as **organisational – not individual – problems**

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Thank you to my research team

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The screenshot shows a presentation slide titled "Healthy Workplaces by Design". It features a "Risk audit results" chart and a portrait of Professor Michelle Tuckey. The chart displays the following data:

Response Category	Percentage
Very effectively	~85%
Effectively	~10%
Neutral	~2%
Ineffectively	~1%
Very ineffectively	~2%

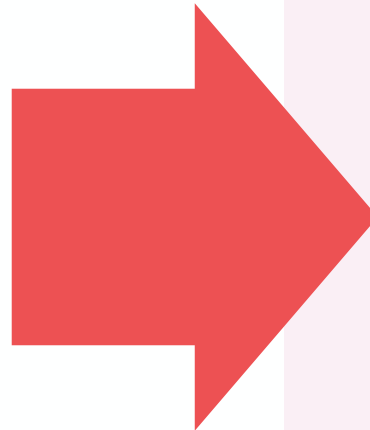
The chart also includes a "Score 71" badge and a question: "1. How do we manage tasks & workload? *". The question has 124/124 (100%) responses. The chart is a horizontal bar chart with five categories: Very effectively, Effectively, Neutral, Ineffectively, and Very ineffectively. The bars are blue and the chart is set against a light blue background. The "Score 71" badge is a green rounded rectangle with the number "71" in white. The question is in bold black text. The response count is in a smaller font. The chart is part of a larger presentation slide that also includes a portrait of Professor Michelle Tuckey and a video player interface.

**Shifting the mindset on
bullying and harassment**

The biggest myth about workplace bullying



Enablers
+
Motivators
+
Triggers



BULLYING

A common example:

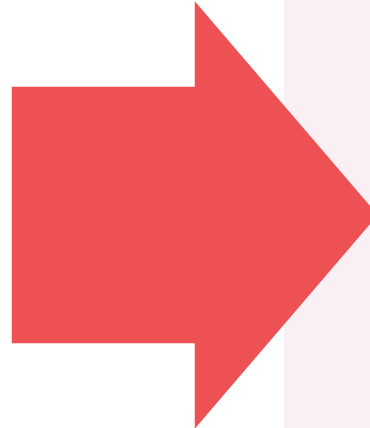
Work pressure

+

Understaffing

+

**A way to get
things done**



Advisory Group Report to Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (2015)

