



OUR STATE OF MIND

NATIONAL REPORT 2023

Prepared by Ipsos
and
The B Well Coalition

September 2023



THE
B • WELL
COALITION

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BACKGROUND

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

What we know about mental wellbeing in the workplace...

Currently,

1 IN 5

Australian workers experience a mental health condition.

[\(State of Workplace Mental Health in Australia. Melbourne: Beyond Blue.\)](#)

Australian businesses lose over

\$6.5B

each year by failing to provide early intervention/treatment for employees with mental health conditions.

[\(Mental Health Fact Sheet: Mental Health and Employment, MHCA\)](#)

On average, an ROI of

2.3x

can be expected on every dollar invested in creating a mentally healthy workplace.

[\(Creating a mentally healthy workplace: Return on investment analysis. Melbourne: Beyond Blue.\)](#)

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

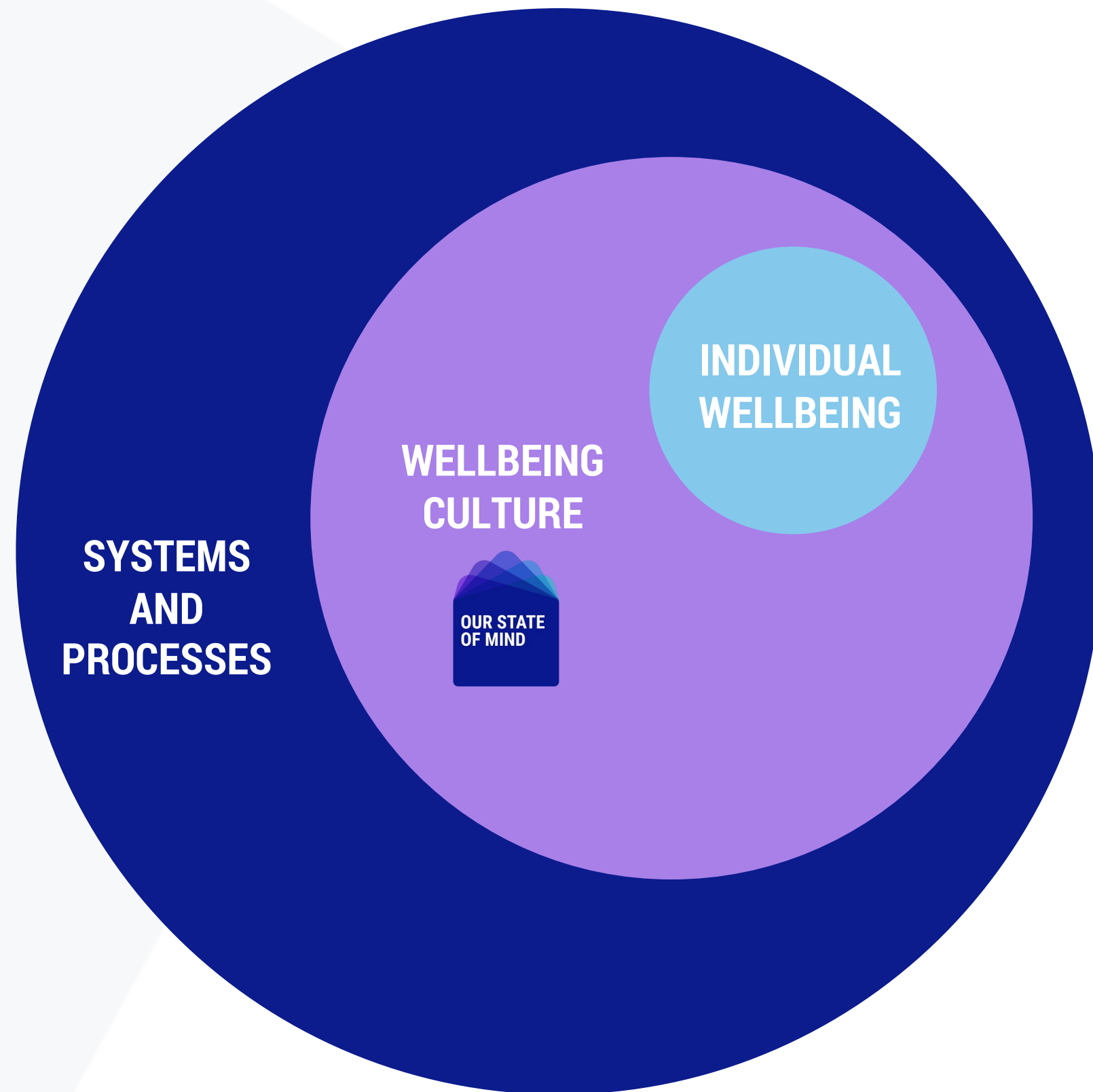
Our State of Mind is an initiative of The B Well Coalition. The B Well Coalition exists to support the leadership of organisations to create mentally well workplaces.

The Coalition is a network of CEOs and delegates across Australasia sharing both best practice and challenges to help foster better mental wellbeing within their organisations. It is a community built on leadership, insights, and collaboration.

The B Well Coalition is part of the B Team Australasia—a regional organisation that actively works with CEOs and leadership teams to enhance how they impact people and the planet. Through coalitions and initiatives, the B Team Australasia tackles complex, global challenges like climate change, mental wellbeing in the workplace, the future of artificial intelligence, and the future of leadership.



RESEARCH BACKGROUND



Upon creating The B Well Coalition, initial research was conducted to better understand the challenge at hand and it was found that generally businesses focus on two areas:

1. The individual wellbeing of each staff member on a case by case basis; and/or
2. The systems and processes in place for mental health e.g. an Employee Assistance Program

However, there is missing information on how workplace culture can influence and impact mental wellbeing and how to proactively create a positive mental wellbeing culture in the workplace.

This is the gap in knowledge that the Our State of Mind study is working fill.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Our State of Mind is a landmark project to help organisations assess and benchmark their mental wellbeing culture. With Ipsos Australia as official research partner, Our State of Mind is a revolutionary, validated approach to understand mental wellbeing needs in the workplace. The survey follows a unique approach which provides the following benefits...



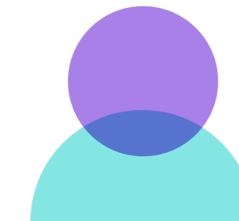
BENCHMARKING

So companies have context to know what their results mean among their peers.



VALIDATED ANALYSIS

A rigorous process was undertaken to develop the survey tool in this new area of research.



ANONYMITY AND INDEPENDENCE

Developed and executed by independent research company Ipsos, employees were assured of their anonymity with an independent inquiry into their workplace.



NATIONAL COORDINATION

The national benchmark was undertaken at the same time as the companies who joined to have their employees participate.



UNCOVERING BEST PRACTICE

Companies who perform well in different areas of mental wellbeing culture will share what they do to achieve this.



A CELEBRATION OF EFFORT

The study also allows a rare shared celebration of effort in an uncompetitive environment of collaboration.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research had a three phased approach. This report covers phase two – the benchmark results.

1 PILOTING

There were several rounds of piloting conducted to develop the final survey tool. The final and most significant pilot was conducted in 2021 with:

n=231 participants

4+ organisations

30+ minute questionnaire

2 BENCHMARKING

After refining the questionnaire a benchmarking study was conducted with a nationally representative panel of Australian employees.

n=2,011 participants

Nationally representative panel

10 minute questionnaire

3 COMPARING

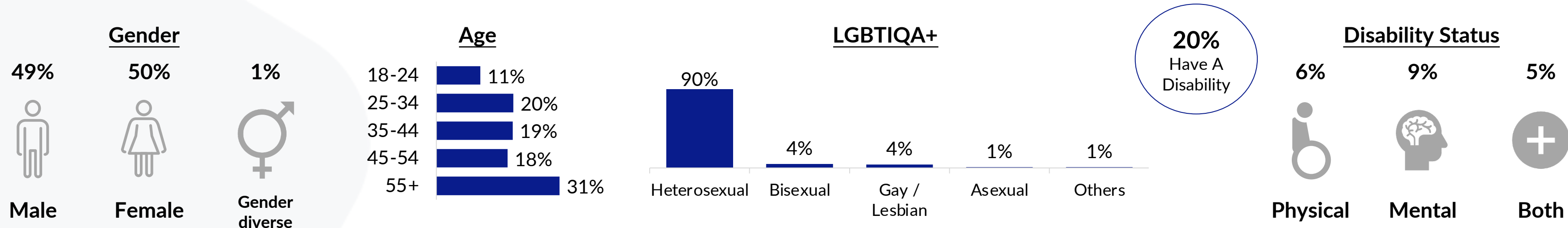
This survey was also conducted with participating organisations to understand how they compare to the benchmark.

n=715 participants

9 organisations

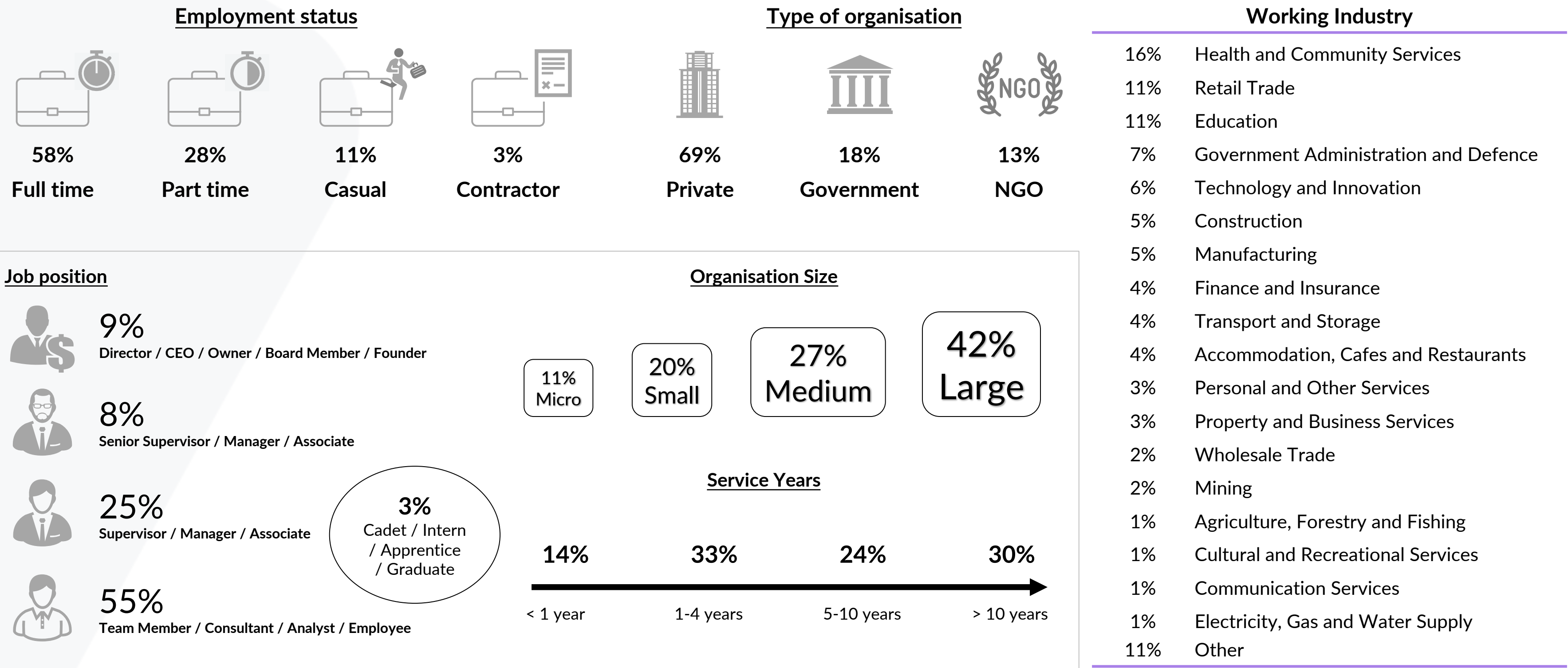
WHO PARTICIPATED

A nationally representative online survey of n=2,011 Australian employees aged 18+ years.



WHERE THEY WORK

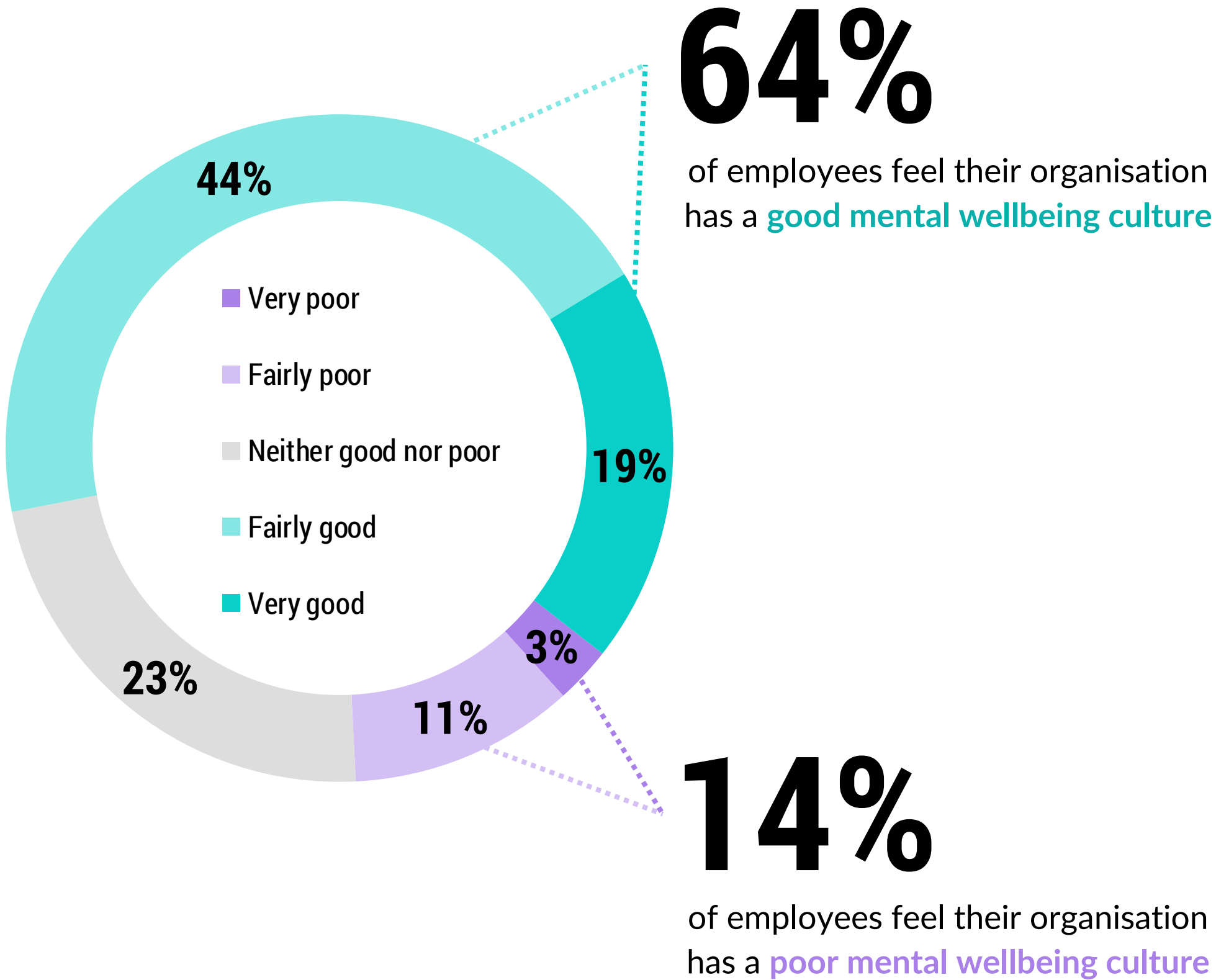
A nationally representative online survey of n=2,011 Australian employees aged 18+ years.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

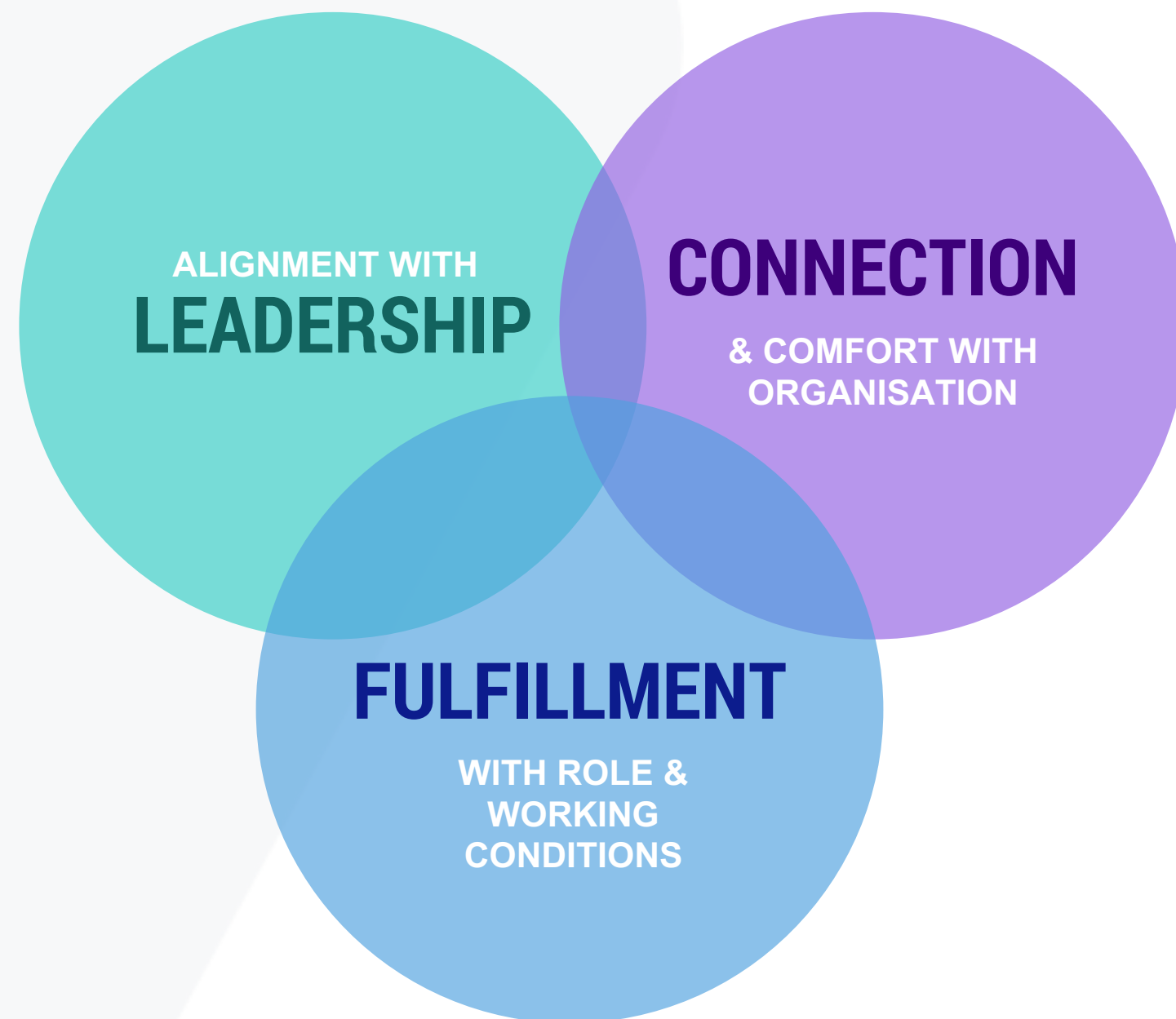
WHAT IS THE CURRENT 'STATE OF MIND'?

