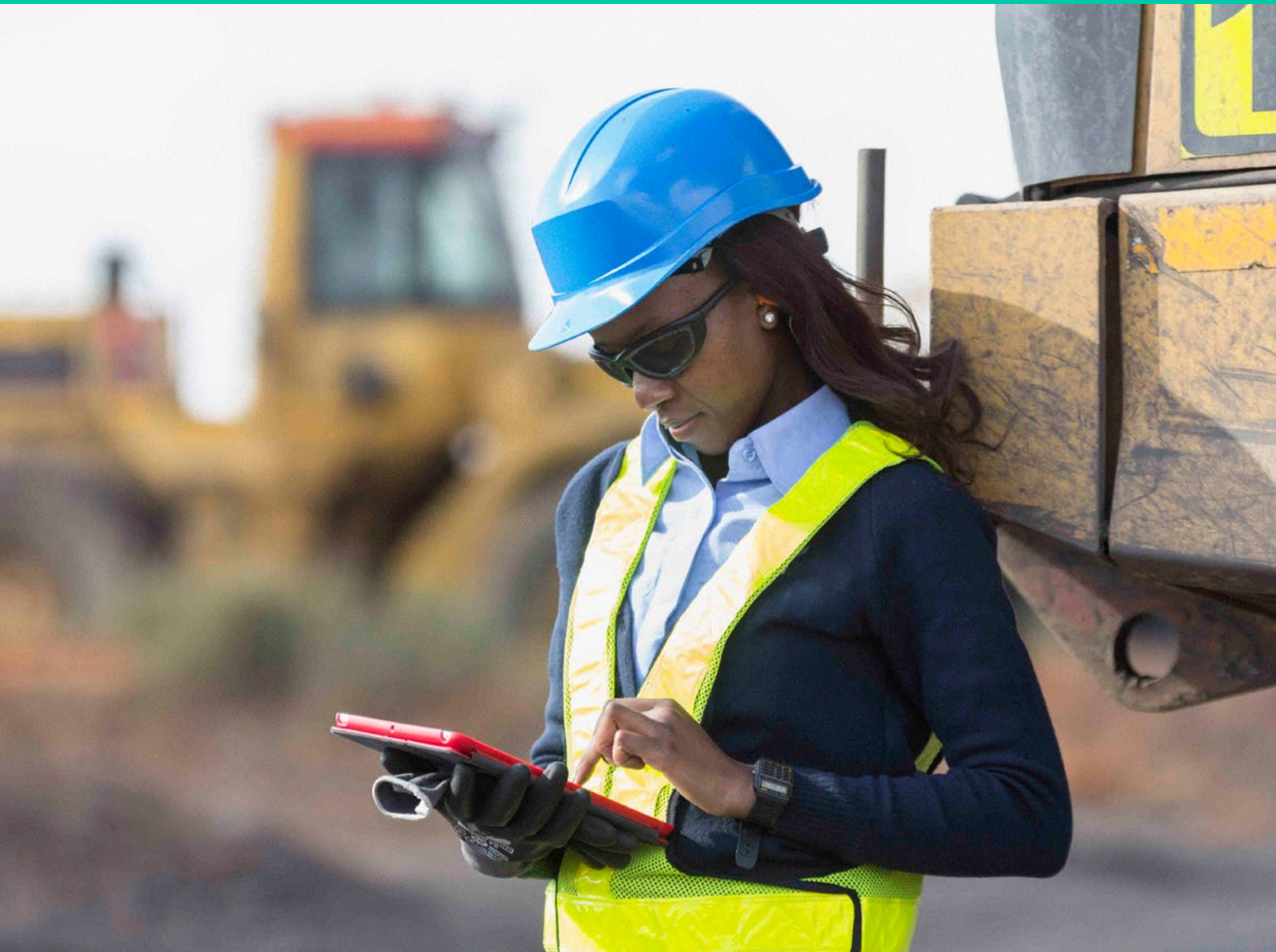


Psychosocial and Psychological Safety Checklist

ICMM Tools for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Introduction

Workplaces play an essential role in contributing to the health and wellbeing of employees and can be strong contributors to their psychological and emotional wellness. They can sometimes be challenging and stressful environments. No workplace environment is immune from psychological health and safety risks, and it is important to expand the definitions of occupational health and safety beyond the physical.