Unhealthy work design

+

Bullying culture

+

Vulnerability

+

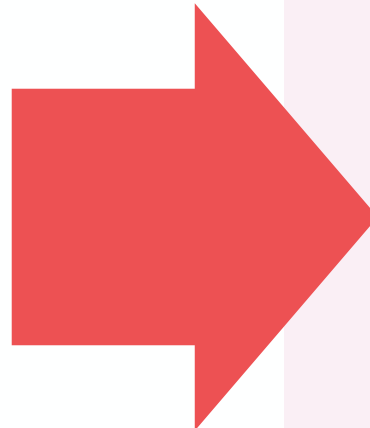
Lack of accountability

+

Lack of supervisory skills

+

**Lack of trust in the
complaints process**



**Sexual harassment is
an organisational
problem too**

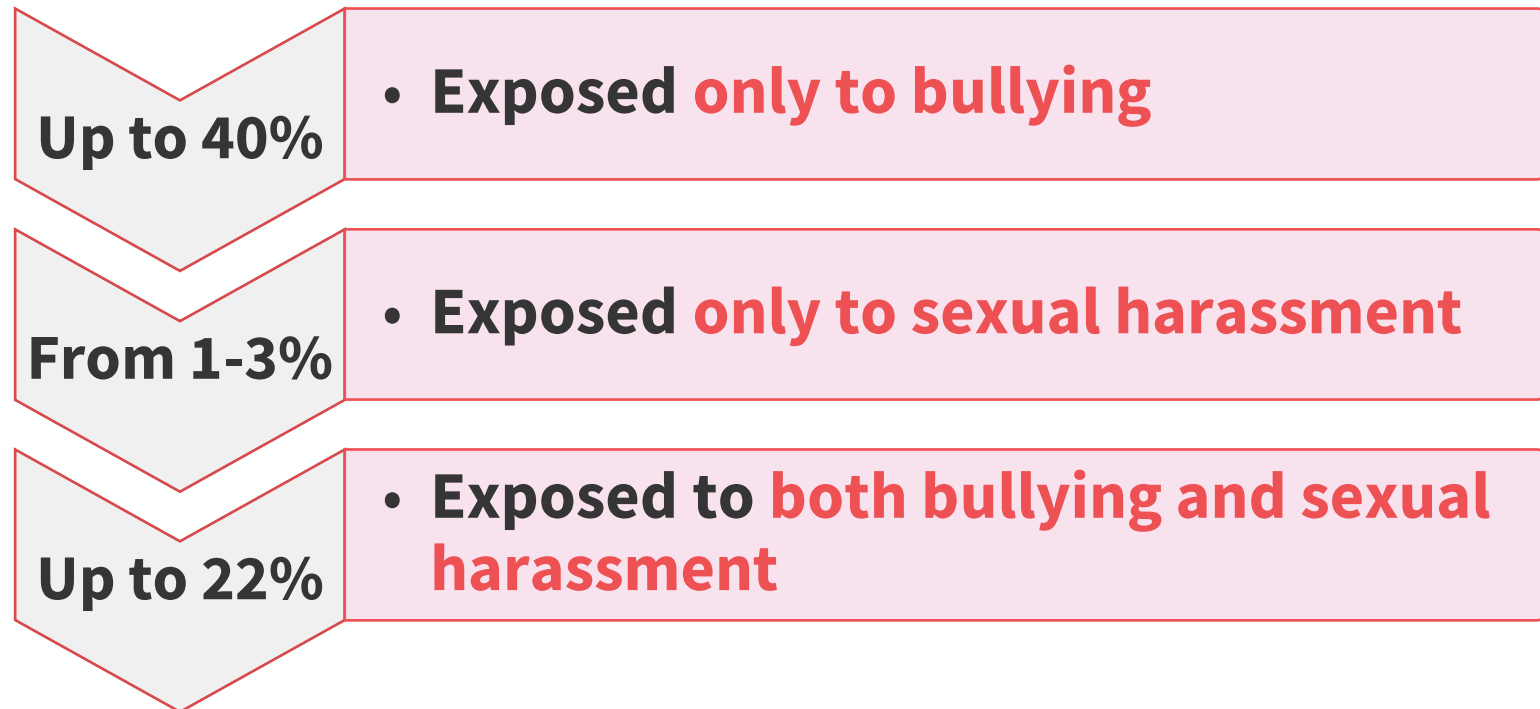
**Job-gender
context**

+

**Organisational
tolerance**

Sexual harassment happens **with bullying**

Bullying happens with or without sexual harassment



Triggers and motivating processes for workplace bullying



Environmental stressors

Release strain and frustration



Societal inequalities

Uphold the status quo

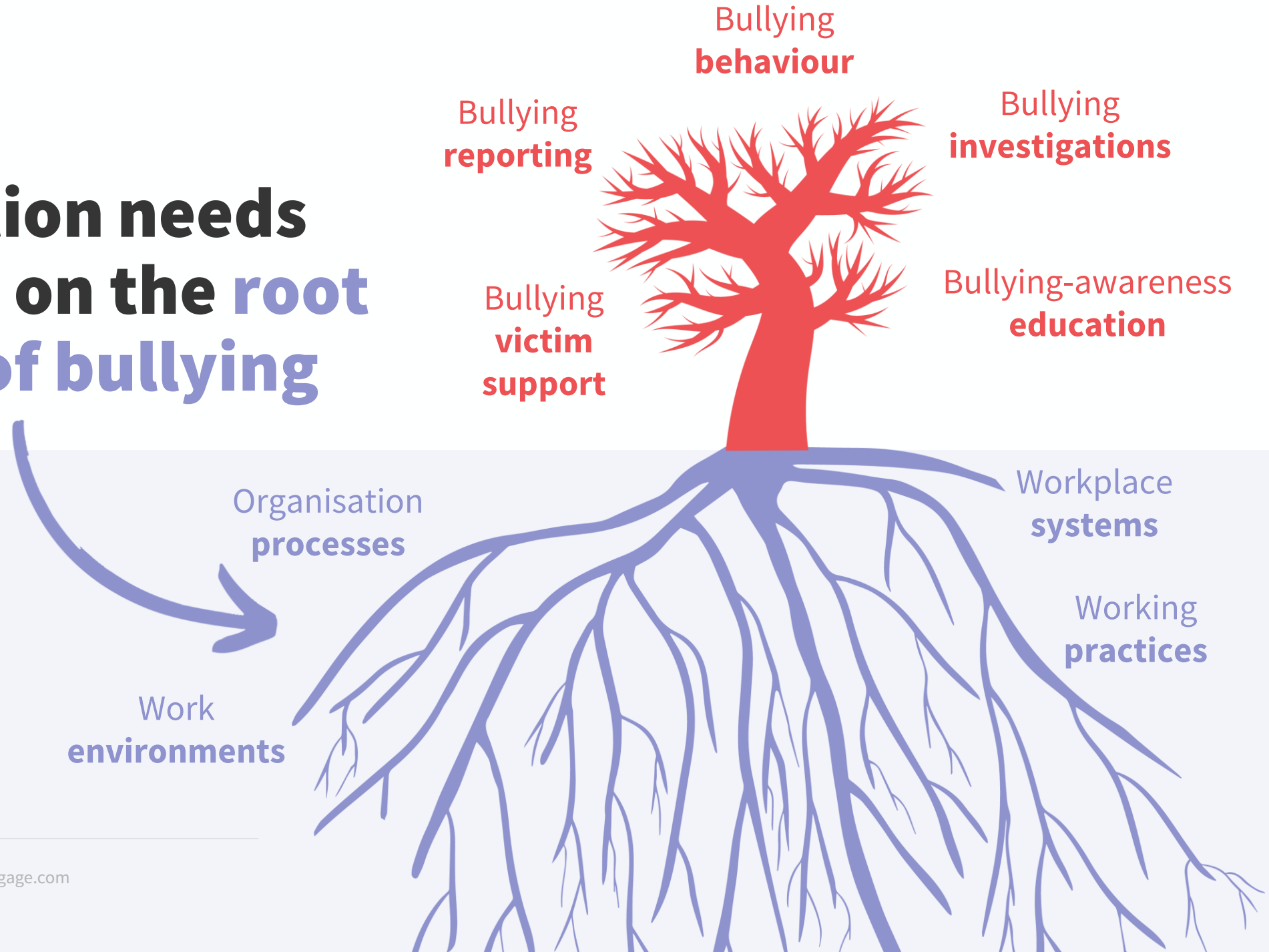


Resource scarcity

Protect and acquire resources

Prevention and response **strategies**

Prevention needs to focus on the **root causes of bullying**





Individual
bully focus

- ✓ Appoint **contact officers**
- ✓ Set-up **reporting mechanisms**
- ✓ **Investigate complaints**
- ✓ Take **corrective action**
- ✓ **Provide support** to targets
- ✓ **Prepare staff** to appropriately manage bullying complaints

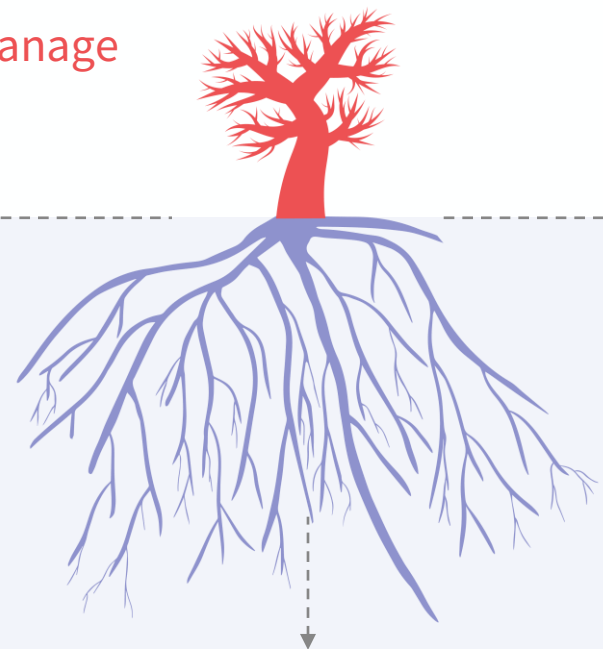
- ✓ **Educate** employees about bullying
- ✓ **Build** interpersonal skills through training
- ✓ Establish an **anti-bullying policy**



Corrective
measures



Preventative
measures



Organisational
root cause focus

- ✓ **Identify** and **reduce** the organisational **risk conditions** for bullying to provide a **safe working environment**



✓ **Identify** and **reduce** the organisational **risk conditions** for bullying to provide a **safe working environment**



**Job gender
context**



**Organisational
tolerance**

**Gender diversity
targets**



**Policies,
reporting, and
zero tolerance**

-
- ✓ Cultivate **systemic safety and inclusion**, particularly for women, **especially in high-risk environments** dominated by men



**Tackling bullying and
harassment through
psychosocial risk
management**



Psychosocial hazards

Hazard:

Potential source of harm.

Psychosocial hazard:

Aspects of the design and management of work, and its social and organisational contexts, that have the potential to cause psychological or physical harm.

Psychosocial hazard



Stress response



Psychological &/or physical injury

Workplace bullying. Excessive
bullying. Excessive overloa
Excessive overload. Work p
Workplace bullying. Excessive overload. Work pressure. Violence. Fatigue. Harassment. Workplace bullying
Excessive overload. Work pressure. Violence. Harassment. Fatigue. Harassment. Workplace bullying
Work pressure. Violence. Fatigue. Harassment. Workplace bullying
Workplace bullying. Excessive
Excessive

Root cause 10 risk factors

Management and coordination of **people and tasks**:



Coordinate, administer working hours

⚠️ 2 risk factors:

- Rostering, scheduling, & working hours
- Leave & entitlements



Manage work performance

⚠️ 5 risk factors:

- Job roles
- Training & professional development
- Tasks & workload
- Appraising & rewarding job performance
- Under-performance



Shape relationships & the work environment

⚠️ 3 risk factors:

- Interpersonal & team relationships
- Mental health & well-being
- Physical safety hazards

Healthy Workplaces by Design risk management program



Preparation

Building readiness for the program



Diagnosis

Identifying which risk areas to focus on



Solutions

Co-designing solutions (improvement strategies) in the focal areas



Implementation

Consolidating the solutions into an action plan
Implementing the solutions at multiple levels



Evaluation

Measuring changes in outcomes
Learning about success factors

How to prepare

Preparation phase

Organisation buy-in

Let each level know this is vital and they need to commit



- ✓ Senior management commitment
- ✓ Organisational infrastructure and resources
- ✓ Middle manager support and involvement
- ✓ Organisational priority
- ✓ Communication plan

Steering group

Establish a steering group to represent diverse interests



- ✓ Safeguard ethical aspects
- ✓ Provide oversight
- ✓ Garner support and resources
- ✓ Inform evaluation measures
- ✓ Coordinate stakeholders and participants

How to diagnose

Diagnosis phase

The risk audit tool assesses each of the **10 risk areas** using a graphical, behaviourally anchored rating scale.