- Almost **two-thirds of Australian employees perceive a positive mental wellbeing culture** in their workplace, compared to 14% who experience poor mental wellbeing culture. This is the 2023 benchmark against which Australian organisations can track progress towards fostering positive environments that reduce the impact of poor mental wellbeing in the workplace.
- While encouraging overall, **diverse employees**, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, **tend to experience poorer mental wellbeing culture** in the workplace. This is also true for employees who: are female, identify as LGBTIQ+ or have a physical or mental disability. There is work needed to improve the experiences of these cohorts of Australian employees.
- Additionally, **those who have less control over their working environment also report a poorer mental wellbeing culture**, particularly employees in non-management roles, larger organisations, or the public sector - particularly those in health and community services.



WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE?

There are three broad domains that drive mental wellbeing culture: **Leadership, Connection and Fulfillment**. The research identifies the areas that workplaces should prioritise to drive positive mental wellbeing culture.



Effective leadership, that is the extent to which an individual feels aligned with the leadership around them, is the **strongest determinant of whether an individual experiences positive or negative mental wellbeing culture**. All seven specific elements that make up the Leadership domain, are in the top 10 drivers of mental wellbeing culture. There are **three priority areas of leadership** to focus on:

- **The strongest driver of mental wellbeing culture is the extent to which leaders do what they say they will and align actions with words.** Organisations that have the right policies in place and make verbal commitments to wellbeing but fail to follow through with action, or don't make decisions based on these values, will ultimately fail to create a positive mental wellbeing culture.
- **How organisations manage conflict is critical to their ability to create a positive mental wellbeing culture.** Everything else an organisation does to try and build this positive culture can be undone if it does not manage conflict in a way that is transparent, consistent and fair.
- **Mental wellbeing culture is also strongly influenced by how organisations approach change**, specifically whether or not they support and encourage new ideas, and seek to challenge the status quo and do things better. The extent to which organisations do these things well is a tangible way for leaders to show individuals they are valued and visible.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE?

The **Connection** domain focuses on how connected individuals feel with the broader organisation and how comfortable they are to truly be themselves. While less important than Leadership overall, there are **two specific Connection behaviours that are critical to building a positive mental wellbeing culture.**

- **The most influential part of the Connection domain is the extent to which organisations actively support inclusion and diversity.** While this is one of the strongest performing areas across the study with net agreement of +63, the results should be considered in the context that Australian employees from priority diversity segments are the most likely to experience poor mental wellbeing culture. This suggests organisations need to continue focusing on diversity and inclusion.
- **The lowest performing measure across the study is in the Connection domain and is the extent to which an individual feels comfortable being vulnerable within the organisation.** While a lower driver of mental wellbeing culture alone, willingness to be vulnerable is strongly linked with the extent to which leaders are seen as role models. As such, those organisations that can increase positive mental wellbeing role modelling in their leaders, may be able to unlock the power of vulnerability across their organisations.

The **Fulfilment** domain refers to how fulfilled individuals are with **the actual work they do** and how satisfied they are with their role and the conditions the work in. The elements that make up the Fulfilment domain all tend to fall towards the bottom of the rank ordered list of drivers of mental wellbeing culture.

- **Importantly, this does not mean these factors don't matter to Australian employees. Rather, they can be seen as hygiene factors,** or table stakes representing the base expectations of organisations in 2023.
- Organisations should continue to focus on the purpose behind work, empower employees to work in their preferred way and manage their own workload. These elements directly impact the extent to which individuals look forward to work, which does in turn impact mental wellbeing culture. However, this focus on the day to day must be complemented with the focus on Leadership and Connection activity.

Food for thought

Our State of Mind and the B Well Coalition are designed to inspire action.

Readers of this report are encouraged to consider the questions below in the context of their own organisation, and think about what steps they might take to help foster a more positive mental wellbeing culture.

**How do we manage
conflict as an
organisation?**

**Do we follow
through on the
promises we make?**

**How do we unlock
the power of
vulnerability?**

**How do we make
our people feel
valued?**

**How do we speak
and live inclusion
and diversity?**

MEASURING MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

DEFINING MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

Driven by data, a definition for this new term of ‘mental wellbeing culture’ was developed from the pilot study results:

*“Mental wellbeing culture covers the **broader contextual and environmental factors** within a workplace that influence people’s mental health and mental wellbeing. A positive mental wellbeing workplace culture is where you feel the organisation **understands, cares about, and behaves** in a way that supports the mental wellbeing of its employees.”*

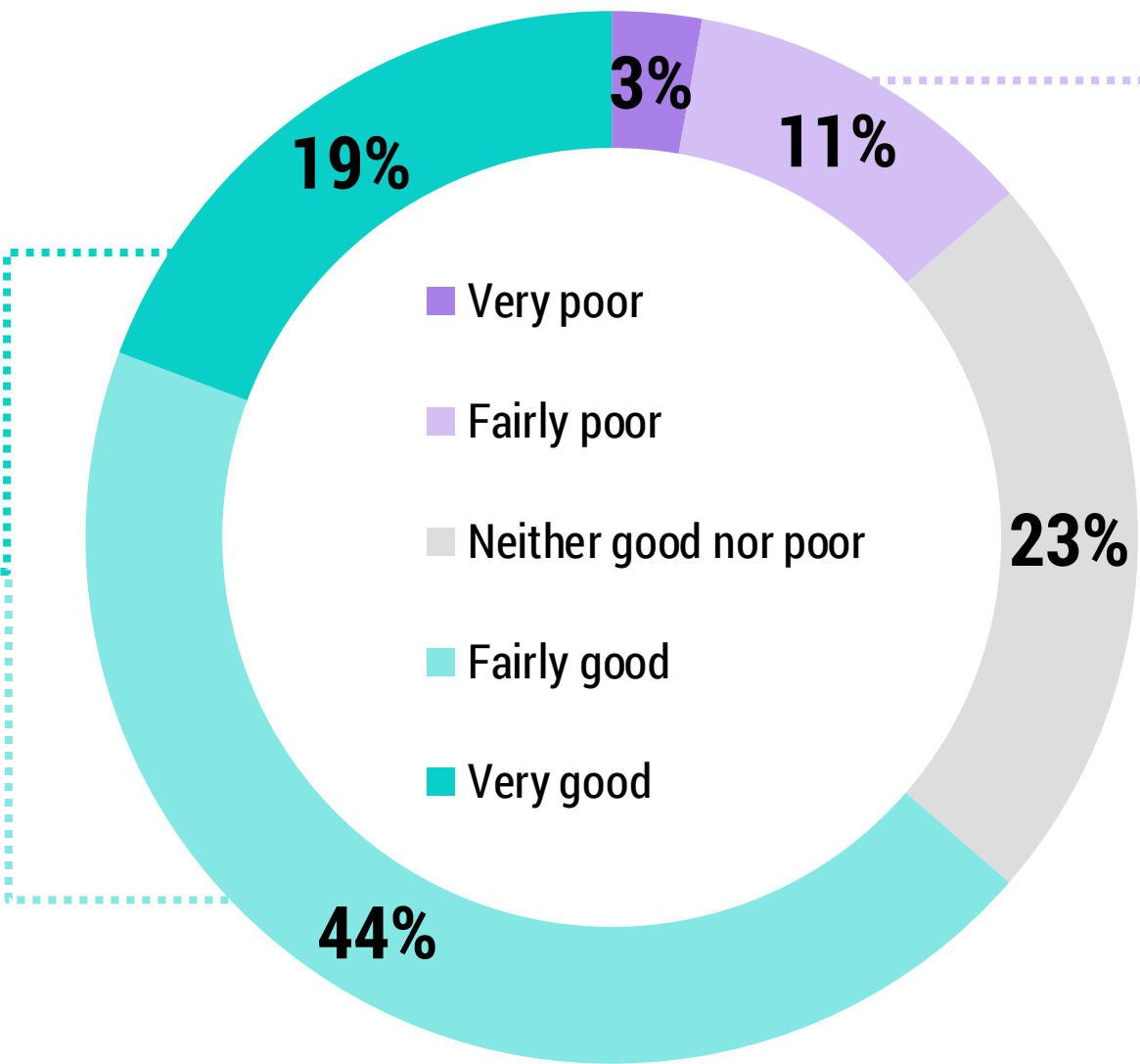
With this definition in mind, participants were asked to identify how they would rate the current mental wellbeing culture in the organisation they work for on a five point scale:



OVERALL MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE PERFORMANCE

The results show that almost two thirds of Australian employees perceive the organisation they work for has a positive mental wellbeing culture. However there is room for improvement with the remaining third.

64%
of employees feel their organisation has a **good mental wellbeing culture**

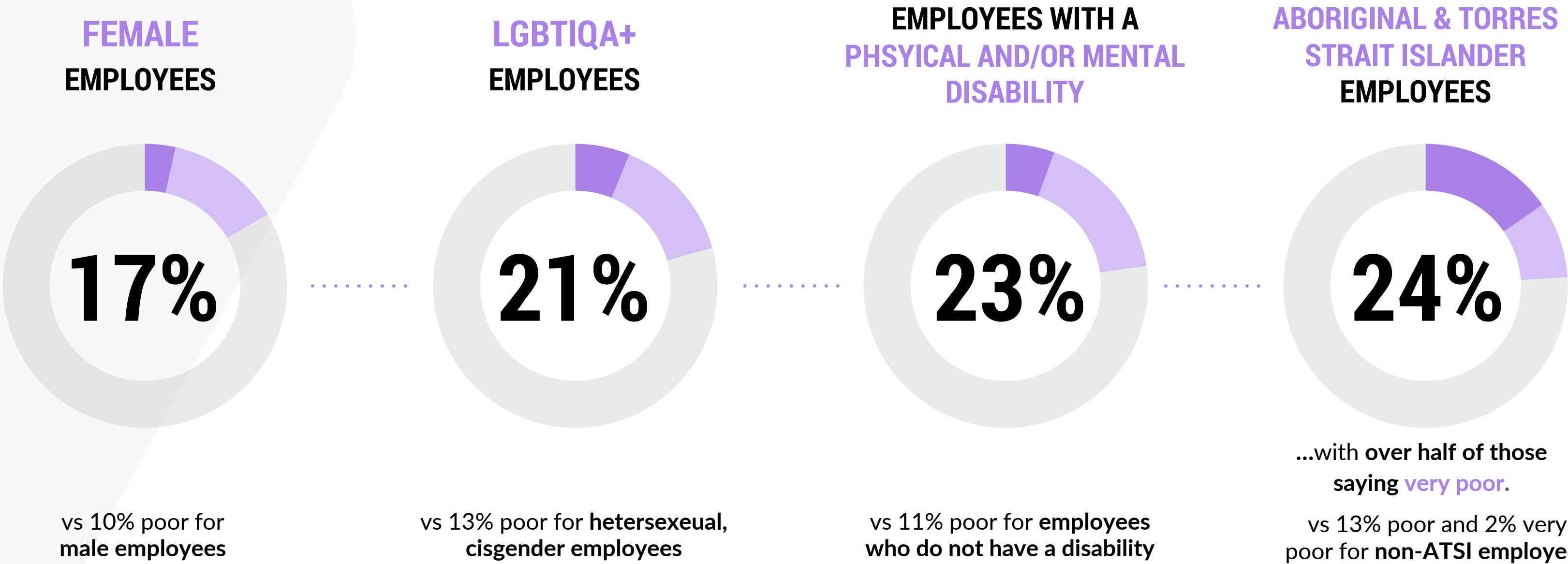


14%
of employees feel their organisation has a **poor mental wellbeing culture**

DIVERSITY FACTORS

Employees with diverse backgrounds tend to experience a greater sense of poor mental wellbeing culture in their workplace than others. This is particularly evident for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

Poor mental wellbeing culture is significantly more likley to be experienced by...



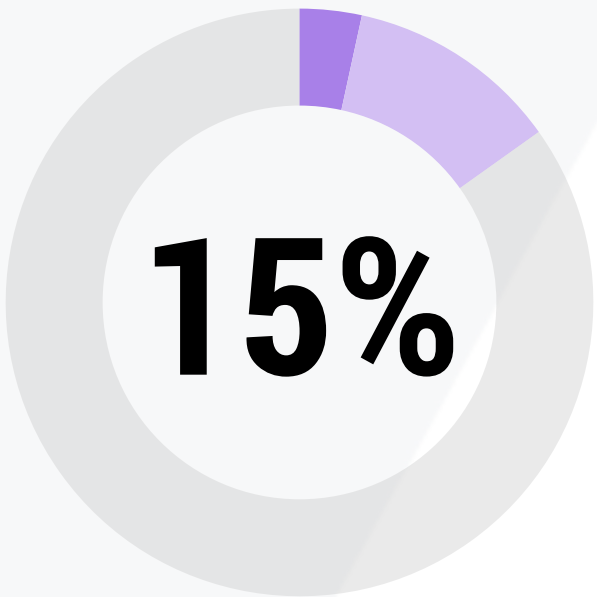
Q1. With this definition in mind, how would you rate the current mental wellbeing culture in the organisation you work for? | SQ2. How would you describe your gender identity? | D2. Which of the following best describes you? | D3. Do you currently identify with having a physical or mental disability? | D1. Which cultural background(s) do you identify with?
Base n=2,011.

WORKPLACE FACTORS

Workplace factors also play a role with those who have less control over their working environment perceiving a poorer mental wellbeing culture.

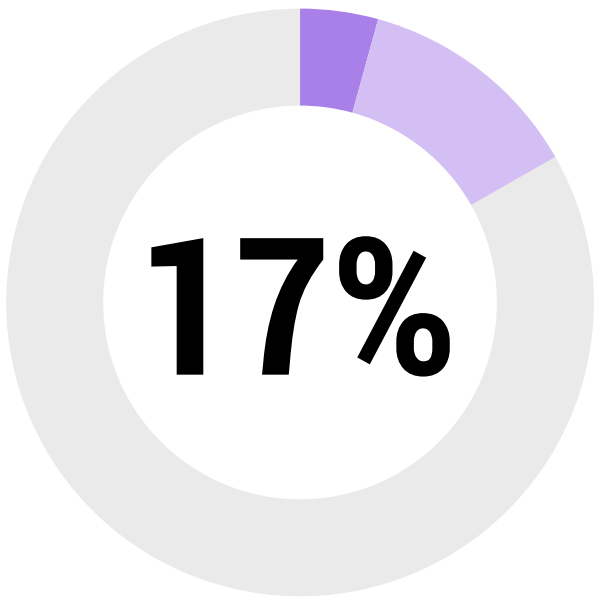
Poor mental wellbeing culture is significantly more likley to be experienced by...