Psychosocial and psychological safety are related concepts but are distinctly different. Psychological safety is the absence and/or threat of harm to mental wellbeing that a worker might experience¹, while psychosocial hazards are aspects of work which have the potential to cause psychological or physical harm.² Psychosocial safety encompasses the broader workplace environment and ensures employees' mental, emotional, and physical health are protected at work with the goal of reducing stress and encouraging good relationships with others.³ These hazards can include job demands and control over workload, job clarity, low reward or recognition, remote work, lack of social support, bullying, harassment and physical or psychological violence in the workplace.

Psychological safety is about employees feeling safe to speak up, share ideas, ask questions, and make mistakes without fear of humiliation or retribution. In other words, a work environment where all employees feel valued and respected and can genuinely participate and contribute. The stages of psychological safety are discussed in detail below. Psychologically healthy and safe workplaces actively work to prevent harm to workers' health and promote their psychological wellbeing.

1. Samra et al. (2022), *Guarding Minds, Understanding Factors and Hazards*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/about/about-psychosocial-factors>
2. International Council on Mining and Metals (n.d.), *05 - Health and Safety*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.icmm.com/en-gb/our-principles/mining-principles/principle-5>
3. MiTraining (n.d.), *What is the difference between psychosocial and psychological safety?*, [Online]. Available at: <https://mitraining.edu.au/blog/what-is-the-difference-between-psychosocial-and-psychological-safety/#:~:text=Difference%20Between%20Psychological%20and%20Psychosocial,and%20physical%20health%20at%20work>

Together, psychosocial and psychological safety in the workplace prevents harm and can enable companies to leverage the benefits of diverse skills, experience, knowledge, and backgrounds in ways that would not be possible if employees did not feel safe to be their full selves at work, voice opinions, thoughts, or ideas in a collaborative atmosphere.⁴

In a high-risk industry such as mining, psychosocial safety is a critical element of workplace safety, as it has been found to positively influence overall safety behaviour.⁵ Psychosocial and psychological safety are also pivotal in addressing sexual and gender-based violence and health (SGBVH) within the mining industry. The often-hypermasculinity of mining workforces, remote and isolated workplaces and existing systemic issues can enable these harmful behaviours. A lack of psychological and psychosocial safety inhibits individuals from reporting and seeking redress for instances of SGBVH due to fear of stigma, retaliation, or further harm.⁶

The costs to the employer associated with poor mental health in the workplace are significant and multifaceted. Direct costs encompass health care expenses, including psychological care benefits and pharmaceutical costs, as well as income support for short- and long-term disability claims. Indirect costs include absenteeism, presenteeism (working while unwell with reduced productivity), and employee turnover. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that poor mental health leads to a global economic loss of about \$1 trillion each year due to decreased productivity.⁷

How to use the checklists

There are two checklists in this tool:

- Psychosocial Safety Checklist
- Psychological Safety Checklist

Both checklists are split into three sections based on levels of responsibility and accountability and are to be used from the perspective of Management, Team Leaders, and Employees.

They are intended as supplementary tools to support and enhance existing psychological and psychosocial safety management systems within companies. They can be used as guides but should be adapted to the company's specific operating context.

Mining companies must ensure that, beyond the ICMM Mining Principles, they are meeting the various local and legislative requirements for managing psychological and psychosocial safety.

4. Wåhlin-Jacobsen et al., (2022), *Leveraging diversity through psychological safety*, [PDF]. Available at: https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/afriberg/files/leveraging_diversity_through_psychological_safety_hbs_article.pdf

5. Yu et al., (2022), *The influence of psychosocial safety climate on miners' safety behaviour: A cross-level research*, [Online]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2022.105719>

6. International Labour Organization (2021), *Women in mining: Towards gender equality*, [PDF]. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---sector/documents/publication/wcms_821061.pdf

7. World Health Organization (2022), *Mental health at work*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-at-work#:~:text=Globally%2C%20an%20estimated%2012%20billion,workers%20with%20mental%20health%20condition>

Psychosocial Safety Checklist

1. Management

We ensure the company's overarching health and safety strategy includes psychosocial safety.

We create an action plan for the prevention of psychosocial risks that includes goals and evaluation mechanisms.

We provide expert training on integrating psychosocial hazards into general safety management practices is provided for health and safety professionals.

We ensure that a diverse committee or group of representatives across the company's workforce is available to provide input on psychosocial safety related policies.