Risk Audit

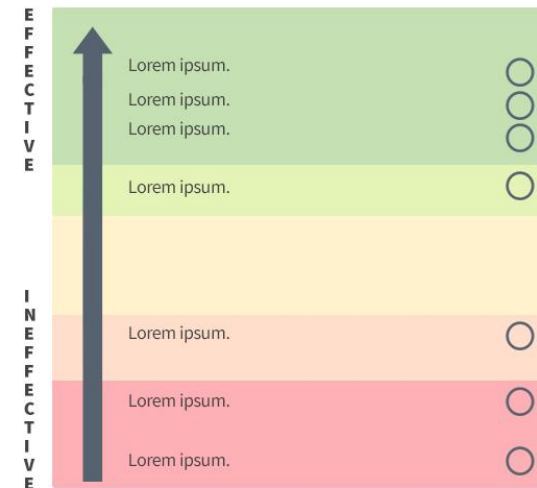
1. Clarifying and defining EFFECTIVE INDICATORS

- In my team, clear information on job roles and expectations is provided
- In my team, job descriptions are reviewed in consultation with team members



Risk Assessment

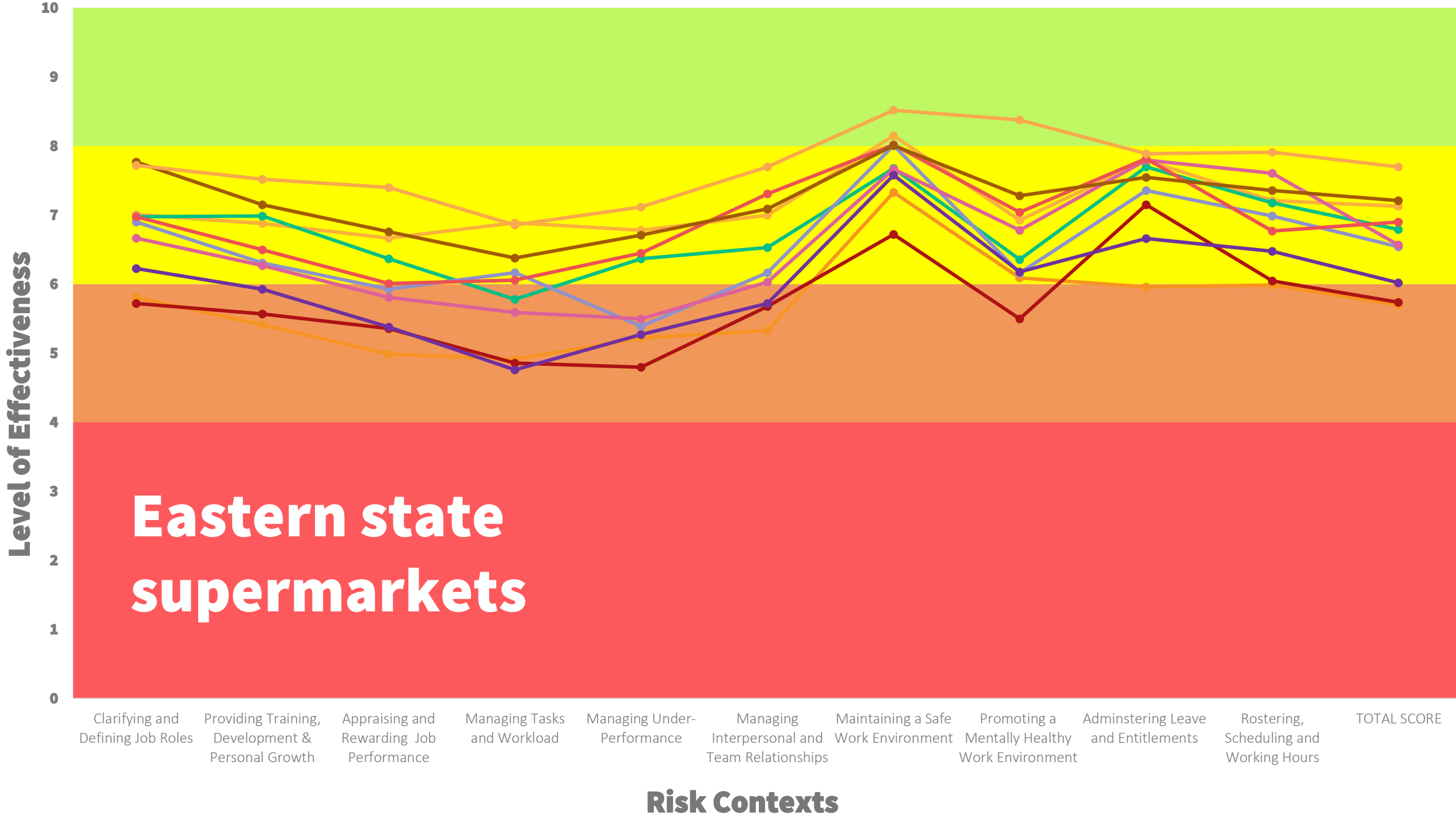
The risk audit tool assesses each of the 10 risk areas:



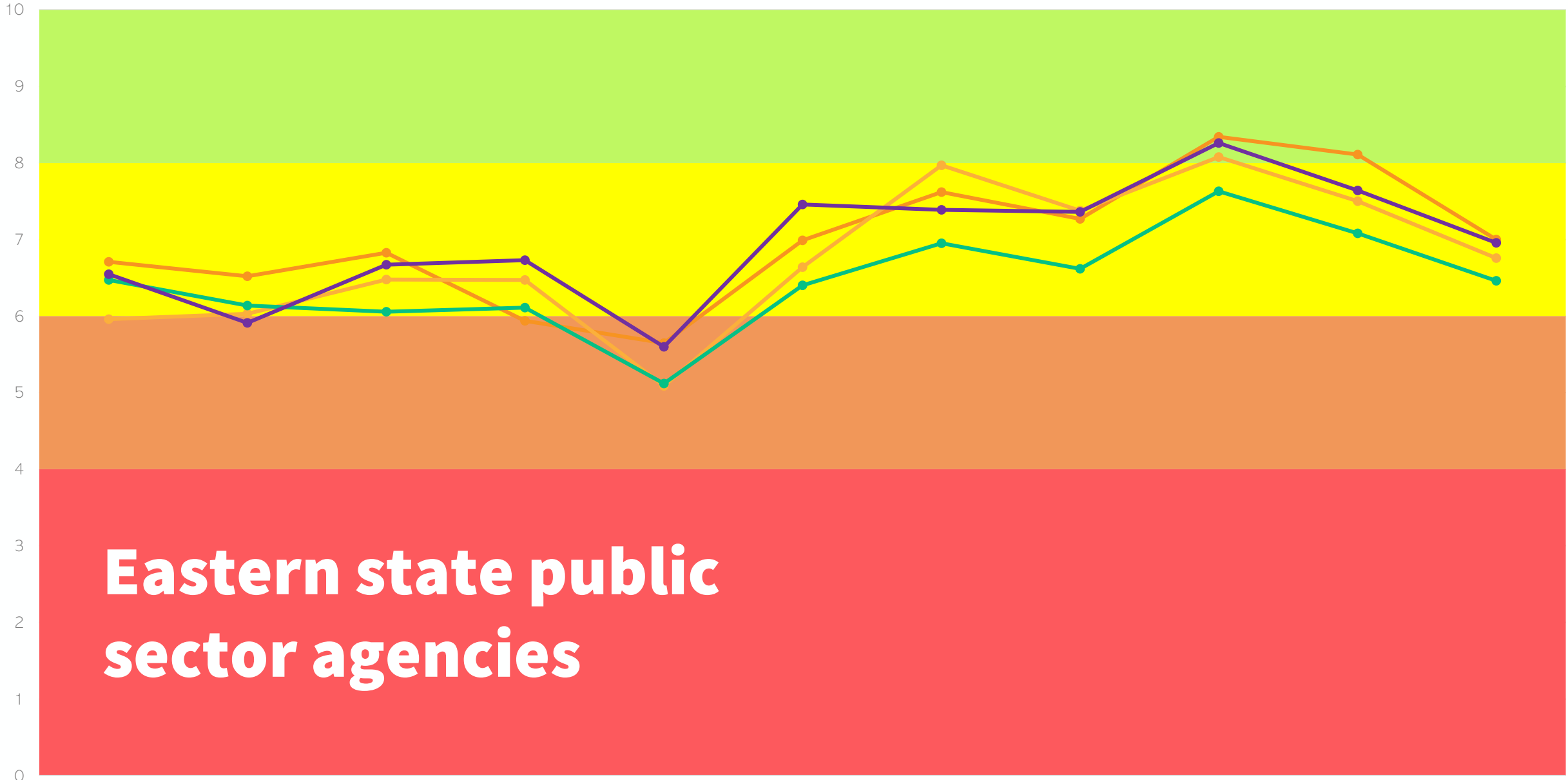
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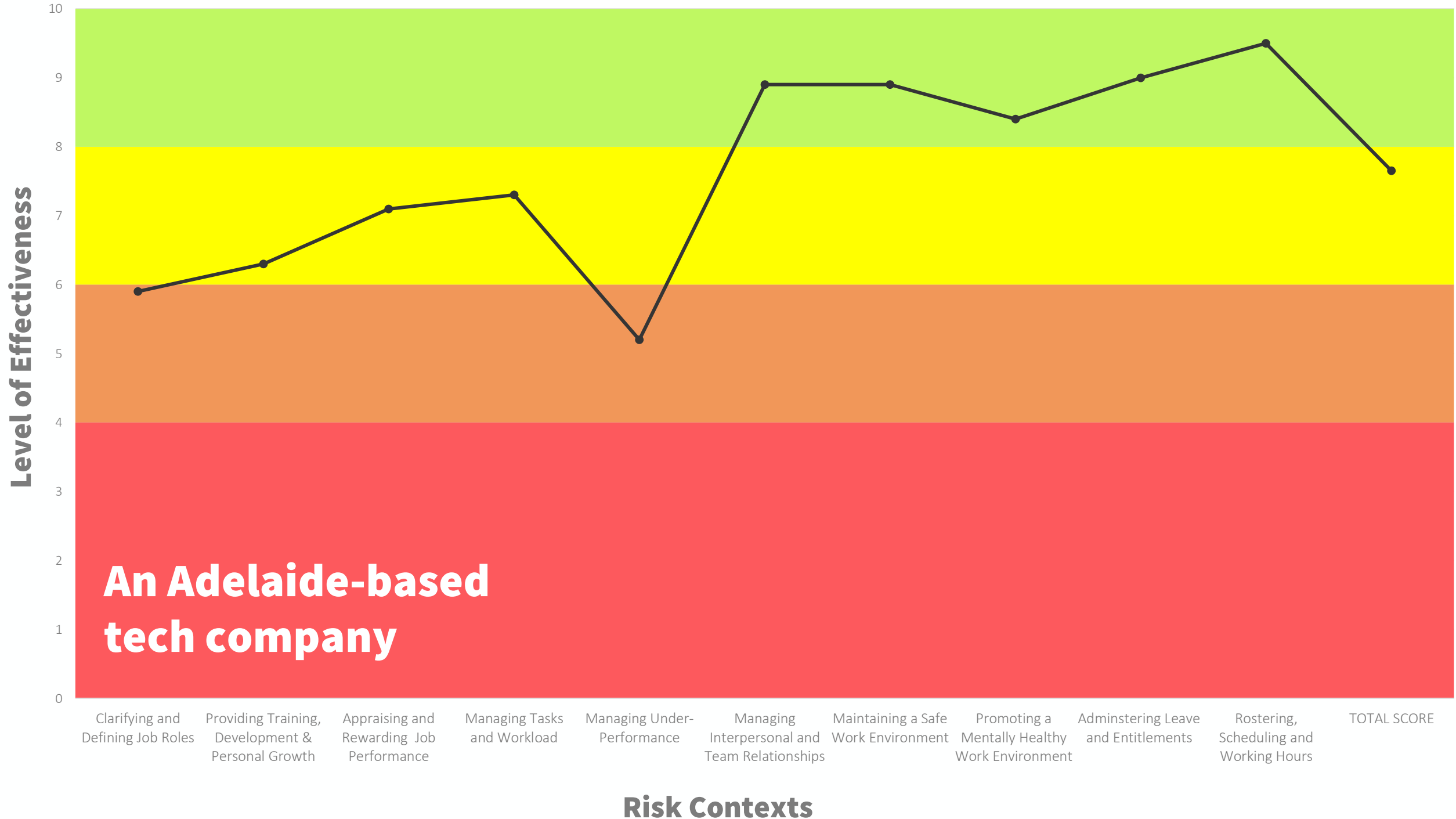
Level of Effectiveness



Eastern state public sector agencies

Risk Contexts

Clarifying and Defining Job Roles Providing Training, Development & Personal Growth Appraising and Rewarding Job Performance Managing Tasks and Workload Managing Under-Performance Managing Interpersonal and Team Relationships Maintaining a Safe Work Environment Promoting a Mentally Healthy Work Environment Administering Leave and Entitlements Rostering, Scheduling and Working Hours TOTAL SCORE