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR
EMPLOYEES



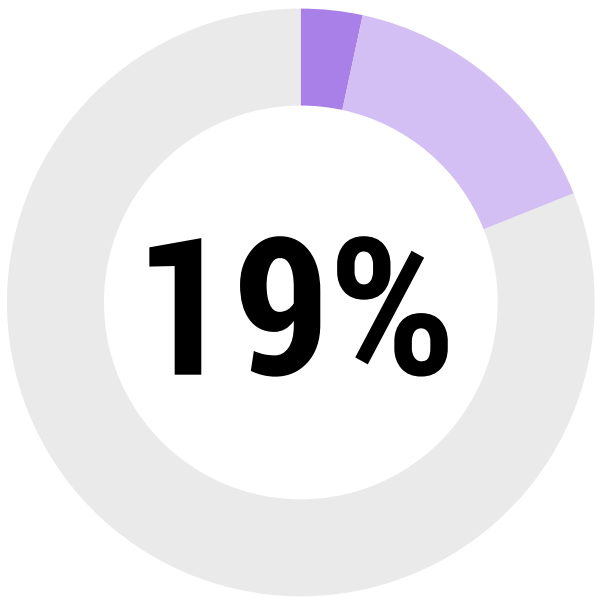
vs only 7% of directors,
founders, CEOs, and board
members feel this way

EMPLOYEES IN LARGER
ORGANISATIONS



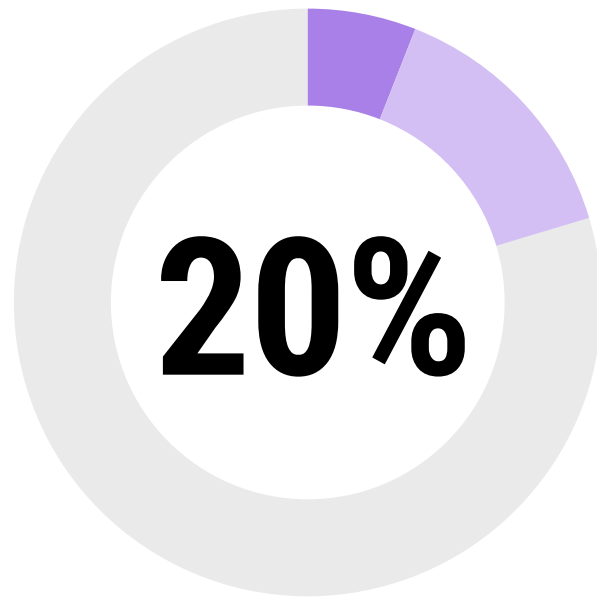
vs 14% Medium, 10% Small,
6% Micro-businesses

PUBLIC SECTOR
EMPLOYEES



vs 12% employees who
work for private businesses

HEALTH & COMMUNITY
SERVICE EMPLOYEES



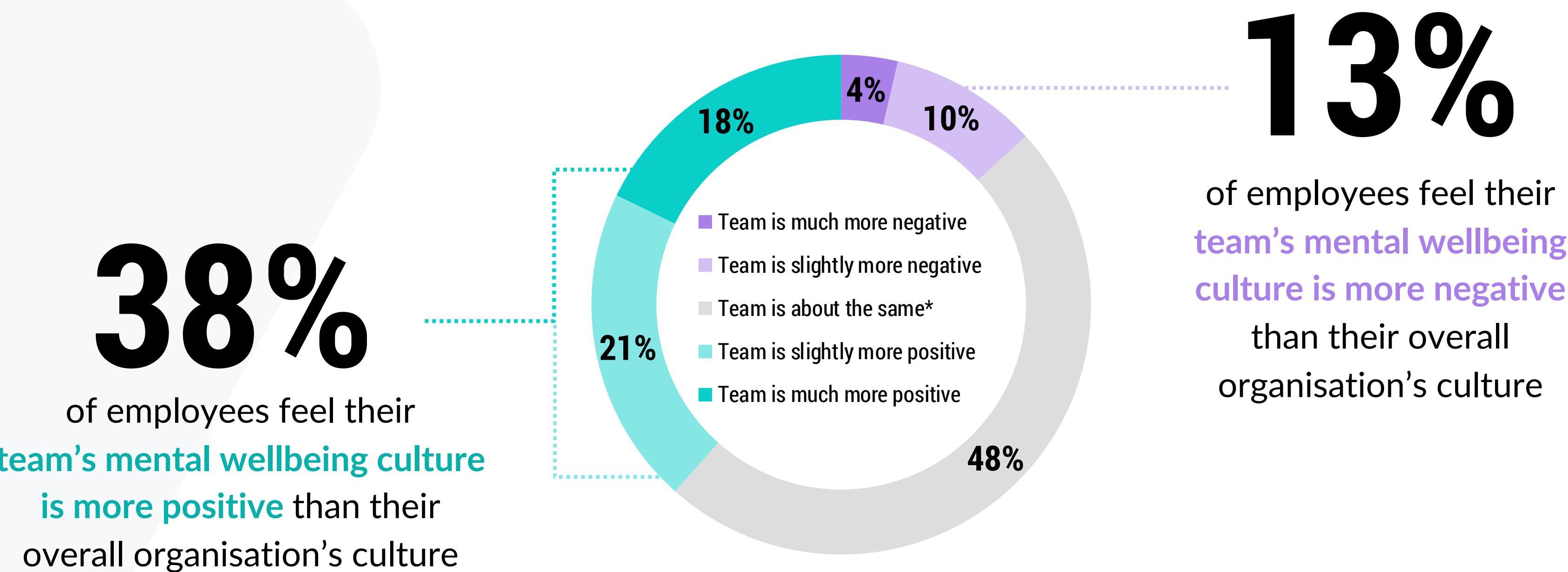
vs 12% for
other industries

Q1. With this definition in mind, how would you rate the current mental wellbeing culture in the organisation you work for? | F13. Which industry do you work in? | F14. Which of the following best describes the organisation you work for? | F14.1 Which of the following best describes the organisation you work for? | F3.4 Which best describes your position at work? Base: n=2,011.



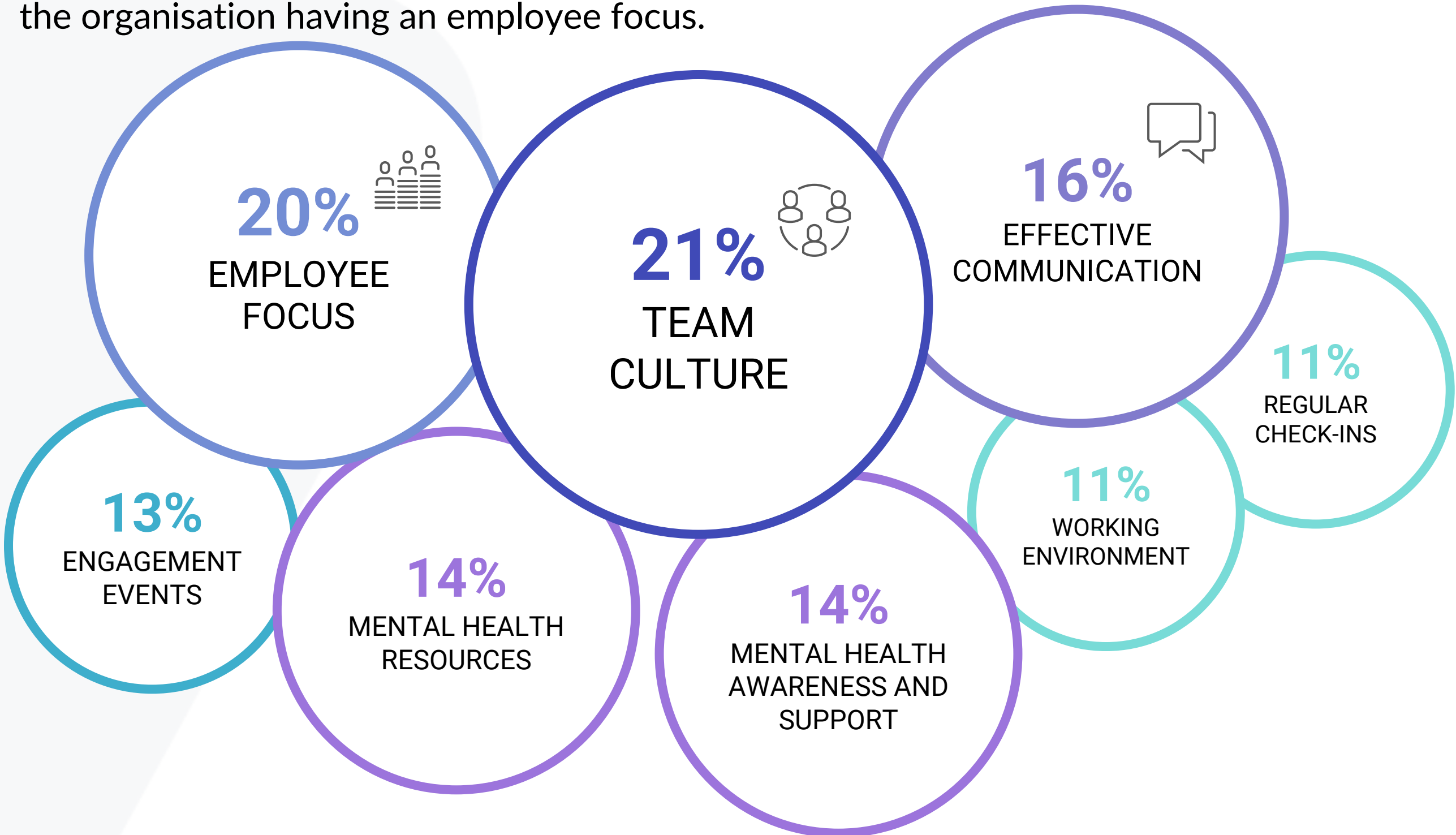
ORGANISATION VS TEAM MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

The team environment does have an impact on the mental wellbeing culture an individual experiences with over half of employees feeling their team’s culture is either more positive or less positive than the organisation.



TOP OF MIND REASONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

When asked to describe what their workplace is doing to foster positive mental wellbeing culture, Australian employees identify strong team culture, effective communication and the organisation having an employee focus.



Talking positives...

Establish a safe space for people to talk about their mental health. A workplace culture where employees feel that they can be themselves, can make it feel easier to speak out, without fear of judgment or repercussions.

Actively supports and promotes **inclusion and diversity** in the workplace. Runs formal training sessions related to health and wellbeing topics.

Creating a positive environment where people **gather and share thoughts**, where people are heard and feel valued.

Lots of avenues to **educate oneself and seek help for one's mental health**. It is a topic that is actively spoken about.

TOP OF MIND REASONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

Team Culture (21%)

A strong team culture requires investment in relationships to ensure a friendly, supportive and respectful environment

Friendly / being easy going / no judgement

7%

Looking out for each other / support

5%

Team building exercises

4%

Teamwork with common goal

3%

Treated with respect and kindness

2%

Talking team culture...



We should have good quality of environment that support our works and build healthy communications and connections each other.

Employee Focus (20%)

An employee focus means listening and developing trust with employees so that they are appreciated and supported

Listen to employees / free speech

6%

Feeling trusted / valued / appreciated

6%

Good work life balance / employee health

5%

Being there for employees

2%

Allowed to be yourself

2%

Talking employee focus...



The door of all my superiors is open at all times for my problems. Ask questions on what there able to do different to accommodate my needs and constantly ask if I am ok.

Effective Communication (16%)

Effective communication requires transparency, feedback and conflict resolution

Open, transparent, healthy communication

10%

Communication with internal stakeholders

2%

Sharing ideas / resolve conflicts

2%

Regular feedback / communication

2%

Others on effective communication

2%

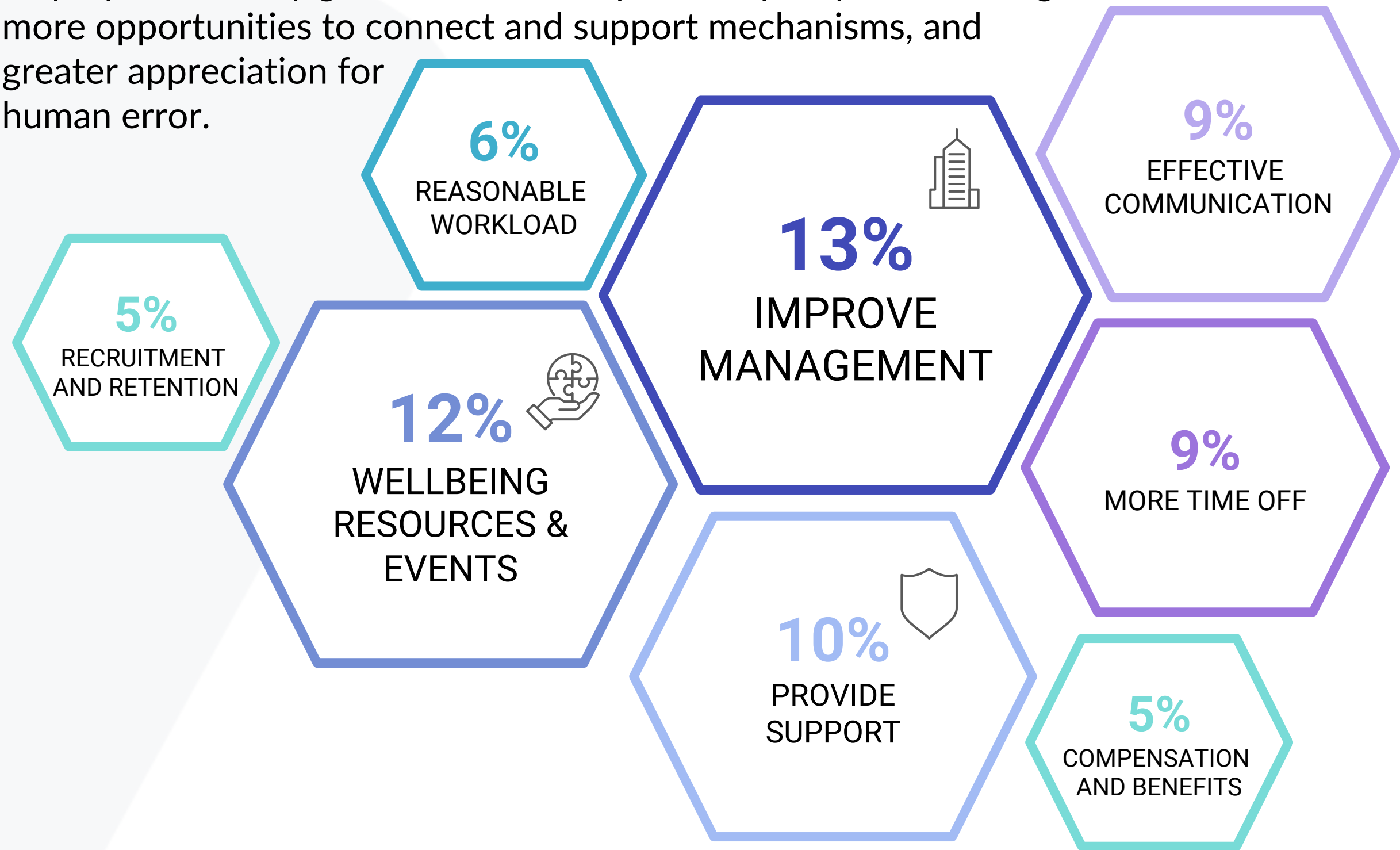
Talking effective communication...



Being open, available and approachable. Regular correspondence and communication, reminders that help is available whenever needed.

TOP OF MIND OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

When asked what can be done to improve mental wellbeing culture, Australian employees identify greater consistency and empathy from managers, more opportunities to connect and support mechanisms, and greater appreciation for human error.



Talking opportunities...

Management should lead by example by **openly prioritising their own mental wellbeing** and demonstrating **the importance of work-life balance**.

Just be **aware and listen to employee's feelings** sometimes what happens at work affects them mentally too.

An **open relationship** with the ability to have your say without fear of dismissal.

Have a monthly meeting with all staff and **make everybody feel included and up to date** with what is going on in the company

Regular training in mental health in the workplace. We do online courses, but it would be good to do group sessions to get instant feedback that specifically relates to our role.

TOP OF MIND OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE



Improve Management (13%)

- 4% More support and trust from management
- 3% Request a change in management
- 3% More competent, positive, humble management

Those who seek improved management want greater support, competency, and humble management. In critical cases, they also request a change in leadership.

Having management understand the needs and limitations of the staff, be more willing to review policy when required, be able to act according to employee feedback and creating an environment in which the staff member can come forward regarding mental health.



Wellbeing Resources & Events (12%)

- 4% More social interaction events
- 3% Access to EAP support / mental health services / mental health related education
- 2% Onsite counsellor / free counselling / having more dedicated staff

Wellbeing resources and events focus areas include more social events, greater accessibility to EAP and mental health services as well as counselling services.

More education in the workplace about mental wellbeing & what is available to staff who need help.