We provide training that empowers workers to recognise and manage psychosocial risks at individual and team levels.⁸

Senior leaders participate alongside workers in all psychosocial risk awareness and prevention activities and training.

We create key performance indicators around psychosocial risk management for senior management.

We provide opportunities for employees to socialise with their co-workers through employee resource groups, etc.⁹

We take action to build proper trust, communication and cooperation between employees and management.

The job design decisions we make protects flexibility (flexible shifts, schedules and sociable hours).

2. Team Leaders

Each person in my team understands where their role fits into the overall business goals.

My team members are clear about what is expected of them in their role.

Each person on my team has a clear plan of work which is agreed with their line manager.

I recognise and support my team members' performance and commend and/or reward them fairly and consistently.¹⁰

All employees are empowered to talk to managers at early stages if they are unclear of the priorities of the task to be undertaken.

There are safe opportunities for workers to discuss behaviours that can cause psychosocial harm.

I provide regular opportunities for the team to collectively reflect on our progress and take on suggestions to improve.¹¹

I model appropriate workplace psychosocial safety behaviours.

I am equipped to manage reports of bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment within the company's established systems.

I have established unbiased and transparent processes, policies, and procedures to address psychosocial hazards within my team.

I consult my team and keep them adequately informed when decisions are made.

8. Kirby (2023), *Workplace Psychosocial Hazards Checklist*, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.whlgni.org.uk/media/uploads/psychosocial-hazards-checklist.pdf>
9. The Australian Council of Trade Unions: *Mind Your Head* (n.d.), *Occupational Health and Safety Checklist for Psychosocial Hazards*, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.mindyourhead.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/MYH-OHS-Checklist.pdf>

10. Chen et al., (2022), *Effect of Work Values on Miners' Safety Behavior: The Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment and the Moderating Role of Safety Climate*, [Online]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159553>

11. Boston Consulting Group (2024), *Psychological safety levels the playing field for employees*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2024/psychological-safety-levels-playing-field-for-employees>

3. Employees

Management has made a visible commitment to creating and maintaining a mentally healthy workplace for all employees.

Our workplace culture considers health and safety as important as production and quality.

Psychological health and safety are considered equal priority to physical health and safety.¹²

I am adequately informed about current business needs, developments, and reasons for some actions taken.

There is consistency and clarity in my job role and responsibilities.

I have received adequate training and support to undertake my duties effectively.

I am comfortable with my workload and the variety of tasks I am given.

I have adequate opportunities to develop my skills and build new ones.¹³

I am offered adequate managerial support with everyday work issues, new work issues, or personal issues if needed.

My workspace is designed to accommodate my physical and ergonomic needs.¹⁴

My company provides resources to support me when I experience stress, upset, anxiety, burn out, or have trouble sleeping.

My company supports a healthy work and life balance.

12. The Australian Council of Trade Unions: *Mind Your Head (n.d.)*, *Occupational Health and Safety Checklist for Psychosocial Hazards*, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.mindyourhead.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/MYH-OHS-Checklist.pdf>

13. Kirby (2023), *Workplace Psychosocial Hazards Checklist*, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.whlgni.org.uk/media/uploads/psychosocial-hazards-checklist.pdf>

14. Safe Work Australia (n.d.), *Traumatic events or materials*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/managing-health-and-safety/mental-health/psychosocial-hazards/traumatic-events-or-materials>

Psychological Safety Checklist

Stages of Psychological Safety

In his book *The Four Stages of Psychological Safety*, Timothy R Clark describes a conceptual model of four 'stages' of psychological safety that teams can progress through:

Stage 1: Inclusion Safety

Team members feel safe to belong to the team. They are comfortable being present, do not feel excluded, and feel like they are wanted and appreciated.

Stage 2: Learner Safety

Team members can learn through asking questions. Team members here may be able to experiment, make (and admit) small mistakes, and ask for help.