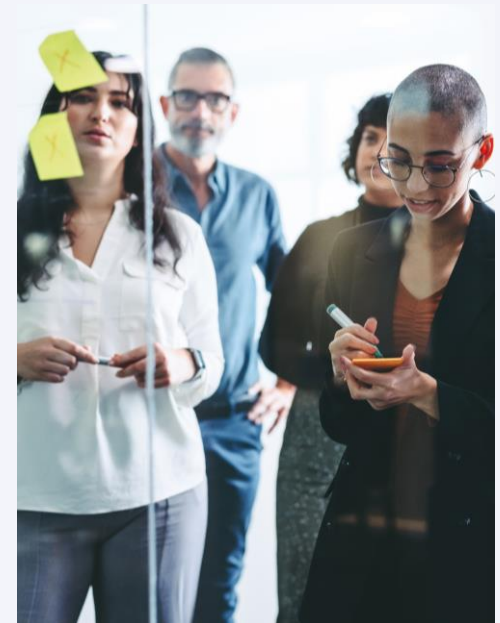


**The
solution**

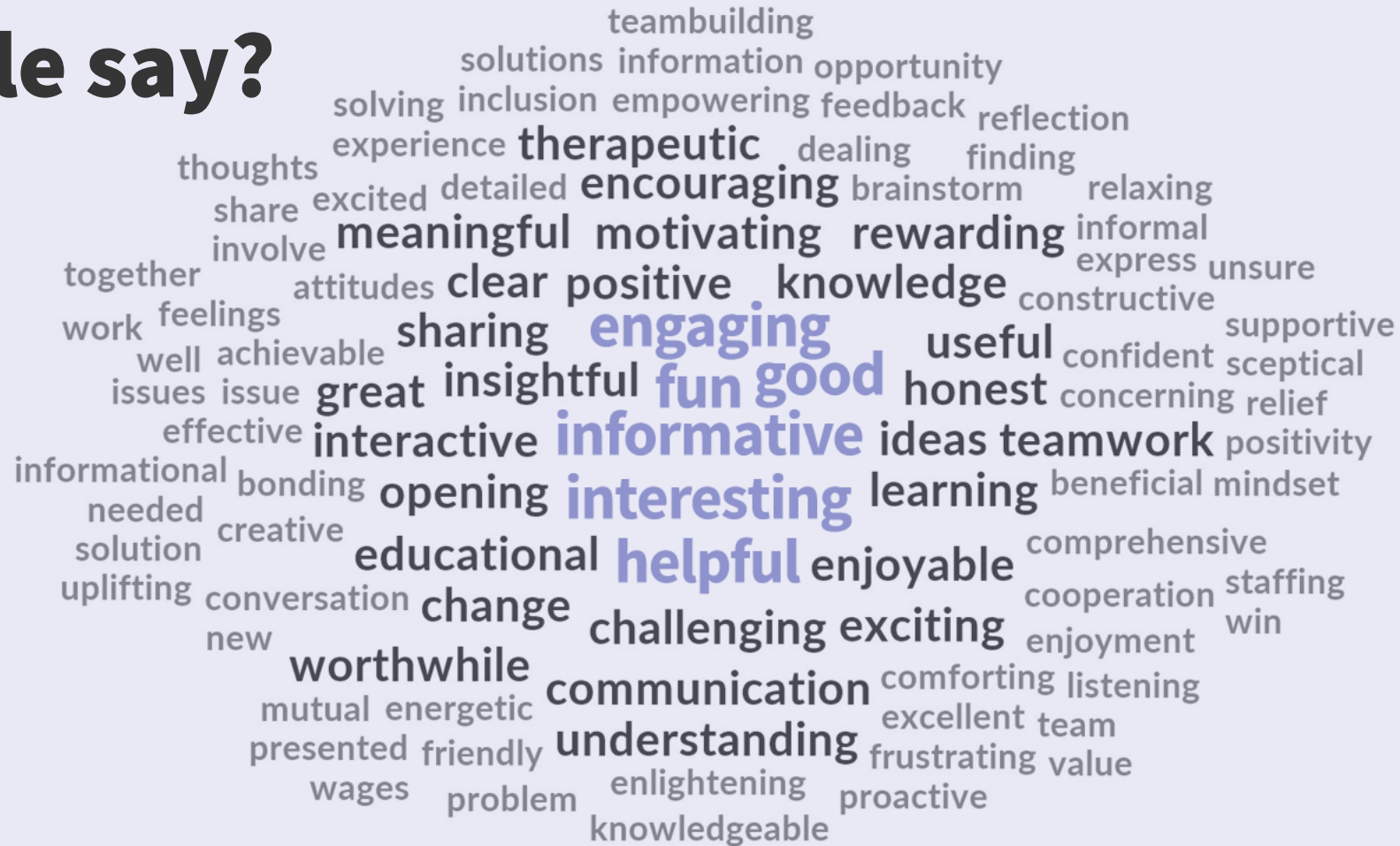
Solutions phase

Co-design brings together, **on equal ground**, stakeholders with expertise and those with lived experience to design solutions.

Focus on **unpacking the problems** in the focal areas, then brainstorming solutions.



What do people say?



What do people say?



The implementation

Implementation phase

Develop concrete action plans at team level that prioritise solutions and document roles, responsibilities, timeframes.



Example solutions

Here's an example of the solutions that a team might introduce.

Our team agree to **conduct these activities:**

Setup a recognition wall

[Click for more details](#)

Review base rostering

[Click for more details](#)

Change supervision structure

[Click for more details](#)

Draft a communication template

[Click for more details](#)

Change hours allocation

[Click for more details](#)

Setup cross training

[Click for more details](#)

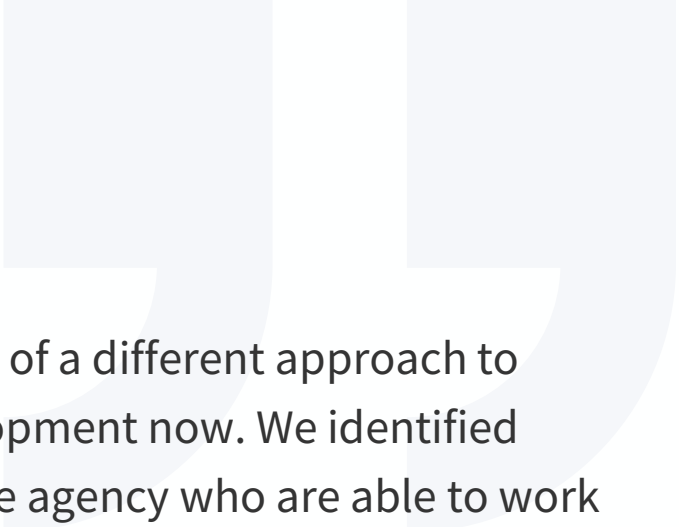
Implementation phase

“The benefit of the project has been getting a diverse group of people engaged to think about the issues, then they link the other stuff in that happens day-to-day.”

“For a smaller group of people, it’s shifted the mindset; they connect [the dots] between all of the other stuff that is already in place to support them.”

“I found it positive that staff took ownership.”