Provide Support (10%)

- 3% Support in dealing with conflict management / stress / mental health
- 3% Listening actively and speak up culture
- 2% More empathetic / inclusive / encouragement / acceptance of people

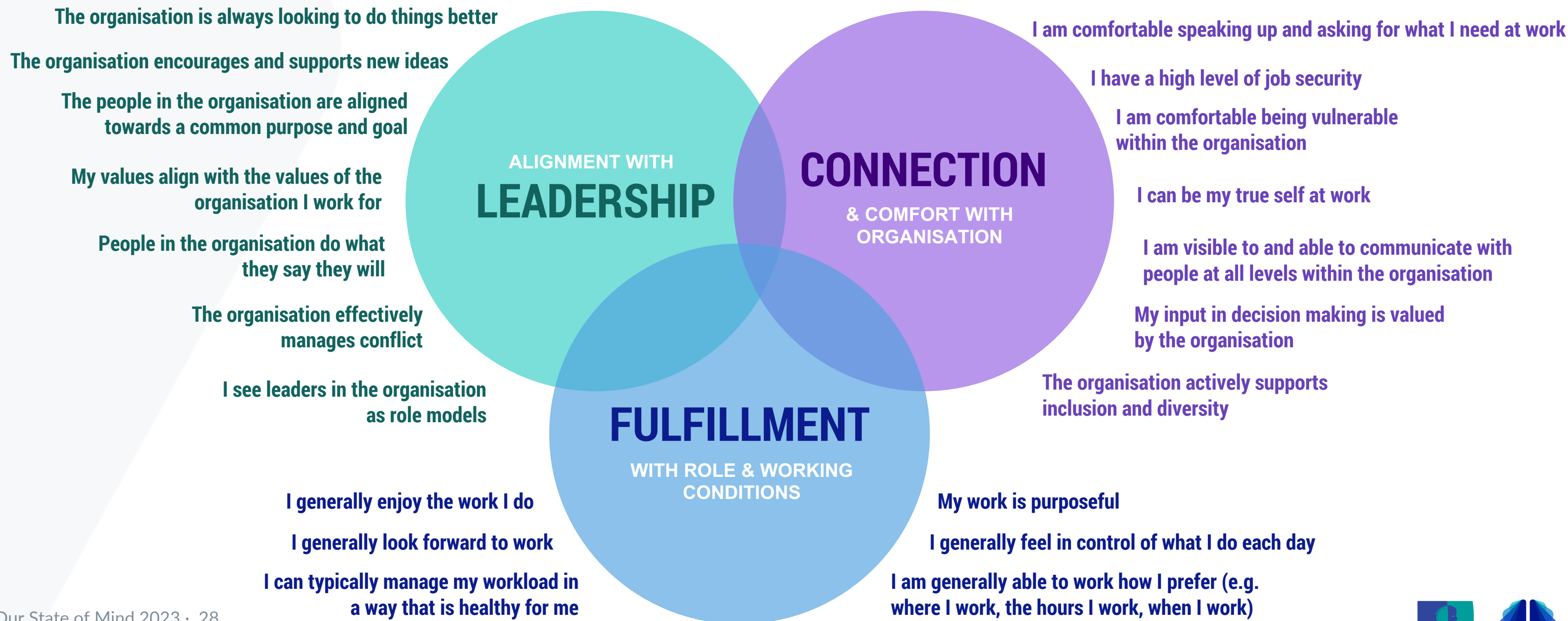
Those seeking more support want assistance with conflict and stress management, active listening culture, and greater empathy and inclusivity.

Genuinely make more of an effort to support those under pressure. More access to mental health services and make it more acceptable to take time off.

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

DOMAINS THAT DRIVE MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

Developed from the 2022 pilot study, the below three domains and 20 statements are the key drivers of mental wellbeing culture in the workplace. There is alignment with the top of mind comments from Australian workers about what is needed to create a positive mental wellbeing culture (see pages 23-26), further validating the model.



TOP 10 DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

Domain	Rank	Driver
Leadership	1	People in the organisation do what they say they will
Leadership	2	The organisation effectively manages conflict
Leadership	3	The organisation encourages and supports new ideas
Connection	4	The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversity
Leadership	5	I see leaders in the organisation as role models
Leadership	6	The organisation is always looking to do things better
Leadership	7	The people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goal
Leadership	8	My values align with the values of the organisation I work for
Fulfillment	9	I generally look forward to work
Connection	10	My input in decision making is valued by the organisation



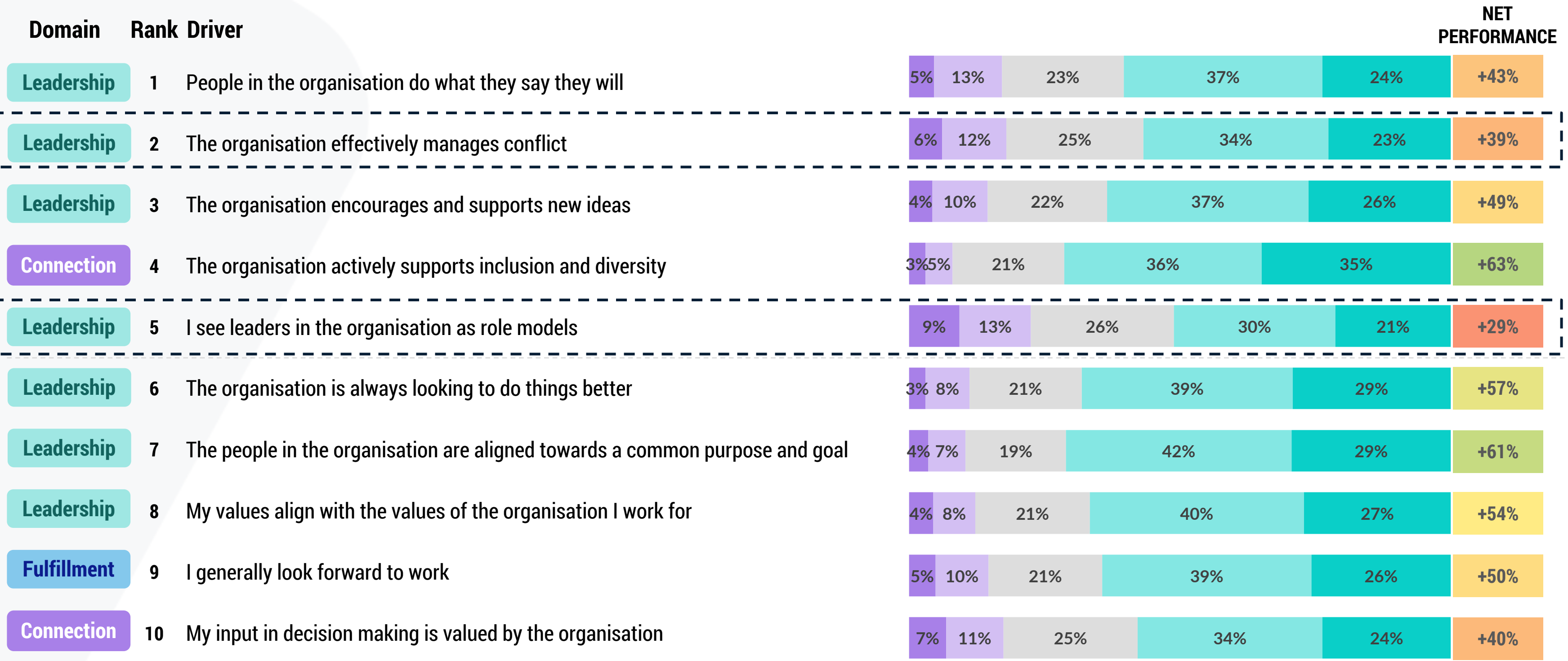
Effective leadership is the strongest driver of mental wellbeing culture in the workplace while employees' personal fulfillment is less influential.

Leaders in the organisation, at all levels, following through on promises, managing conflict effectively, encouraging new ideas and role modelling have the greatest impact in forming positive mental wellbeing.

Inclusion, diversity and input into decision making are the strongest drivers to make an individual feel connected to the organisation. Only one personal fulfillment factor falls in the top 10 drivers.

TOP 10 DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

Overall, Australian employees have high agreement that their organisations are fulfilling these top 10 drivers of mental wellbeing culture. Conflict management and role modelling have the most room to improve.



DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

	Rank	Driver	NET PERFORMANCE
Leadership Domain	1	People in the organisation do what they say they will	+43%
Leadership Domain	2	The organisation effectively manages conflict	+39%
Leadership Domain	3	The organisation encourages and supports new ideas	+49%
Connection Domain	4	The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversity	+63%
Leadership Domain	5	I see leaders in the organisation as role models	+29%
Leadership Domain	6	The organisation is always looking to do things better	+57%
Leadership Domain	7	The people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goal	+61%
Leadership Domain	8	My values align with the values of the organisation I work for	+54%
Fulfillment Domain	9	I generally look forward to work	+50%
Connection Domain	10	My input in decision making is valued by the organisation	+40%
Fulfillment Domain	11	I generally feel in control of what I do each day	+63%
Connection Domain	12	I am comfortable speaking up and asking for what I need at work	+58%
Connection Domain	13	I can be my true self at work	+56%
Fulfillment Domain	14	I can typically manage my workload in a way that is healthy for me	+64%
Fulfillment Domain	15	I generally enjoy the work I do	+71%
Connection Domain	16	I am visible to and able to communicate with people at all levels within the organisation	+54%
Connection Domain	17	I am comfortable being vulnerable within the organisation	+17%
Fulfillment Domain	18	My work is purposeful	+73%
Fulfillment Domain	19	I am generally able to work how I prefer (e.g. where I work, the hours I work, when I work etc.)	+39%
Connection Domain	20	I have a high level of job security	+51%

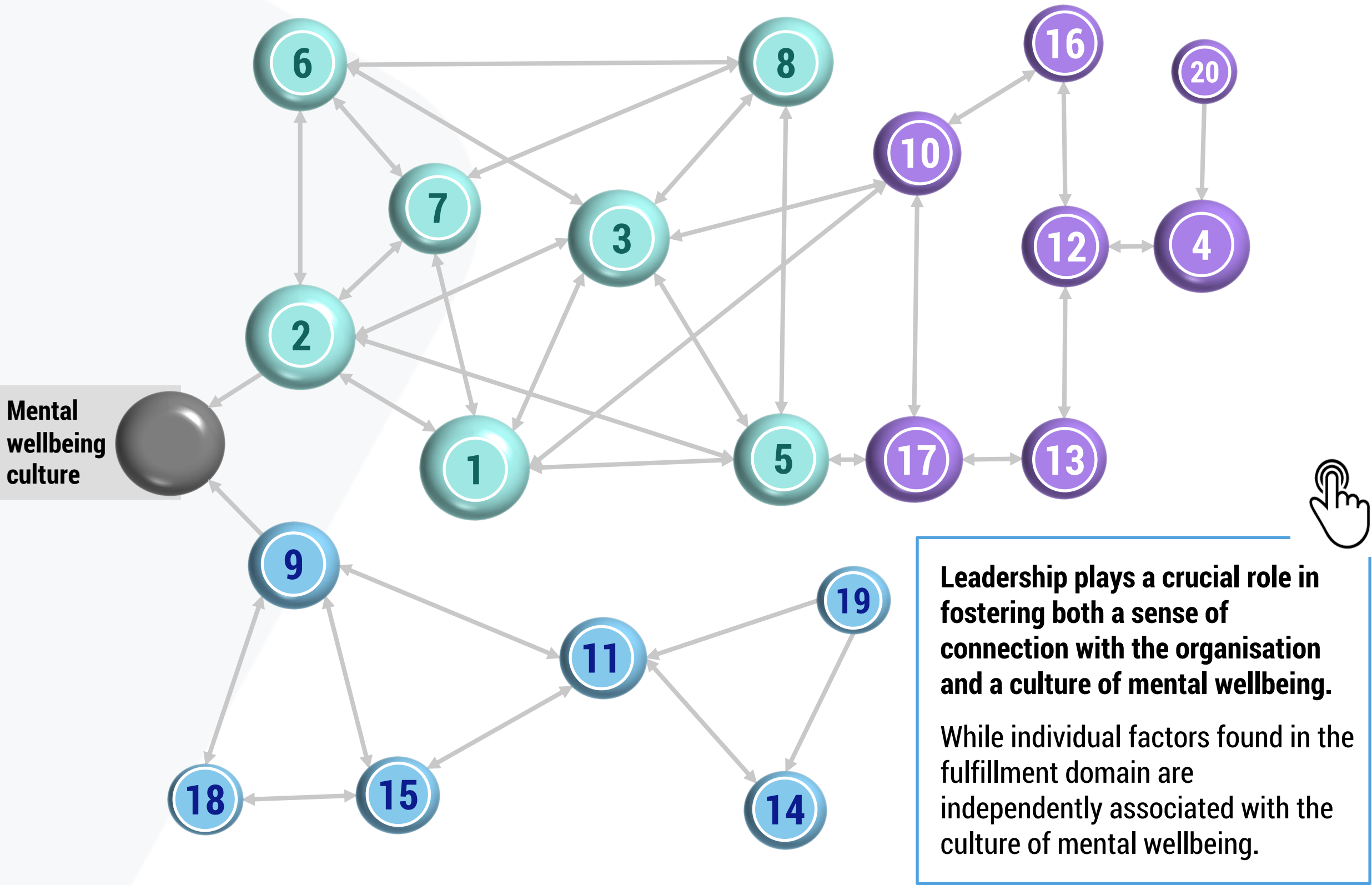


Vulnerability performs the poorest for Australian employees, highlighting an opportunity.

While lower down in the list of drivers, comfort with being vulnerable within an organisation has the most room for improvement.

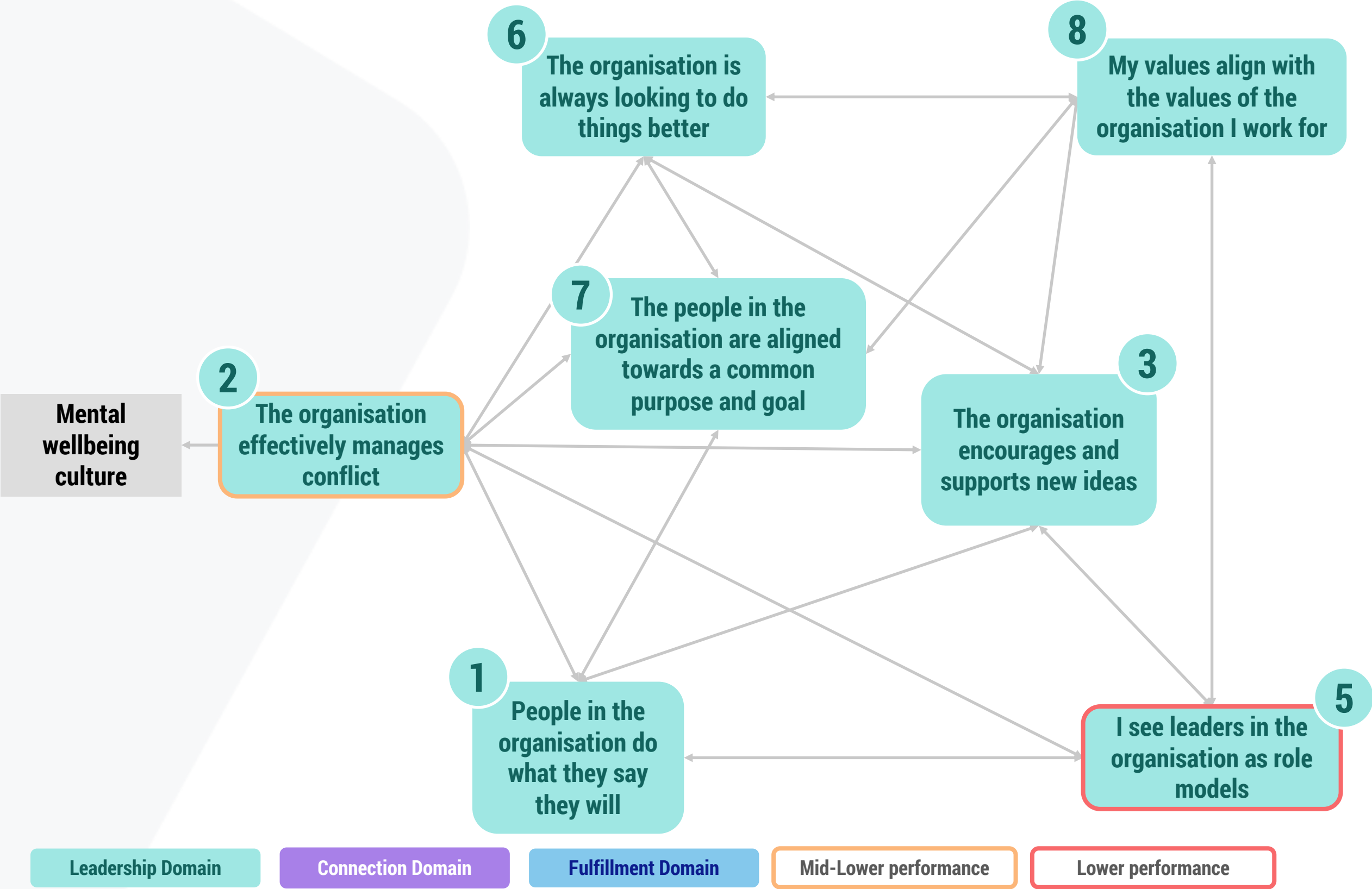
Nonetheless, there is agreement across all 20 measures indicating that Australian employees generally enjoy the work that they do and find it purposeful.

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE



- 1 People in the organisation do what they say they will
- 2 The organisation effectively manages conflict
- 3 The organisation encourages and supports new ideas
- 4 The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversity
- 5 I see leaders in the organisation as role models
- 6 The organisation is always looking to do things better
- 7 The people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goal
- 8 My values align with the values of the organisation I work for
- 9 I generally look forward to work
- 10 My input in decision making is valued by the organisation
- 11 I generally feel in control of what I do each day
- 12 I am comfortable speaking up and asking for what I need at work
- 13 I can be my true self at work
- 14 I can typically manage my workload in a way that is healthy for me
- 15 I generally enjoy the work I do
- 16 I am visible to and able to communicate with people at all levels within the organisation
- 17 I am comfortable being vulnerable within the organisation
- 18 My work is purposeful
- 19 I am generally able to work how I prefer (e.g. where I work, the hours I work, when I work)
- 20 I have a high level of job security

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE



Leadership factors are all interconnected but the critical determiner of mental wellbeing culture is effectively managing conflict.

Leadership is highly influential on mental wellbeing culture with all seven leadership attributes appearing in the top 10 drivers. Drivers within the leadership domain have strong reciprocal relationships with each area influencing the other back and forth.

However, if conflict is not managed effectively, all other leadership efforts will be diminished for Australian employees.