Stage 3: Contributor Safety

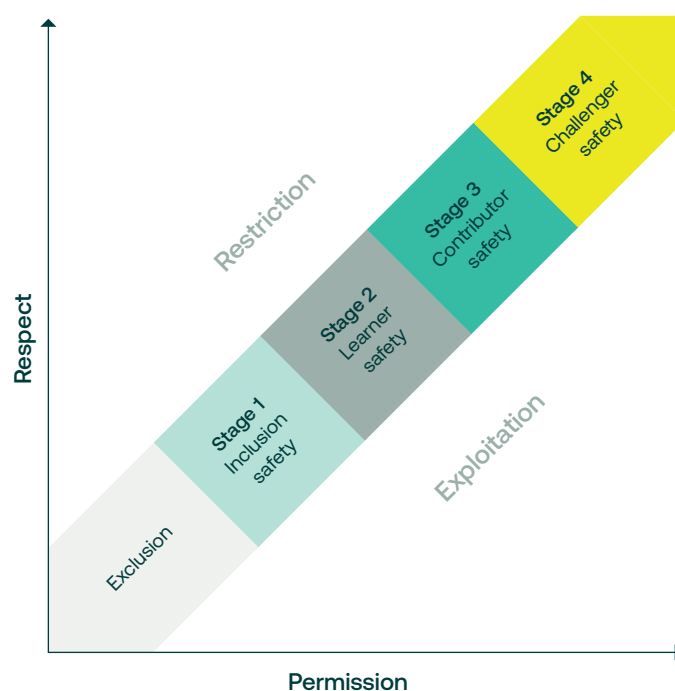
Team members feel safe to contribute their own ideas, without fear of embarrassment or ridicule. This is a more challenging state, because volunteering one's own ideas can increase the psychosocial vulnerability of team members.

Stage 4: Challenger Safety

Team members feel comfortable to challenge the status quo and engage in constructive dissent without the fear of retaliation or damage to standing or personal reputation.

The diagram below demonstrates how each stage builds on the previous, and how these stages interact with respect and permission within teams. Respect in the model refers to the acknowledgment and appreciation of others as individuals, regardless of their background, role, or status and recognising the value of contributions, ideas, and perspectives. When respect is present, individuals are more likely to feel safe to express themselves and engage in open communication. Permission also refers to the explicit or implicit allowance for individuals to speak up, share their thoughts, and take interpersonal risks without fear of negative consequences such as ridicule, punishment, or rejection.

Figure 1: The four stages of psychological safety¹⁵



15. Spill (2024), The 4 stages of psychological safety, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.spill.chat/company-culture/four-stages-of-psychological-safety>

Each stage of psychological safety highlights behaviours that a team can adopt to create an inclusive, supportive, and safe working environment.¹⁶

If someone on the team is at a significantly different stage to the others in the team, it can feel highly discordant. It is important to think about increasing the psychological safety of all the team and bringing everyone along together at a similar pace.¹⁷

1. Management

The company has an established psychological safety policy, that outlines leadership commitment to improving workplace psychological health and safety.

Senior leadership is required to actively endorse and support psychological health and safety procedures, initiatives, and processes.

Company policy includes measurable, relevant, consistent targets that are developed in consultation with employees.¹⁸

There is a baseline assessment of other workplace determinants of psychological health (e.g., environmental, physical, job requirement, staffing levels).¹⁹

The company has a mechanism for workers to report incidents related to psychological safety and respect.

The company provides advanced training in how to respond to immediate disclosures within an established psychological risk management framework.²⁰

The company provides adequate support to employees during transition periods, prolonged or recurring restructuring and other significant changes.²¹

2. Team Leaders

I am committed to creating a positive and fair working environment for my team.

I can effectively coach, engage in two-way conversations, and give and receive feedback in ways that create psychological safety for my team members.²²

I consistently recognise the efforts, contributions, and achievements of my team members.

I am adequately trained to recognise workplace behaviours that may reflect a psychological health and safety issue.

I routinely look for opportunities to connect with team members and do so in an authentic and transparent way.

I can recognise where my team members do not have clear guidelines on the tasks they are expected to do and not do.

I am equipped to handle incidents involving an explicit or implicit challenge to psychological health, safety, or wellbeing within my team.

I consistently leverage the knowledge and expertise of my team members when making decisions.²³

I organise frequent team-building exercises with my team to take stock of their work, values, customs, and interpersonal relationships.

I monitor how I respond to bad news, dissenting voices and feedback.