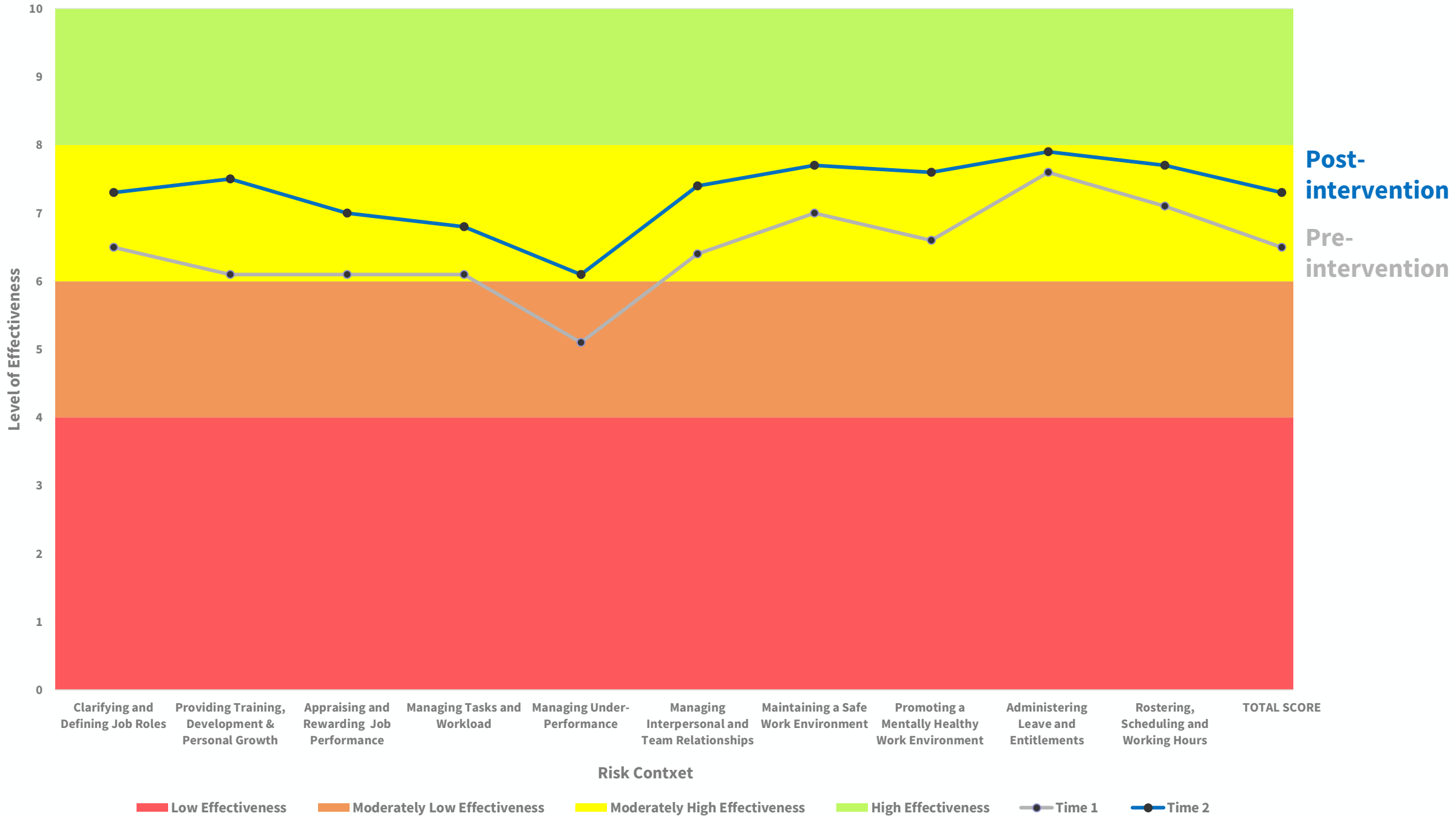
“The people at the workshop were those who put their hand up first.”



“We are taking a bit of a different approach to learning and development now. We identified staff from across the agency who are able to work on a stretch project ... to collectively design [a new training program]. This has never happened before.”

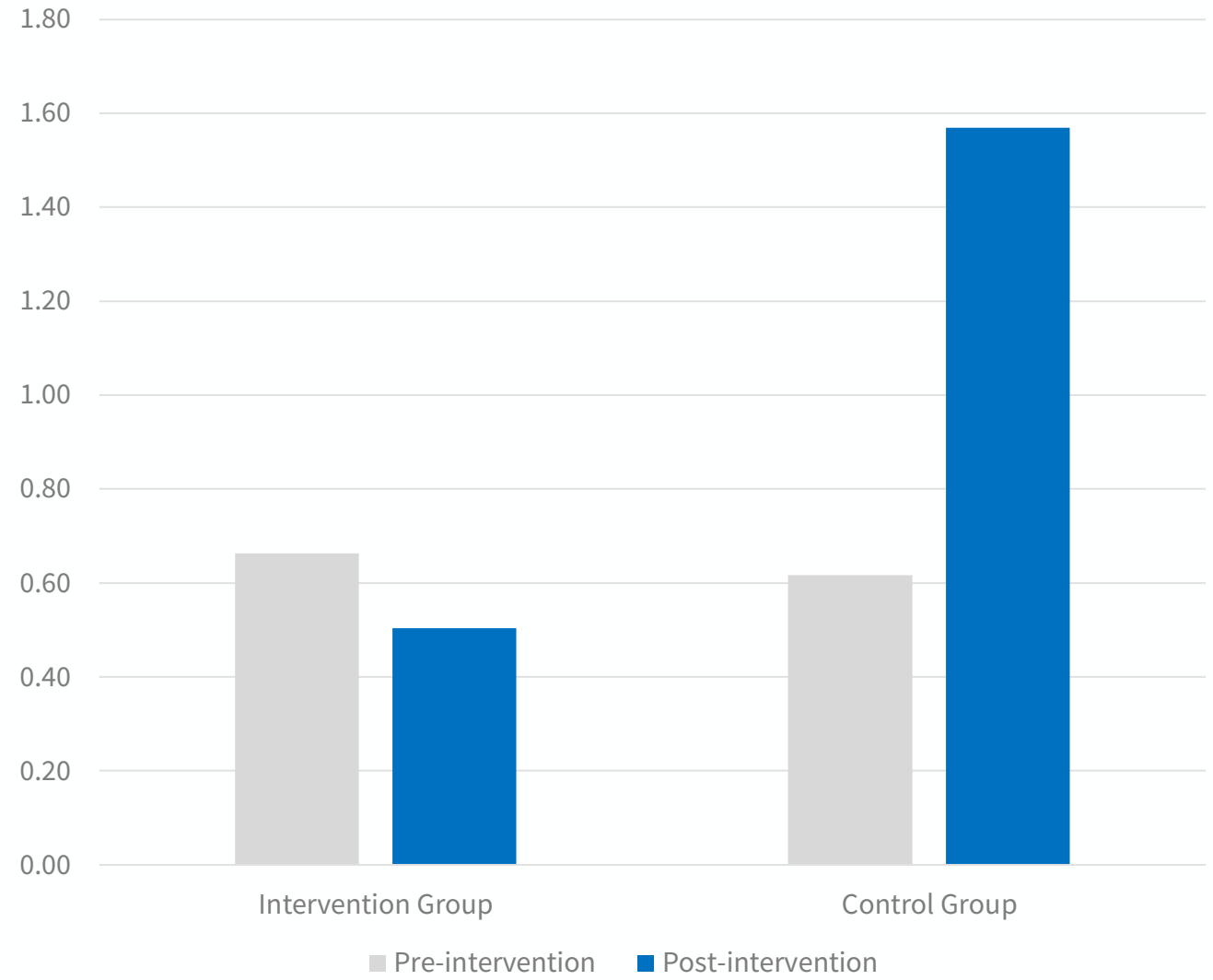
“Historically, it was a HR problem and now we want it to be a collaborative process.”

The evaluation



**RCT
Results**

Exposure to Workplace Bullying



Change process

Changing Culture:

“So it’s not just about the doing of the project, it’s about a way of being, we had a way of being through the project.”

“The vibe in the whole store is a lot more supportive and everyone recognises each other’s hard work no matter what level you’re at.”

“The store just feels more positive now. ”

Creating Safety:

“This project gave staff the chance to really give meaningful solutions in a place that they felt safe and confident to do so.”

“Team members are opening up instead of giving us the cold shoulder, not feeling quite so nervous to say how they are feeling.”