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE

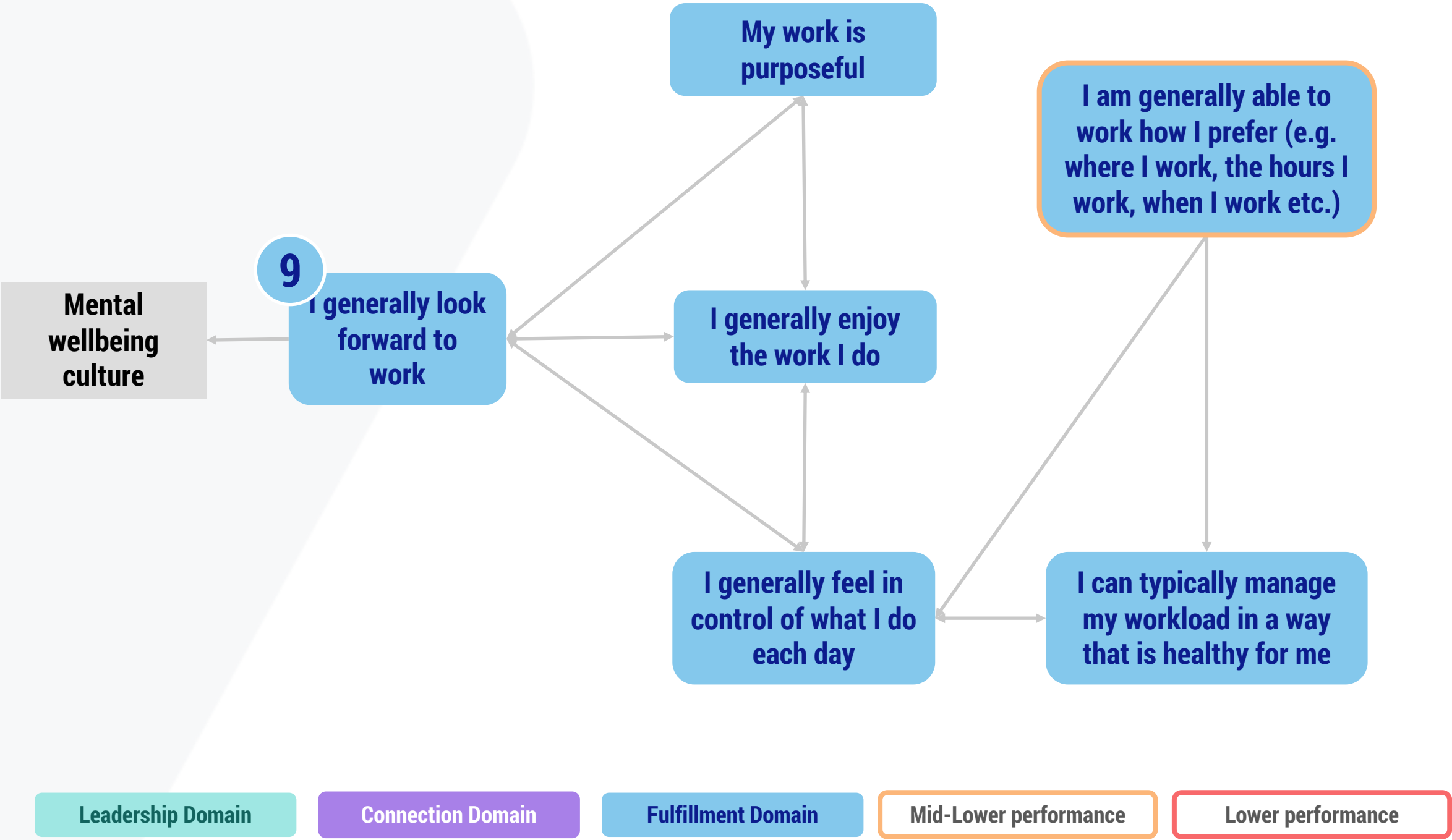


Effective leadership connects employees to the organisation through two distinct pathways, ultimately leading to the promotion of inclusion and diversity.

Connection feeds into leadership through two paths:

1. When the organisation encourages new ideas and follows through on promises employees feel their input into decision making is valued.
2. When employees see their leaders as role models then they feel more comfortable being vulnerable.

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE



Feeling satisfied in a role and working conditions directly impact mental wellbeing culture but are not as influential as leadership.

If Australian workers find their work purposeful and enjoyable, they are more likely to look forward to work. Additionally, feeling in control of their work directly impacts their anticipation for work. This sense of control is influenced by factors such as the ability to work in their preferred way and effectively manage their workload in a healthy manner.

DRIVERS OF MENTAL WELLBEING CULTURE



	Low performance (NET score < 50%)	High performance (NET score > 50%)
Higher driver (Top 10 drivers)	<div>HIGH PRIORITY TO ADDRESS</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">People in the organisation do what they say they willThe organisation effectively manages conflictThe organisation encourages and supports new ideasI see leaders in the organisation as role modelsI generally look forward to workMy input in decision making is valued by the organisation	<div>HIGH PRIORITY TO PROGRESS</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversityThe organisation is always looking to do things betterThe people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goalMy values align with the values of the organisation I work for
Lower driver (Bottom 10 drivers)	<div>SECONDARY PRIORITY TO ADDRESS</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I am comfortable being vulnerable within the organisationI am generally able to work how I prefer (e.g. where / when I work, the hours)	<div>SECONDARY PRIORITY TO PROGRESS</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I generally feel in control of what I do each dayI am comfortable speaking up and asking for what I need at workI can be my true self at workI can typically manage my workload in a way that is healthy for meI generally enjoy the work I doI am visible to and able to communicate with people at all levelsMy work is purposefulI have a high level of job security

At a national level there are high priority areas to address and others to continue progressing.

Following through on promises, managing conflict, supporting new ideas, role modelling, looking forward to work and making staff feel valued in the decision making process are all highly influential on mental wellbeing culture and have the most room to grow.

Areas that are high priority to progress are high importance and high performing factors that need to continue to be nurtured. Secondary priorities can be addressed and progressed later but are also likely to be positively impacted by working on the high priority areas due to the strong relationships between the drivers.



DETAILED DOMAIN CHAPTERS

LEADERSHIP DOMAIN

The leadership domain is about leadership culture within an organisation at all levels - from the individual contributor to the CEO. It is made up of seven measurable attributes listed to the right.

Fostering these leadership attributes from the top down will lead to a strong mental wellbeing culture in the organisation.

The organisation is always looking to do things better

The organisation encourages and supports new ideas

The people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goal

My values align with the values of the organisation I work for

People in the organisation do what they say they will

The organisation effectively manages conflict

I see leaders in the organisation as role models

LEADERSHIP DOMAIN PERFORMANCE

Australian organisations perform best on working towards a common purpose or goal, working towards betterment and values alignment with employees. However, there is room for growth with conflict management and role modelling.



of employees agree there is a an alignment between themselves and how the organisation operates

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)

71%

The people in the organisation are aligned towards a common purpose and goal

68%

The organisation is always looking to do things better

67%

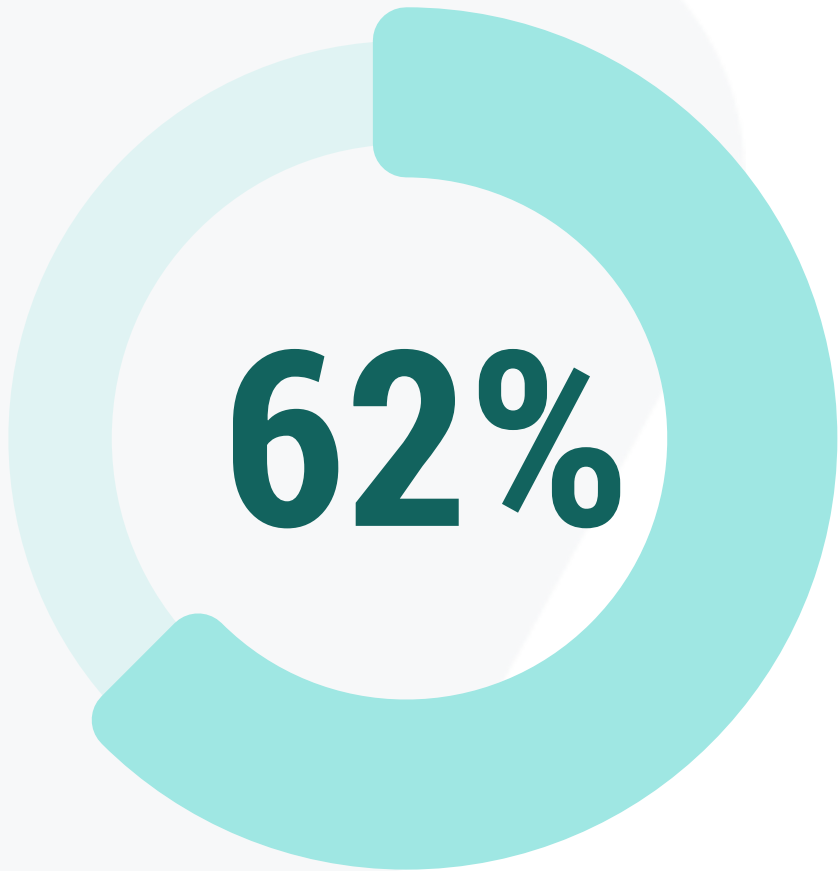
My values align with the values of the organisation I work for

Ranking from 4th to 7th

- 63% The organisation encourages and supports new ideas
- 60% People in the organisation do what they say they will
- 57% The organisation effectively manages conflict
- 51% I see leaders in the organisation as role models

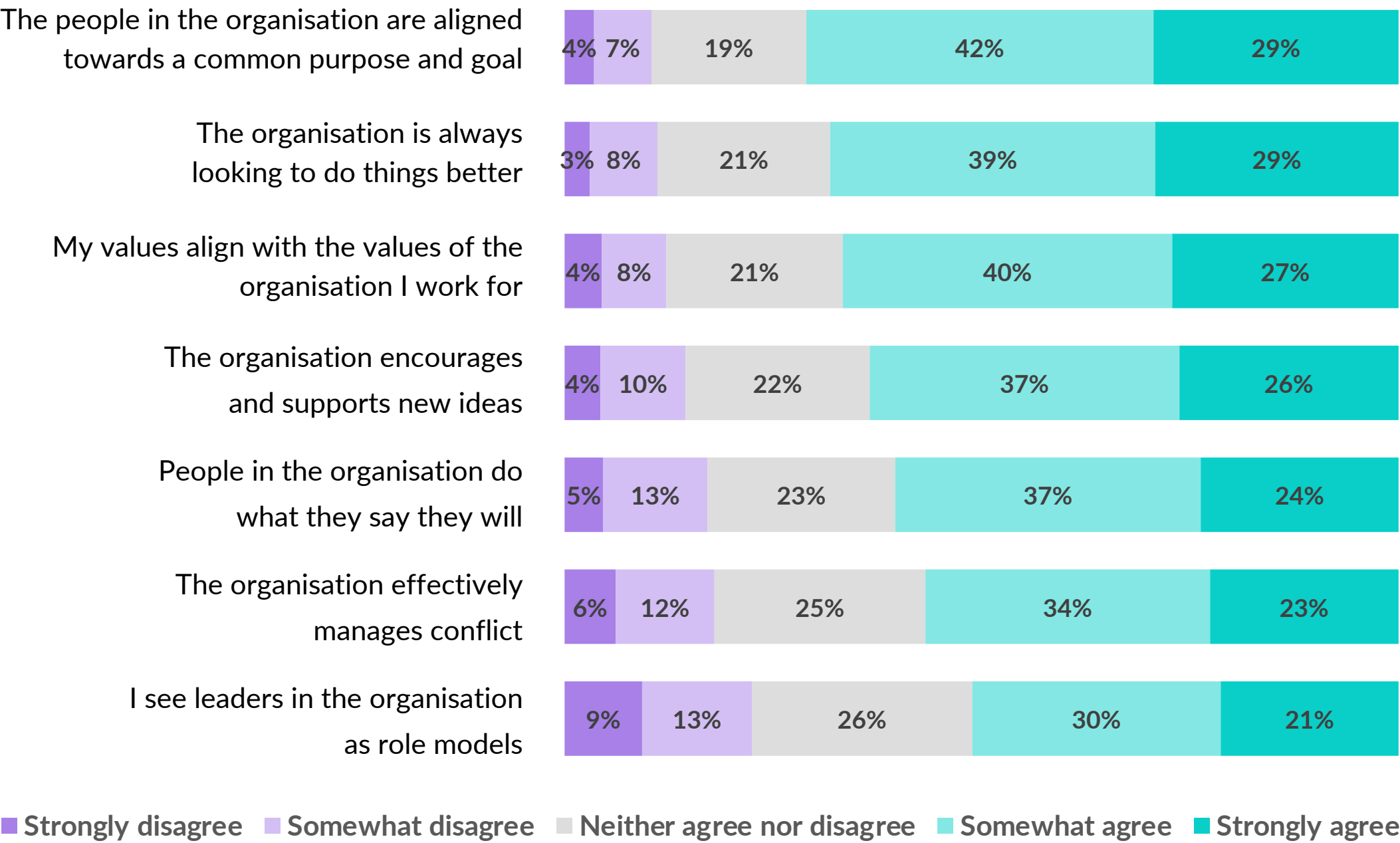
LEADERSHIP DOMAIN PERFORMANCE BREAKDOWN

Strength of agreement is relatively high with at least one in five strongly agreeing for all leadership attributes.



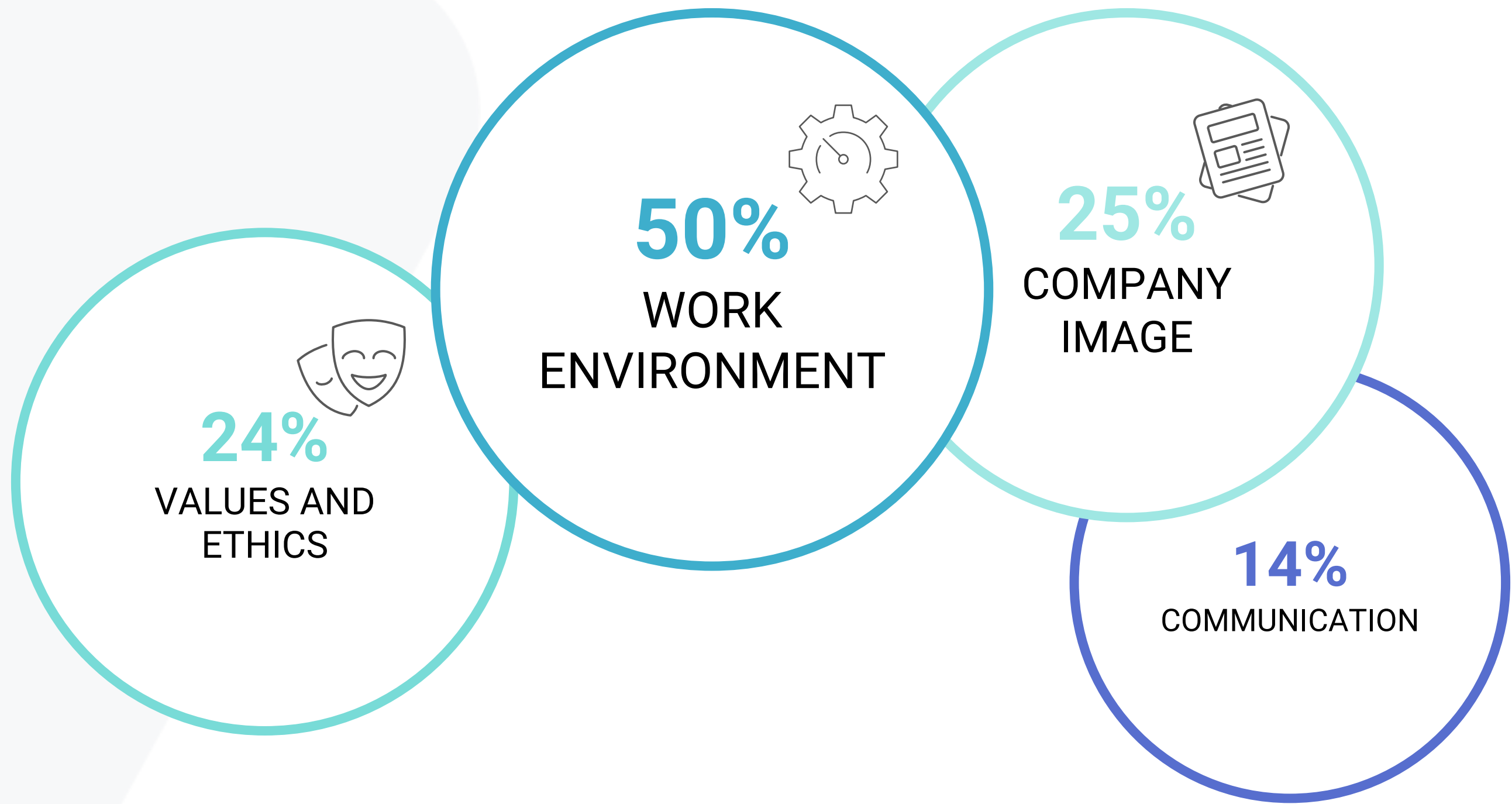
of employees agree there is a an alignment between themselves and how the organisation operates

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)



REASONS FOR HIGH ALIGNMENT WITH LEADERSHIP

Reasons for high alignment with leadership focus on transparency, similarity in values, embracing diversity and respect for others.