16. Ibid.

17. Psychological Safety (2021), The Four Stages of Psychological Safety, [Online]. Available at: <https://psychsafety.co.uk/the-four-stages-of-psychological-safety/>

18. Mental Health Commission of Canada (2019), The National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, [Online]. Available at: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/2019-03/C4HC%20Toolkit_Asset%2036_ATP-HC_EN.pdf

19. Mining Industry Human Resources Council (2024), Psychological Safety in the Workplace, [PDF]. Available at: <https://mihr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/MiHR-24-17-Psychological-Safety.pdf>

20. International Labour Organization (n.d.), *Preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work through occupational safety and health measures*, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/publications/major-publications/preventing-and-addressing-violence-and-harassment-world-work-through>

21. Rio Tinto (n.d.), Report into Workplace Culture at Rio Tinto, [PDF]. Available at: <https://www.riotinto.com/-/media/Content/Documents/Sustainability/People/RT-Everyday-respect-report.pdf>

22. Centre for Creative Leadership (n.d.), *How Leaders Can Build Psychological Safety at Work*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-psychological-safety-at-work/>

23. World Economic Forum (2023), *How do we create a team culture that's inclusive and psychologically safe?*, [Online]. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/10/workplace-psychological-safety/>

3. Employees

I am always treated with respect and dignity in this team.

I can share my opinion when asked and offer alternatives and solutions in a way that respects the ideas and opinions of others.

When someone makes a mistake in this team, it is not held against them.

I feel a positive sense of belonging within my work team.

I am comfortable asking my supervisor and colleagues clarifying questions about my job.

I know how I contribute to the overall success of my organisation, beyond just completing my job assignments.

I can voice concerns to management about company policy without a negative consequence.²⁴

The workplace layout supports communication and social support from colleagues.

All the equipment I need for my work is readily available and well maintained.

I can identify and escalate instances of offensive, intimidating behaviours (sexual or non-sexual in nature) targeted at me or another individual.

24. Geller (2022), *Psychological Safety: The Optimal Context for Injury Prevention*, [PDF]. Available at: https://www.assp.org/docs/default-source/psj-articles/bpgeller_0122.pdf?sfvrsn=d11d9f47_0

Wayfinder

Existing Best Practice Guidelines:

[CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ 9700-803/2013 \(R2022\), Psychological health and safety in the workplace](#)

A voluntary standard that specifies requirements for a documented and systematic approach to develop and sustain a psychologically healthy & safe workplace.

[CSA Z1003: The National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace](#)

First Standard of its kind in the world, it offers a 13 psychosocial factor framework for understanding the work environment factors that contribute to overall PH&S. Provides detailed guidance on best practices approaches and additional resources.

[International Organization for Standardization 45003:2021 Occupational Health & Safety Management](#)

Provides guidelines for managing psychosocial risk within an occupational health and safety (OH&S (occupational health and safety) management system based on ISO 45001.

[ISO 45003: Occupational health and safety management – Psychological health and safety at work – Guidelines for managing psychosocial risks](#)

First international framework for Psychological Health & Safety development was informed by CSA Z1003. It provides a framework for 21 psychosocial factors in the work environment, which align with the CSA Z1003 13-factor framework.

[US Surgeon General’s Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)

The framework, developed through research and expert discussions, outlines five essentials for workplace mental health and wellbeing. It serves as a starting point for organisations to update and establish policies, processes, and practices to support workers’ mental health and wellbeing.

Protocol for Monitoring Psychosocial Risk in the Workplace:

[Samra, J. Psychologically Safe Leader Assessment](#)

A five-module program for managers and people leaders to build the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to recognise, speak to, and action workplace psychological health and safety.

[SPE Implementation Handbook: Assembling the Pieces](#)

A well-developed psychological health and safety management system can help organisations identify potential hazards that could impact the psychological health of their workers.

[World Health Organization \(WHO\): Guidelines on Mental Health at Work](#)

In these guidelines, WHO provides evidence-based global public health guidance on organisational interventions, manager and worker training, and individual interventions for the promotion of positive mental health and prevention of mental health conditions.

[World Health Organization \(WHO\) & International Labour Organization \(ILO\): Mental health at work: policy brief](#)

The *Mental health at work: policy brief*, developed jointly by WHO and the ILO, provides a pragmatic framework for implementing the recommendations of *WHO guidelines on mental health at work*.

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Through collaboration, ICMM member companies set the standard for responsibly produced minerals and metals in a safe, just and sustainable world.

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ICMM
53-64 Chancery Lane
London, WC2A 1QS
United Kingdom
+44 [0]20 7467 5070
info@icmm.com
icmm.com

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