Creating Connection:

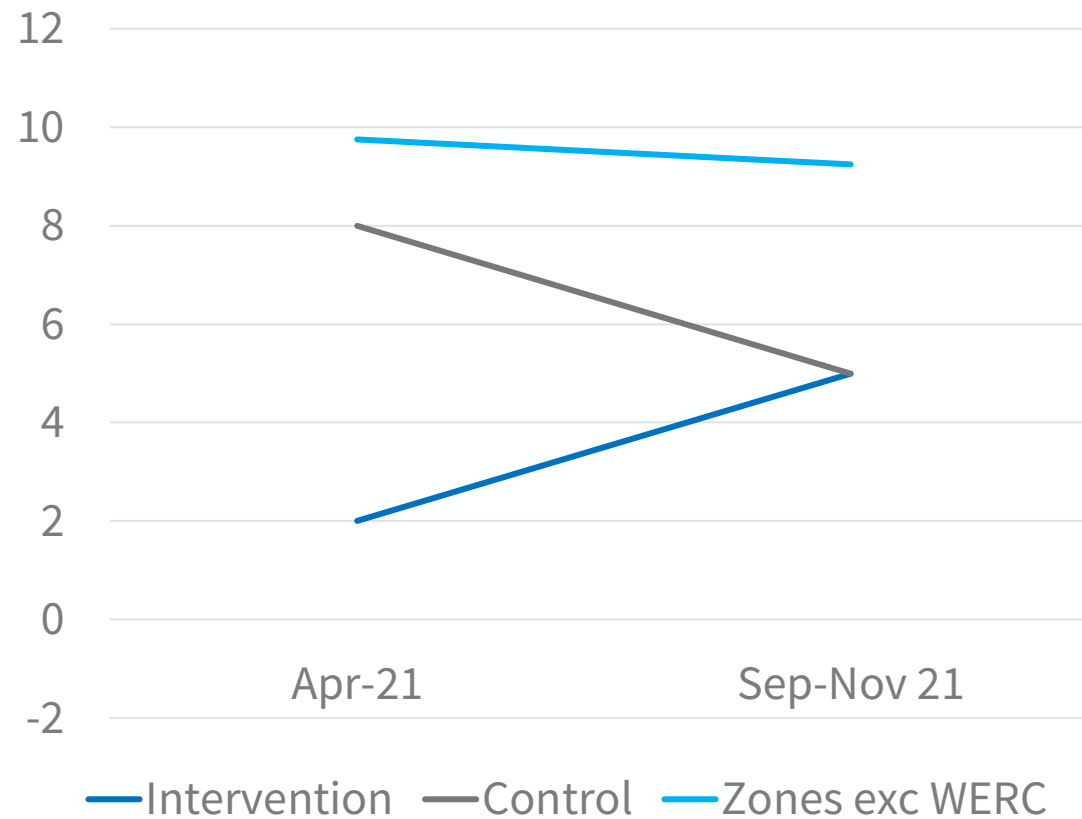
“It went beyond just what the actions were or what the project was... It turned around the view of staff that the managers were there to support them.”

“Everyone is just a lot more supportive. And we have each other’s backs a lot more.”

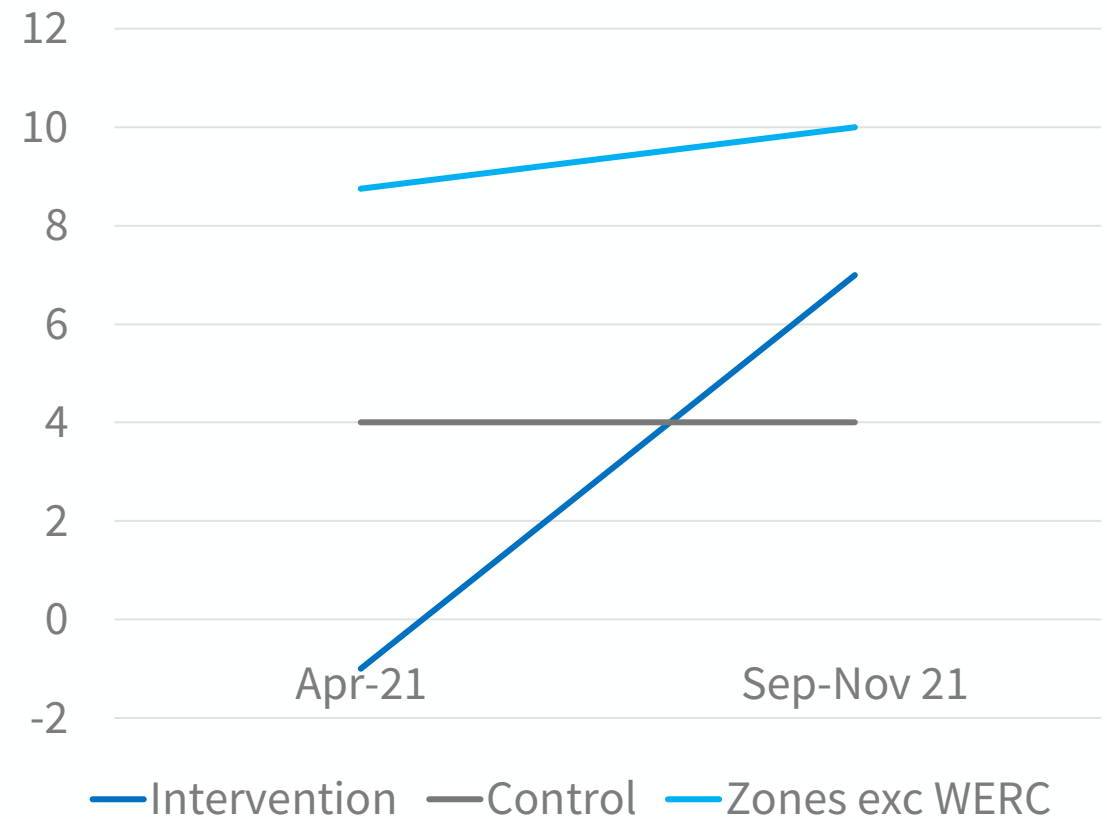
“You’re a team player, not just a department player, you are about the whole store. That’s a big difference I’ve noticed.”