Talking high alignment...

The organisation is **open about the ways it operates** and supports their staff members.

My organisation **embraces all people and values** other races and the LGBTQIA+ community. They are genuinely interested in young people and promote healthy, fun lifestyles. **Leadership listen, act and care** about their employees. They also give positive reinforcement.

There is a high level of **self reflection, personal growth, respect for others** and inclusion and equity within my workplace.

We have **similar values and outlooks on life** in general. We also work together and thinking up the best way to solve any issues.

Q5C. Based on your answers to the previous questions, it seems there is high alignment between yourself and how the organisation operates (e.g., values, expectations, openness to new ideas, purpose, behaviour, conflict management, leadership). Why is that? And how can other organisations learn from this?
Our State of Mind 2023 · 41 Base n=418.

REASONS FOR HIGH ALIGNMENT WITH LEADERSHIP

Work Environment (50%)

Positive work environments are linked to supportive, respectful and caring teams and a sense of positive culture.

Focus on employee with care and support
19%

Supportive and collaborative team
18%

Being respectful and open minded
10%

Positive workplace culture
6%

Employee benefit (mental health / flexibility)
5%

Talking work environment...



We work as a team and have the same goal. We work together to achieve that and always check on each other.

Company Image (25%)

Company image relies on supportive leaders and being known as an ethical organisation or great place to work.

Supportive leaders / open structure
10%

Operates ethically
6%

Type of organisation (education/ healthcare)
4%

Well-established / great place to work
4%

Small organisation
3%

Talking company image...



Leaders are considerate and passionate about their employees, listen and implement.

Values and ethics (24%)

Having values and ethics that align closely between the company and individual are a focus for leadership alignment.

Aligns with my values, goals and expectation
13%

Achieve successful business goals
4%

Positivity / be kind / empathy / compassionate
3%

Inclusive
2%

Contribute back to society / community
1%

Talking values and ethics...



My values align with the organisations values.

REASONS FOR LOW ALIGNMENT WITH LEADERSHIP

Reasons for low alignment with leadership are linked to a lack of appreciation, behaviour mismatch with values and poor communication.



Talking low alignment...

The employees cannot do anything to improve how the work runs if the management team **didn't care and didn't listen to the employees' suggestions.**

The organisation seem to be set in their own ways of doing things **based on a small majority of opinions.** More flexibility of the organisation is needed to consider the opinions of others.

They have strong values plastered all over the walls but don't live by them. **The leaders' behaviour not being aligned to the values of the organisation.**

The organisation runs on 'bums on seats' mentality, **money is more important than staff wellbeing & safety.** Suggestions fall on deaf ears.

Leaders **don't treat teams with respect** for their points of view or individualism.

REASONS FOR LOW ALIGNMENT WITH LEADERSHIP



Poor Company Strategy (29%)

- 14% Leaders don't practice what they preach / no action / no improvement
- 7% Lack of innovation / resistance to new ideas
- 3% Inflexibility / close-minded

Poor company strategy is linked to leaders that have not followed through on their word, and have not encouraged and invested in innovation.

Not very open minded. Don't support speaking up for your ideas and thoughts.



Lack of Employee Appreciation (25%)

- 10% Don't care about employee's mental wellbeing
- 10% Lack of meritocracy / don't feel valued
- 7% Lack of support and empathy / Terrible employee treatment

Lack of employee appreciation can be a result of a lack of empathy, acknowledgement and consideration for employee wellbeing.

Leaders are not honest & treat staff very differently depending on how much they can manipulate them to their own needs.



Communication (25%)

- 15% Don't listen / acknowledge employee ideas
- 5% Ineffective communication and unclear message
- 2% Lack of responsiveness

Poor communication is often tied to a lack of acknowledgment of ideas, poor messaging and lack of responsiveness.

Only management ideas matter. They ask you for ideas and input but will not take your input into consideration when making decision.

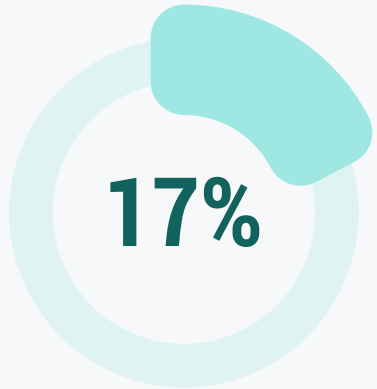
REASONS FOR NEUTRALITY WITH LEADERSHIP

Suggestions from those neutral towards leadership include enhancing teamwork and workload, improving communications and being empathetic.



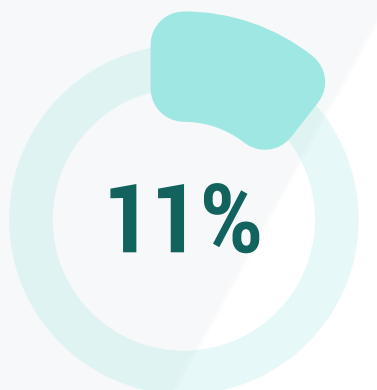
Workplace Environment

- 5% Enhance teamwork, ensure equal contribution and improve work ethics
- 4% Should value employees by offering more support and focus on mental well being
- 2% Required better time management and lessoning the workload



Communication

- 9% Need to listen more to team suggestions / give chance to express opinion
- 5% Need more open communication between management team and employees
- 4% Need more clear and honest communication



Management Team

- 7% Lack of leadership skills (i.e., disconnected, close-minded, uncompassionate)
- 2% Lack of integrity / start doing what they say
- 1% Poor management skills (i.e., dictatorship, micromanagement, unfair, conflicting ideas)



Talking neutrality

The company **does not put much thought and emphasis into mental health**, it takes a back seat and the only way for values to align is to switch jobs that has a better culture.

Management make major changes that effect the staff **but do not follow up these changes with staff**.

I think leadership **need to listen more and have an open mind** instead of relying on the same people all the time for input.

Can be improved by **more and closer communication and deeper coordination**.

Leadership is top heavy, so conflicts and confusion occur which makes it difficult for individual workers.

CONNECTION DOMAIN

The connection domain is about how connected and comfortable employees are within the organisation – from job security to vulnerability to inclusion and diversity. It is made up of seven measurable attributes listed to the right.

Embracing these attributes of connection will result in a strong sense of staff identification with the organisation and ultimately foster a culture of positive mental wellbeing.

I am comfortable speaking up and asking for what I need at work

I have a high level of job security

I am comfortable being vulnerable within the organisation

I can be my true self at work

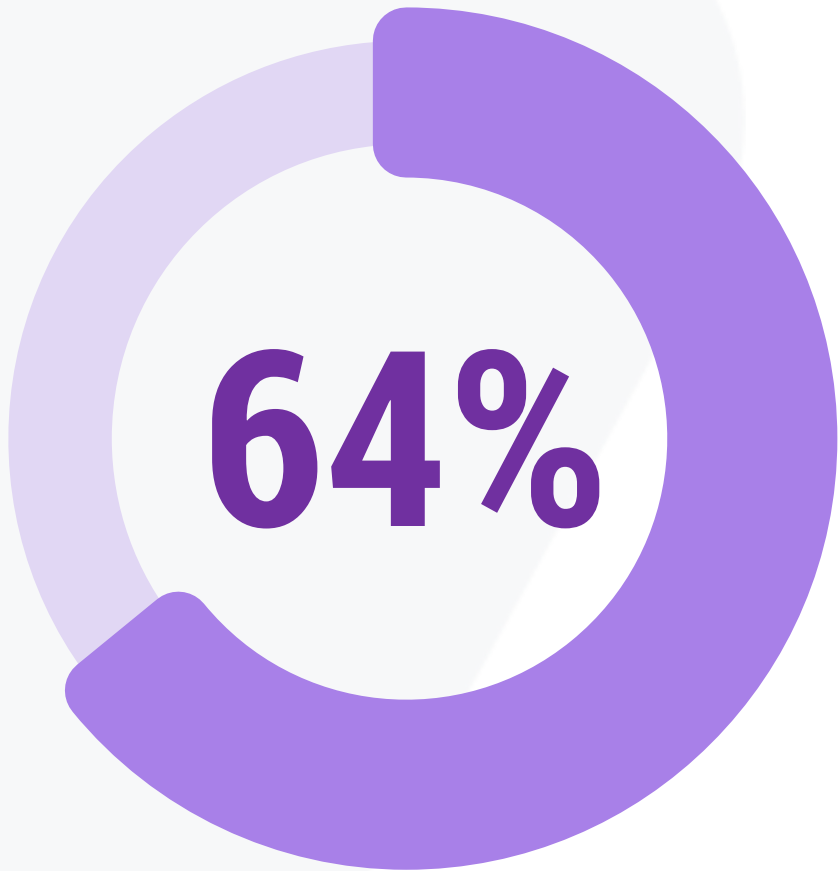
I am visible to and able to communicate with people at all levels within the organisation

My input in decision making is valued by the organisation

The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversity

CONNECTION DOMAIN PERFORMANCE

Supporting inclusion and diversity, encouraging open communication, and creating an authentic work environment are the most effective ways to foster organisational connection. Vulnerability and employee involvement in decision making present opportunities for growth.



of employees agree they are comfortable and connected to the organisation

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)

71%
The organisation actively supports inclusion and diversity

71%
I am comfortable speaking up and asking for what I need at work

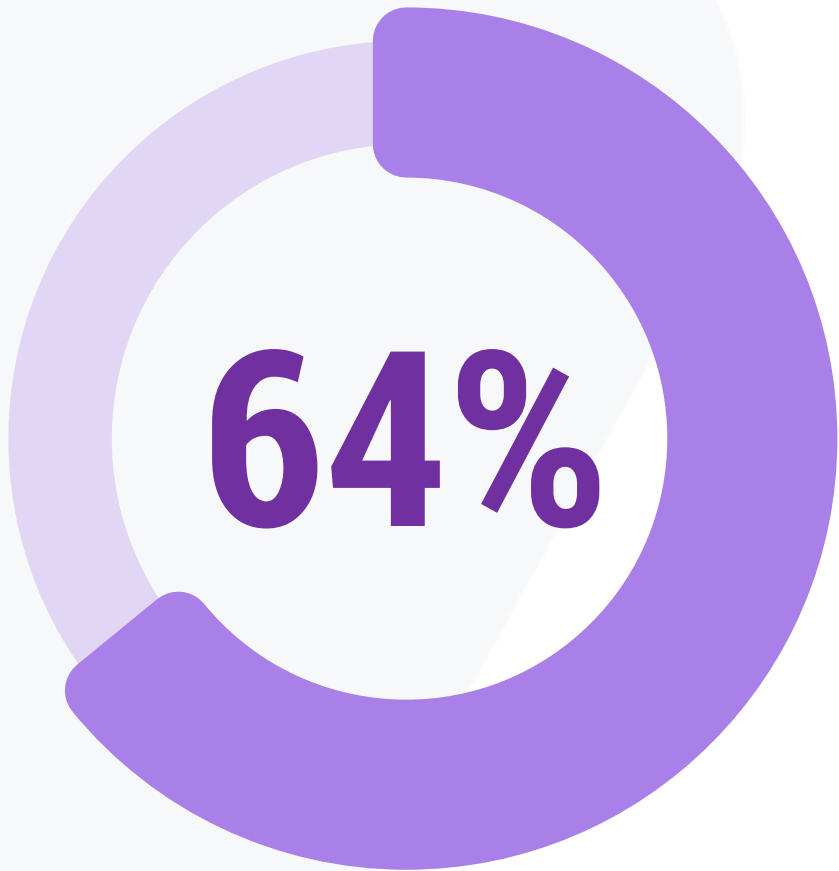
70%
I can be my true self at work

Ranking from 4th to 7th

- 68% I am visible to and able to communicate with people at all levels within the organisation
- 66% I have a high level of job security
- 58% My input in decision making is valued by the organisation
- 44% I am comfortable being vulnerable within the organisation

CONNECTION DOMAIN PERFORMANCE BREAKDOWN

Strength of agreement is high with the top four performing attributes having around one in three strongly agree. Being comfortable being vulnerable is the most polarising measure with almost three in 10 disagreeing.



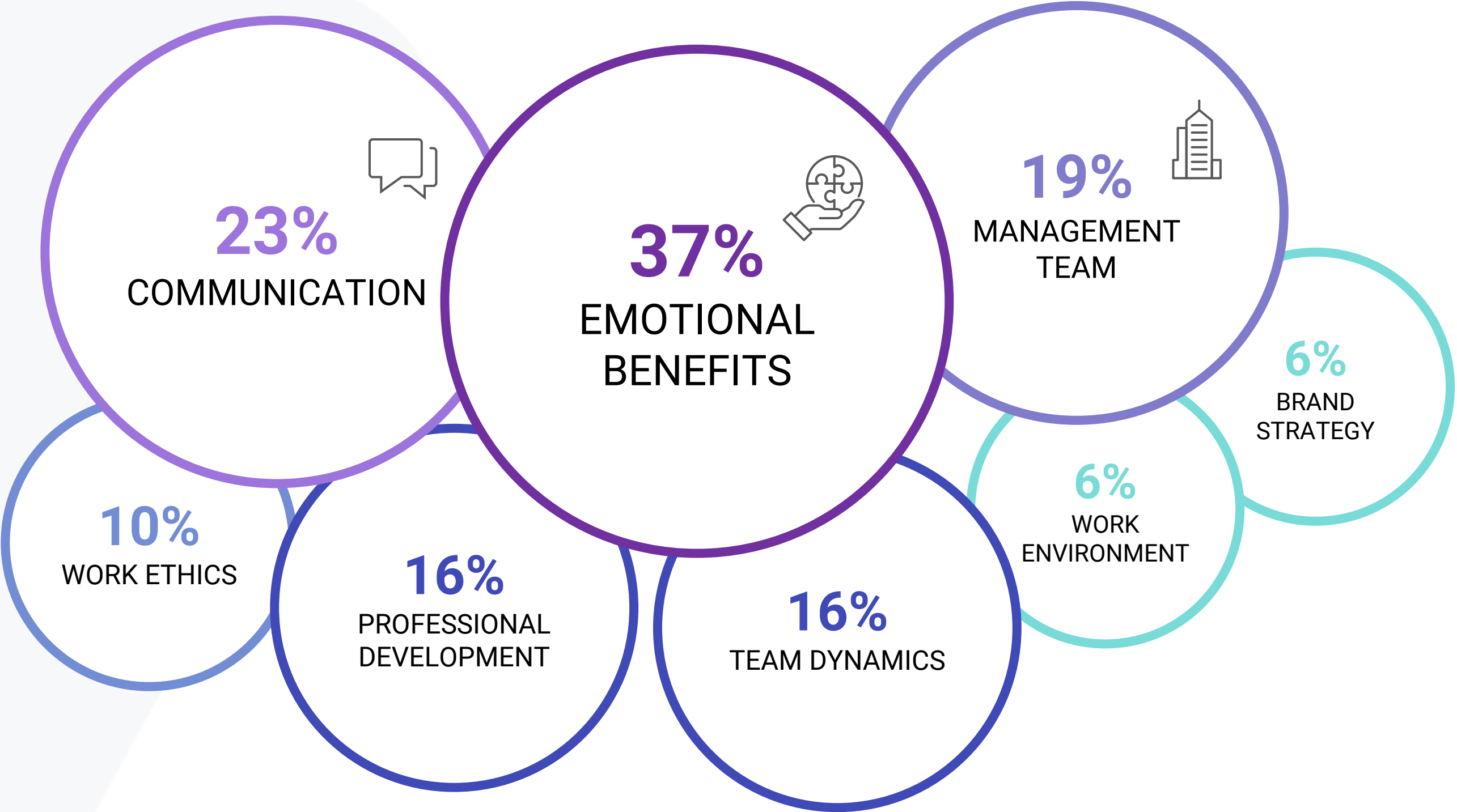
of employees agree they are comfortable and connected to the organisation

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)



REASONS FOR HIGH CONNECTION WITH ORGANISATION

Reasons for high connection with the organisation focus on the emotional benefits, communication and management.



Talking high connection...

Genuine concern and compassion for your fellow work colleagues is a great first step to ensuring all feel safe and comfortable in raising their hand especially when they feel overwhelmed or need assistance whilst at work.

Respected behavior from all managers to all workers with a caring nature and are genuinely interested in their employees welfare. They are excellent role models to all employees.

My manager has undergone **mental health first aid training** and is a wellness champion.

The organisation is very **open and inclusive for all diverse people** celebrating life and various cultures throughout the year.

We have very open dialogue at work and everyone can **feel comfortable saying what that want and getting listened to**.

REASONS FOR HIGH CONNECTION WITH ORGANISATION

Emotional Benefits (37%)

Emotional benefits focus on support, inclusion and feeling valued. Mutual respect and acceptance is essential

Supportive workplace culture

9%

Inclusive / feeling welcome

9%

Feel valued and worthwhile

7%

Mutual respect in workplace

5%

Able to be myself / feeling accepted

5%

Talking emotional benefits...



My workplace has strong work ethics and supports diversification and individual thought.

Communication (23%)

Communication is about taking onboard feedback and encouraging open communication and divergent ideas

Employee's input is taken into consideration

9%

Encouraged to speak up

9%

Open communication

5%

Check-ins and feedback

3%

Acceptance of divergent ideas

1%

Talking communication...



I can rely on people and ask them their opinions. Good communication is the key.

