

Resilience in the workplace

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Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back after a stressful experience, to overcome adversity and even thrive under challenging conditions. As Territorians we are well accustomed to working in and planning for difficult situations, that's what sets us apart. We now have to work at transferring this attitude and determination to our business life.

Organisations are finding that they need to pull together often, including times when they are very busy, when change is occurring or when a tragedy / natural disaster strikes. The ability of an organisation to thrive is entirely dependent upon the health, well-being and resiliency of management and staff. The emotional strength of everyone is critical for improving communication and creativity. Building resilience in the workplace can lower staff turnover, reduce absenteeism and result in fewer, or less severe workplace injuries.

Businesses today face an age of continual change and instability that demands organisational resilience. It is an organisation's capability to respond rapidly to unforeseen change and disruption that determines its ability to bounce back and perform to the expectations of stakeholders.

People and organisations are great because of adversity – not despite it – but only if they are resilient enough to grow. Resilience is vital as it is what makes people and organisations great. Often the most important business lessons learned will be in response to a challenge faced and overcome. In setting business goals and objectives, the number one priority should be to build resilience, because this skill alone will foster continual development and the ability to adapt.

Resilient organisations and people enjoy many advantages: higher levels of engagement, better health, improved morale, less stress. For a business, higher engagement alone translates to increased profitability, productivity and customer loyalty. Absenteeism is also lower, as is staff turnover and innovation is up.

A resilient organisation can be characterised by the principles under which it operates, including:

- r flexibility to deal with external pressures
- r inspiring leadership at all management levels
- r empowered workforce where trust and accountability are foremost
- r recruiting resilient people
- r strong and effective organizational communication
- r streamlined systems to ensure high standards

It is useful to remember that pressure can also be positive. As pressure rises, an organisation can become more motivated and perform better. We all know resilient people. They appear to be able to deal with all of life's ups and downs in a positive way. Even significant set-backs do not send the resilient person off-track. There is a confident, positive and optimistic side to resilient people and they appear to have enough energy to work hard and stay motivated and over a sustained period of time. When teams are under pressure it is all the more reason to have resilience in the workplace. Resilient teams are made up of resilient people.

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