Culture survey results

Advocacy for the **Organisation**

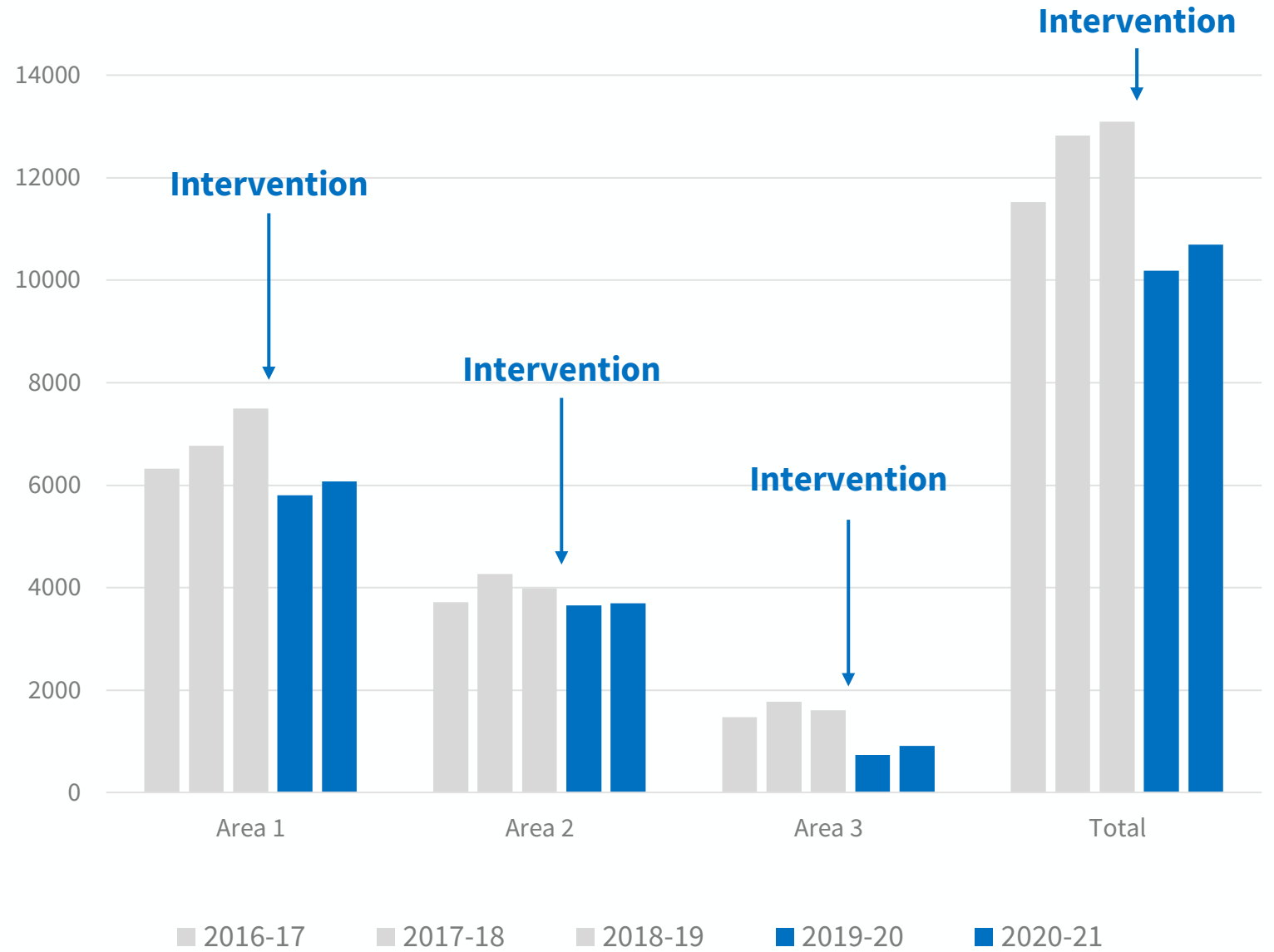


Advocacy for the **Work Area**



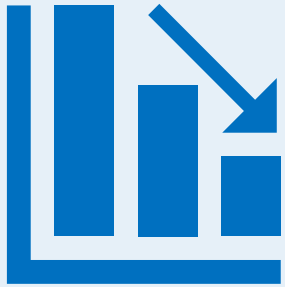
**Sustained
impact**

Incidence of **Absenteeism**



Program results

Teams that participate in the **Healthy Workplaces by Design program** have been shown to have:



34%

less exposure
to bullying

73%

reduction in sexual
harassment complaints

46%

reduction in workplace
bullying complaints

They also have increased happiness, productivity and compliance:



8%

increase in job
satisfaction



16%

decrease in
absenteeism



9%

increase in work
engagement



compliance
requirements met

Meeting the Code of Practice

⚠ Duty Holder Obligations

Identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to psychosocial risks.

Eliminate risks, so far as is reasonably practicable and, if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risks, minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Maintain implemented control measures so they remain effective.

Review, and if necessary revise, control measures so as to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.

Consult with workers when assessing risks or making decisions about the psychosocial risks to health and safety including what control measures are implemented.



✓ Healthy Workplaces by Design

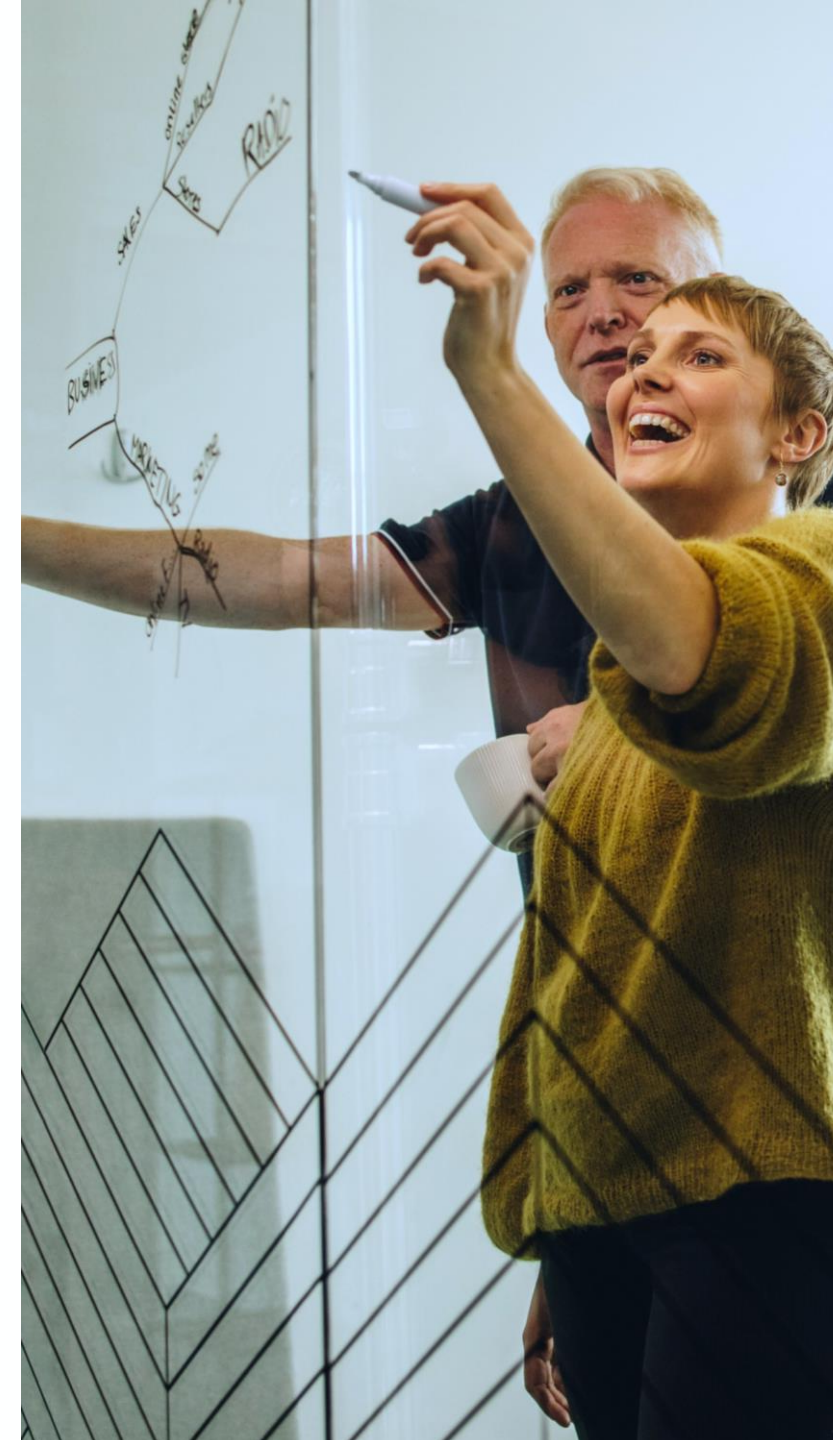
Audit the root causes of harm that give rise to psychosocial hazards and risks.

Develop a range of risk control measures to eliminate and minimise the risk.

Implement and improve control measures over a sustained period of time.

Track progress to identify when control measures should be revised, or a new risk audit initiated.

Engage workers from all levels of the organisation at each stage to shape how psychosocial risks are understood and prevented.



**Why does
it work?**

Success factors



Systems focus on work (re)design



Data-driven process for multi-level action



Meaningful participation from staff at all levels





“The biggest learning for me was just that you can make simple, small interventions that are quite effective and that have quite an impact.”

Government Agency Project Leader

Questions?



Find out more

Scan the QR code to discover how this evidence-based program **developed at UniSA** and **powered by Teamgage** can help you create a **healthy workplace by design**.