Management Team (19%)

Effective team management is about communication, empathy, trust, approachability and safety

Open communication and listen to employee

6%

Supportive and empathetic management

6%

Trustworthy and strong leadership

5%

Being approachable / good connection

5%

Support psychological safety

2%

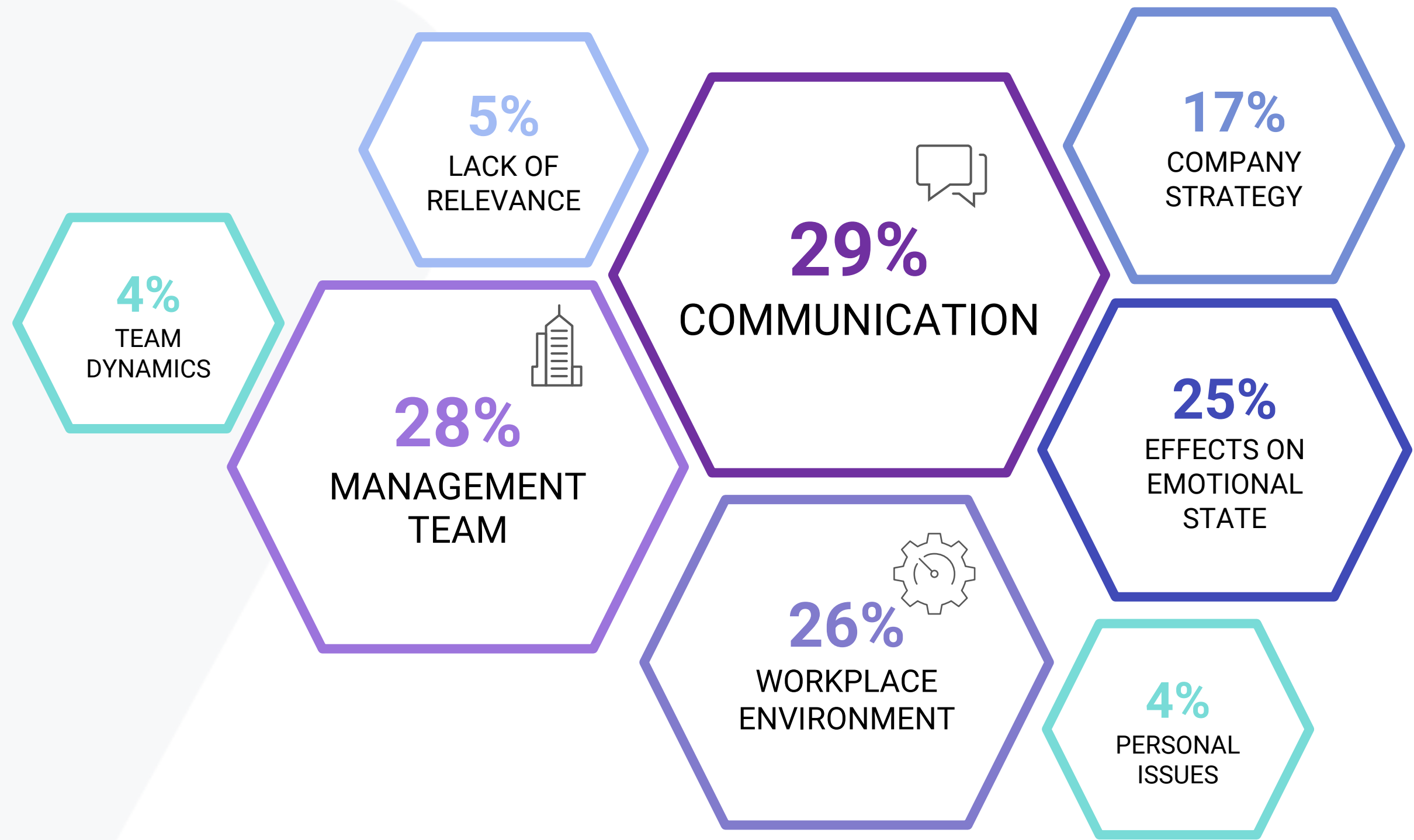
Talking management team...



The supervisors are very open to ideas and supportive and that gives me the power to show my real self at work.

REASONS FOR LOW CONNECTION WITH ORGANISATION

Reasons for low connection with the organisation focus on the poor communication, poor management team and workplace environment.



Talking low connection...

People who are their true self & speak out get **branded as "pains in the arse"**. Anyone who wants to change the culture, which threatens the managers position, is driven out.

The manager is extremely **unprofessional and creates conflict at workplace**. Have tried raising the issue but nothing seems to work.

Management having a very old set of mind, **mental health and well being is not important to them**, taking day off is almost impossible due to short staff, people are made feel guilty taking sick days.

People **do not genuinely care about you**. HR will ignore any request for support and respect for privacy.

Q8A. Based on your answers to the previous questions, it seems you have low comfort and/or connection within the organisation (e.g., being able to speak up and ask for what you need, job security, being vulnerable, being your true self, having access to others, decision making input, inclusion and diversity). Why is that? And how can it be improved? Base n=165.

REASONS FOR LOW CONNECTION WITH ORGANISATION



Lack of Communication (29%)

- 13% Opinions are not valued / not listening to employee / ignorance
- 9% Speaking up will get a person punished / harassed / fired
- 7% Lack of open, transparent and effective communication

Lack of communication is commonly associated with feelings of not having opinions valued, concern that speaking up will result in punishment and lack of openness.

Not enough open communication between all levels, no authentic encouragement to speak up.

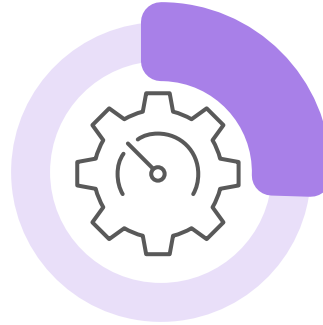


Management Team (28%)

- 13% Lack of open discussion and do not listen to employee
- 6% Toxic and controlling behaviour of management
- 5% Ineffective leadership traits

Poor perception towards the management team is linked with a lack of open discussion, controlling behaviour and ineffective leadership.

This is not a good organisation to work for because the leadership lacks compassion and respect towards their employees.



Workplace Environment (26%)

- 8% Lack of job security
- 8% Unethical behaviour / value profit over people
- 4% Toxic work culture (top-down, restrictive, close-minded)

Workplace environments are viewed negatively when there is a lack of job security, unethical behaviour and toxic work culture.

It's all about profit, not about people. Company found guilty of unfair dismissal. No one trust management anymore.

FULFILLMENT DOMAIN

The fulfillment domain is about how satisfied employees are their role and working conditions. A more independent domain compared to the others, it is made up of six measurable attributes (listed to the right) focusing on enjoyment, purpose and control over work.

Supporting employees to feel more fulfilled in their roles will result in greater work satisfaction and stronger employee contribution to a positive mental wellbeing culture.

I generally enjoy the work I do

I generally look forward to work

My work is purposeful

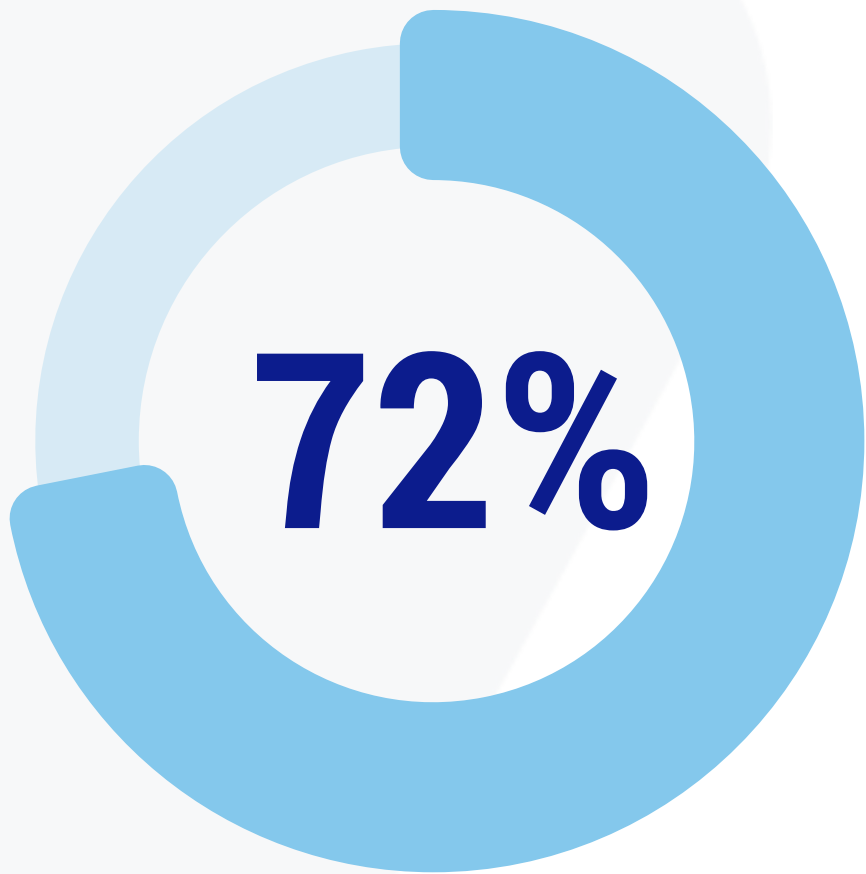
**I generally feel in control of
what I do each day**

**I am generally able to work how I prefer (e.g.
where I work, the hours I work, when I work)**

**I can typically manage my workload in a way
that is healthy for me**

FULFILLMENT DOMAIN PERFORMANCE

Most Australian employees feel their work is purposeful and generally enjoy the work they do. Control over their work so that they can work how they prefer and in a way that is healthy is important for improving this domain's performance.



of employees agree they are satisfied with their role and working conditions

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)

80%
My work is purposeful

79%
I generally enjoy the work I do

74%
I can typically manage my workload in a way that is healthy for me

Ranking from 4th to 6th

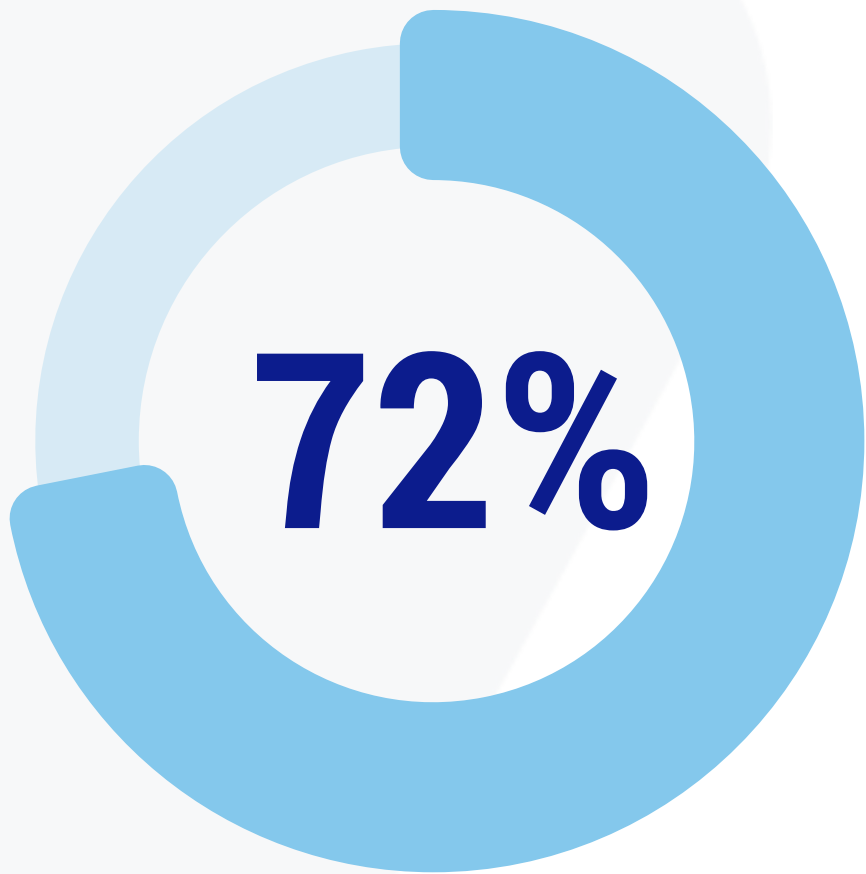
74% I generally feel in control of what I do each day

64% I generally look forward to work

60% I am generally able to work how I prefer (e.g. where I work, the hours I work, when I work etc.)

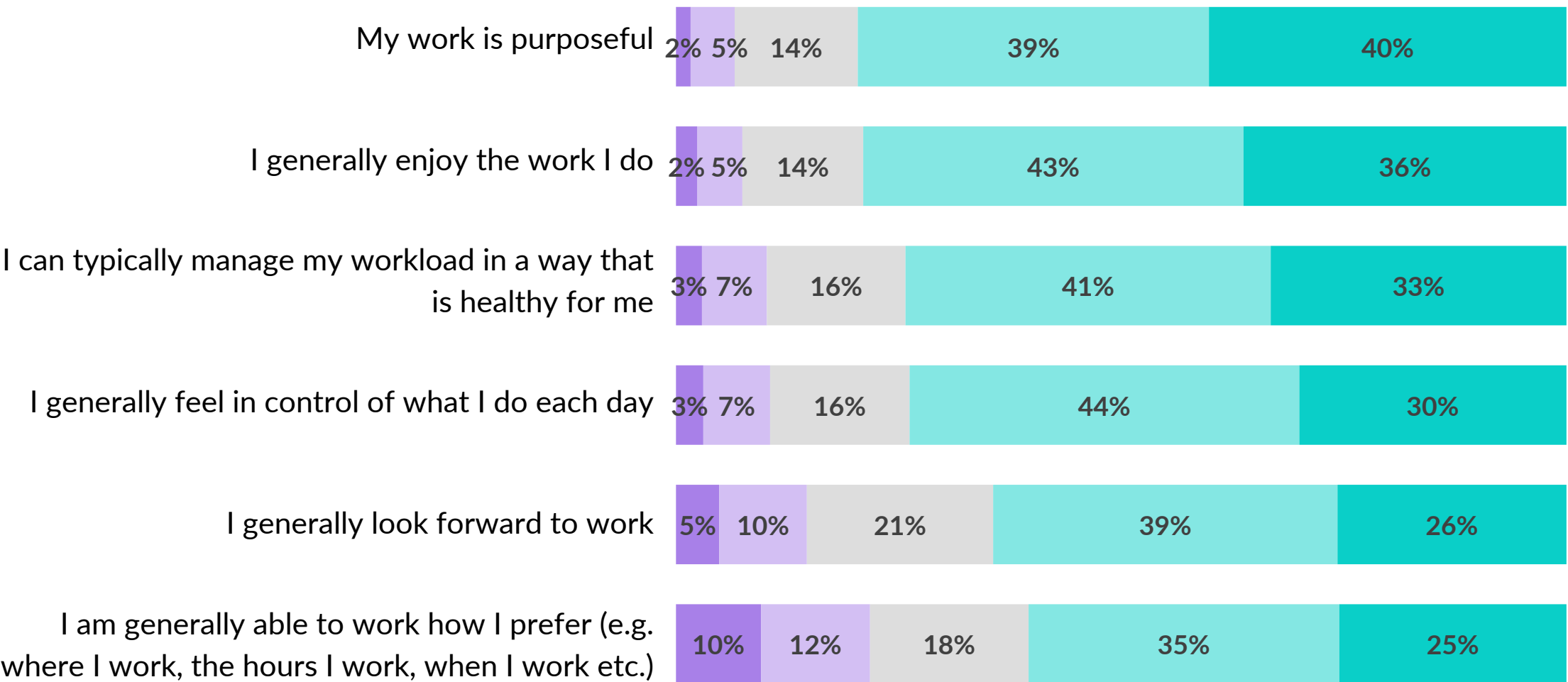
FULFILLMENT DOMAIN PERFORMANCE BREAKDOWN

Employees are highly fulfilled; they feel that their work is purposeful, enjoyable and manageable, and look forward to the work that they do. However, roughly 1 in 5 do not agree they can work how they prefer to.



of employees agree they are satisfied with their role and working conditions

(AVERAGE SOMEWHAT AGREE + STRONGLY AGREE RATING)



Strongly disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Strongly agree

REASONS FOR HIGH SATISFACTION WITH ROLE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

The high satisfaction with their role and working conditions among employees is attributed to the nature of the work itself, as well as the presence of professionalism and positive team dynamics.



Talking high satisfaction...

There is general understanding that we need to have **good working conditions, flexibility around hours and location, and appreciation for work being done** in an intelligent and accurate way.

You have to enjoy your work and the role you play in the business. A **healthy work life balance** means more productive work and better work outcomes.

Communication is key, it is not always easy to verbally communicate once trust is earned this becomes more common.

I really **love what I'm doing and the company is very supportive to their employees** and that's why I stayed here for almost two years now.

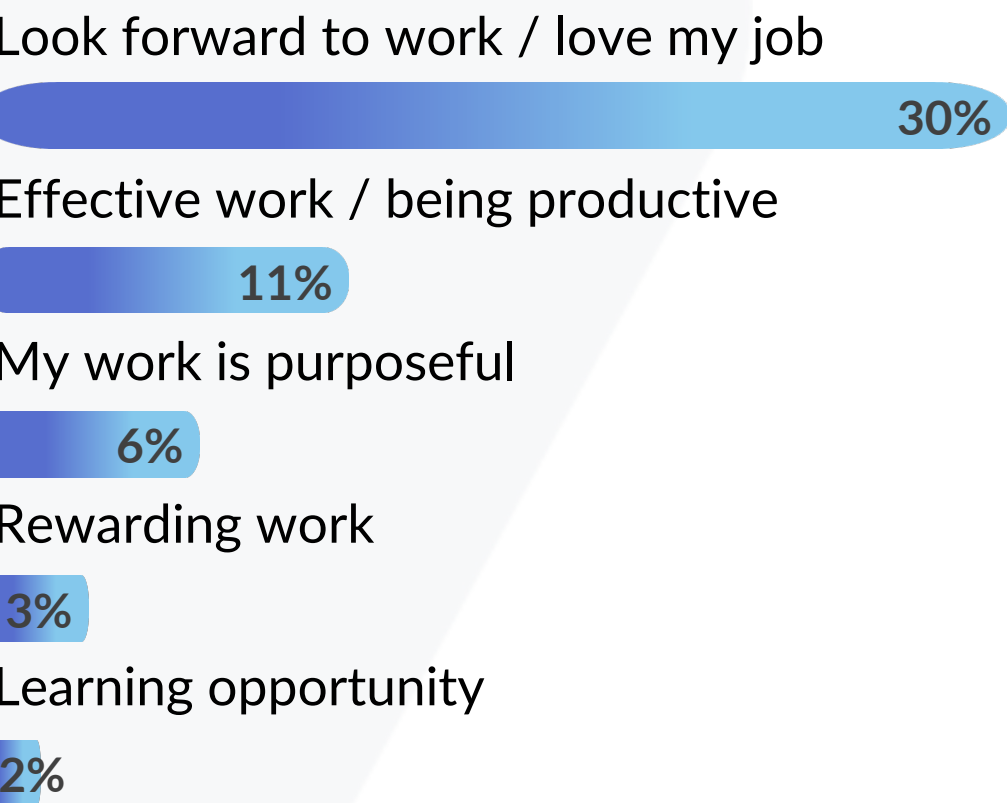
Employers encourage workers to **look out for each other and their own wellbeing**.

Q11C. Based on your answers to the previous questions, it seems you have high satisfaction in your role and/or working conditions at the organisation (e.g., enjoying and looking forward to your work, feeling your work is purposeful, feeling in control of your work, working how you prefer and managing your workload in a healthy way). Why is that? And how can other organisations learn from this? Base n=411.

REASONS FOR HIGH SATISFACTION WITH ROLE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Rewarding & Interesting (45%)

A genuine interest in the work they do with a sense of effectiveness and purpose drives work satisfaction



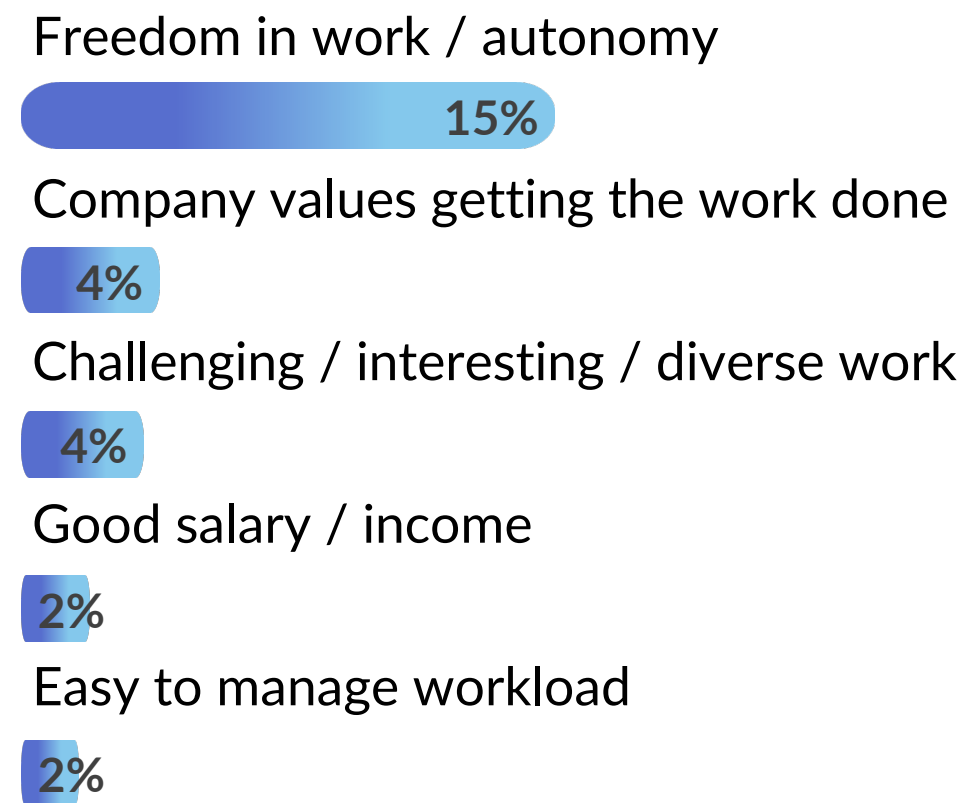
Talking rewarding & interesting...



Feel my work is meaningful and good to myself, teams and the clients.

Professional Environment (28%)

This means being treated as a professional who can achieve and manage their workload effectively – and be fairly compensated



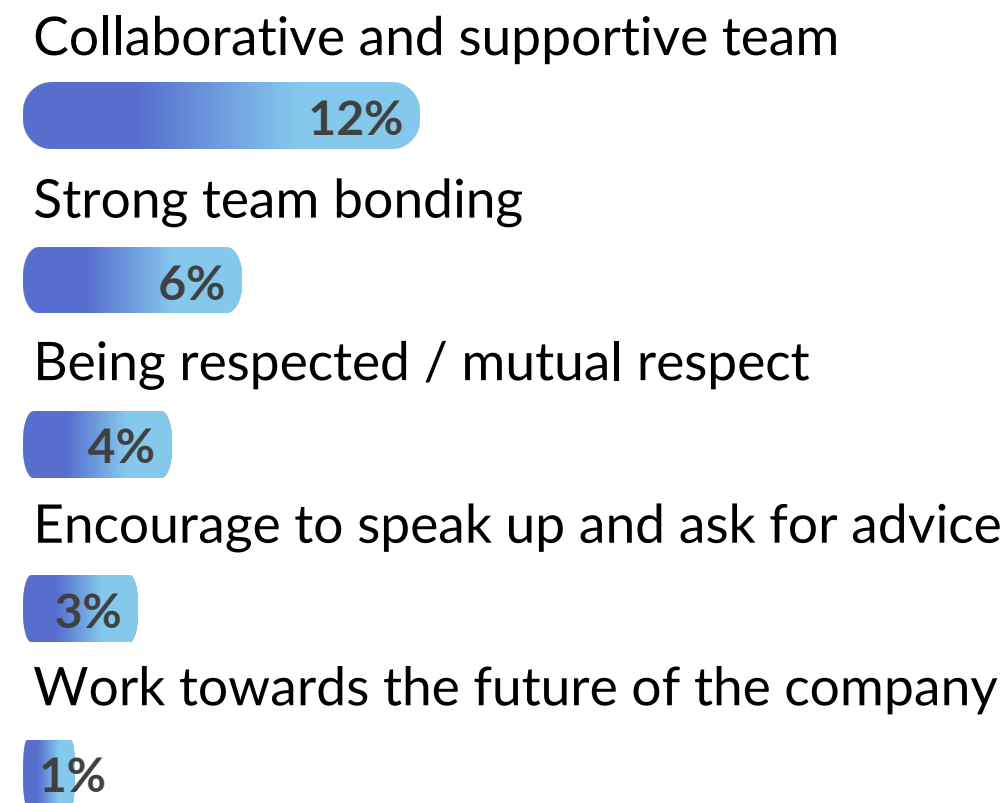
Talking professional environment...



I enjoy what I do and feel that I have flexibility and autonomy with what I do in my role, I am not micromanaged which is beneficial for me and my overall mental health and wellbeing.

Team Dynamics (25%)

Working conditions include the team dynamic which covers collaboration through respect, support and trust



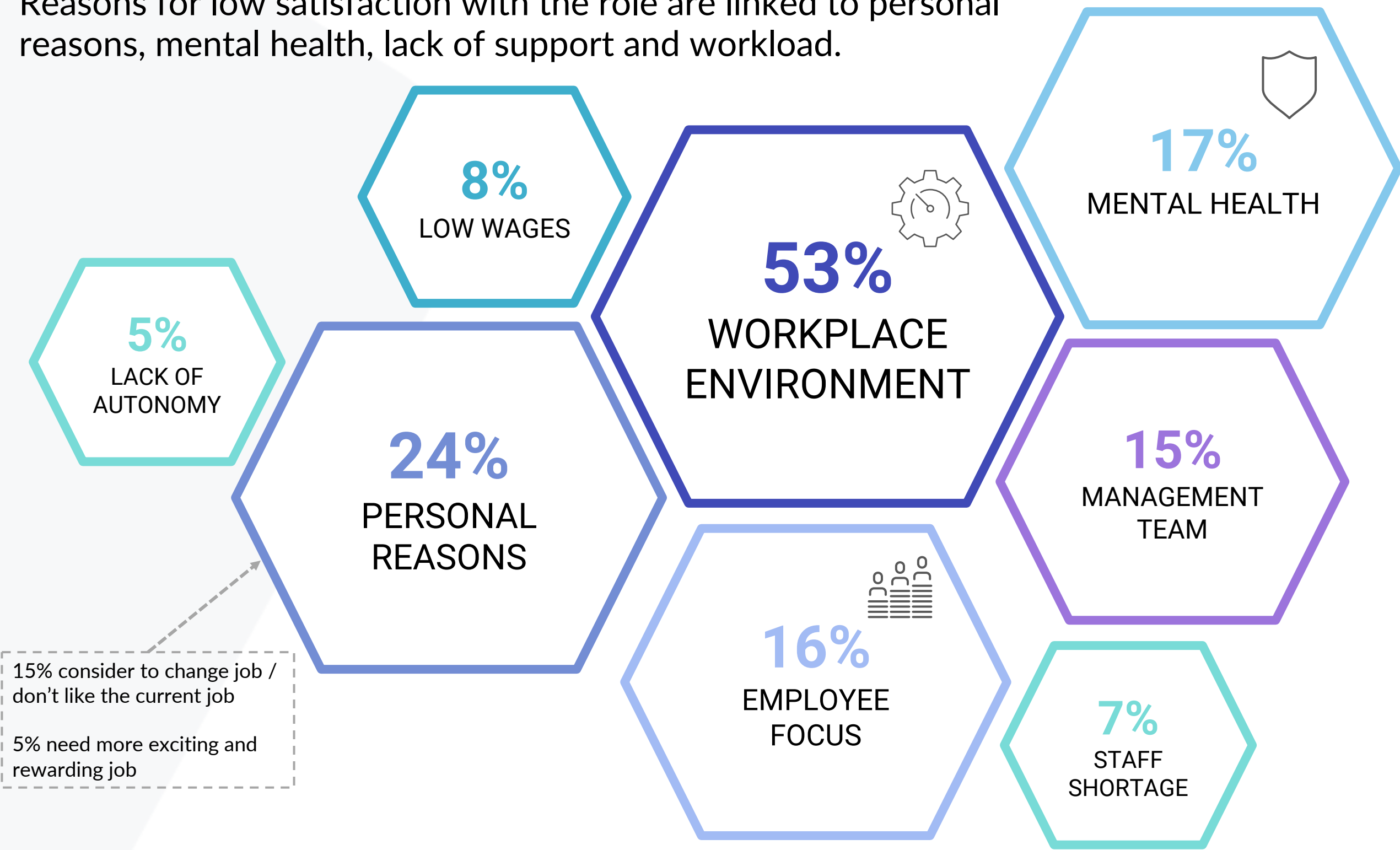
Talking team dynamics...



We work well as a team and support each other with encouragement and constructive advice.

REASONS FOR LOW SATISFACTION WITH ROLE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Reasons for low satisfaction with the role are linked to personal reasons, mental health, lack of support and workload.



Talking low satisfaction...

The organisation focuses on the wrong things and while it says wellbeing is important, that gets lost in the real culture. There **needs to be a cultural overhaul to align with what the organisation says as opposed to what it does.**

Toxic management who does not take responsibility. When things go wrong they blame the subordinates instead of stepping up. Only paying lip service to LGBTIQ+ staff and issues.

My work is interesting and purposeful, but I am **constantly physically and mentally stressed** by the large amounts of work that have to be completed because we are chronically understaffed.

I was **bullied and harassed by my management.** I got so stressed out. I stopped producing quality work and made a big mistake. It nearly got me fired and now I'm on leave cause the stress has badly affected my physical and mental health.

Q11A. Based on your answers to the previous questions, it seems you have low satisfaction in your role and/or working conditions at the organisation (e.g., enjoying and looking forward to your work, feeling your work is purposeful, feeling in control of your work, working how you prefer and managing your workload in a healthy way). Why is that? And how can it be improved? Base n=131.

REASONS FOR LOW SATISFACTION WITH ROLE AND WORKING CONDITIONS



Workplace Environment (53%)

- 15% Heavy workload / unreasonable workload
- 13% Long working hours / less flexible
- 11% Workplace bullying / harassment / unfair employee treatment

Workplace environments are negatively impacted by heavy workloads and long working hours. This can also be a result of bullying or harassment.

Workloads have increased to levels that are unrealistic and many workers are feeling stressed and under appreciated.



Having Mental Health Issues (17%)

- 11% Feel overwhelmed / stress / too much pressure
- 3% Exhausting / mentally draining
- 2% Anxiety

Mental health issues within the workplace are associated to a sense of feeling overwhelmed, anxious or exhausted.

There is a lot of pressure on staff to go above and beyond what we should be doing. Therefore, we often take work home and work under proper ratios. It is very stressful.



Employee Focus (16%)

- 10% Lack of support / compassion / caring in the workplace
- 3% Lack of effort recognition and employee appreciation
- 3% Doesn't really care about mental wellbeing

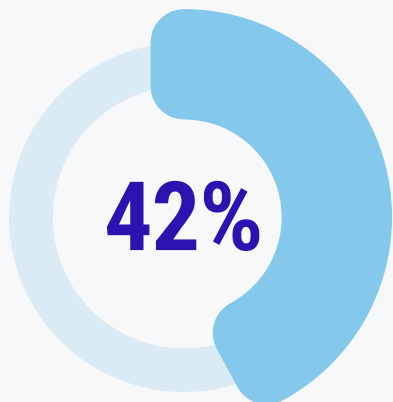
Poor employee focus is linked to a lack of support/care for employees, recognition and care for mental wellbeing.

More flexible workplace, having consideration to work life balance.

Q11A. Based on your answers to the previous questions, it seems you have low satisfaction in your role and/or working conditions at the organisation (e.g., enjoying and looking forward to your work, feeling your work is purposeful, feeling in control of your work, working how you prefer and managing your workload in a healthy way). Why is that? And how can it be improved? Base n=131.

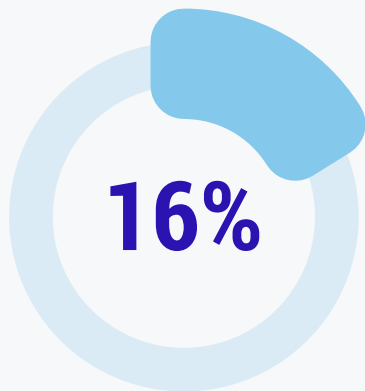
REASONS FOR NEUTRALITY WITH ROLE AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Suggestions from those neutral towards their role and working conditions identify heavy workload, lack of relevance and exciting work, and lack of recognition as key to improve.



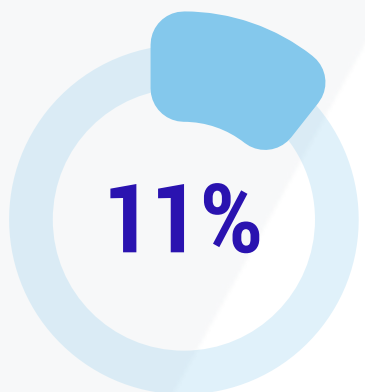
Workplace Environment

- 11% Heavy workload / unreasonable workload
- 11% Working hours need to be shorter and more flexible
- 5% Overwhelming with additional responsibilities / tight timeline / repetitive tasks



Personal Reasons

- 5% Require more exciting and rewarding work
- 4% Lack of relevance (i.e. retirement, self-employed, new to the organisation)
- 4% Consider to change jobs / don't like current job



Employee Focus

- 6% Lack of support / compassion / caring in the workplace
- 3% Require more recognition of effort / more employee appreciation
- 3% Should focus more on mental wellbeing



Talking neutrality

The management can improve in *acknowledging our work more and understanding the workload from our role* not just business. treat us like people not numbers.

My operational role is very project based but I report to another team which is customer service based. As a result, I cannot have flexible work hours and am *expected to do things which do not align with project outcomes*.

Freedom of working certain hours, the *act of working for many decades wears me out*.

I would like *more challenge in some aspects of my work* and feel that I have reached that "glass ceiling" in many ways.



Take part next year

Organisations can sign up to take part in the Our State of Mind study in 2024. Results will not be shared publicly but each organisation will receive an individual report showing how their performance compares to the national average. Participation provides a range of benefits:

- Valuable insights that can be broad and organisation-specific to aid informed strategic decisions.
- Research involvement can spark innovation by exposing companies to fresh ideas and perspectives.
- Active participation shows a commitment to progress and thought leadership.
- Engagement positions organisations as industry leaders and those willing to drive positive change by influencing best practices.
- Participation fosters employee engagement as it signals an inclusive and forward thinking organisational culture.

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