

Being an effective manager

A self-paced learning resource for managers and supervisors working in Disability Business Services



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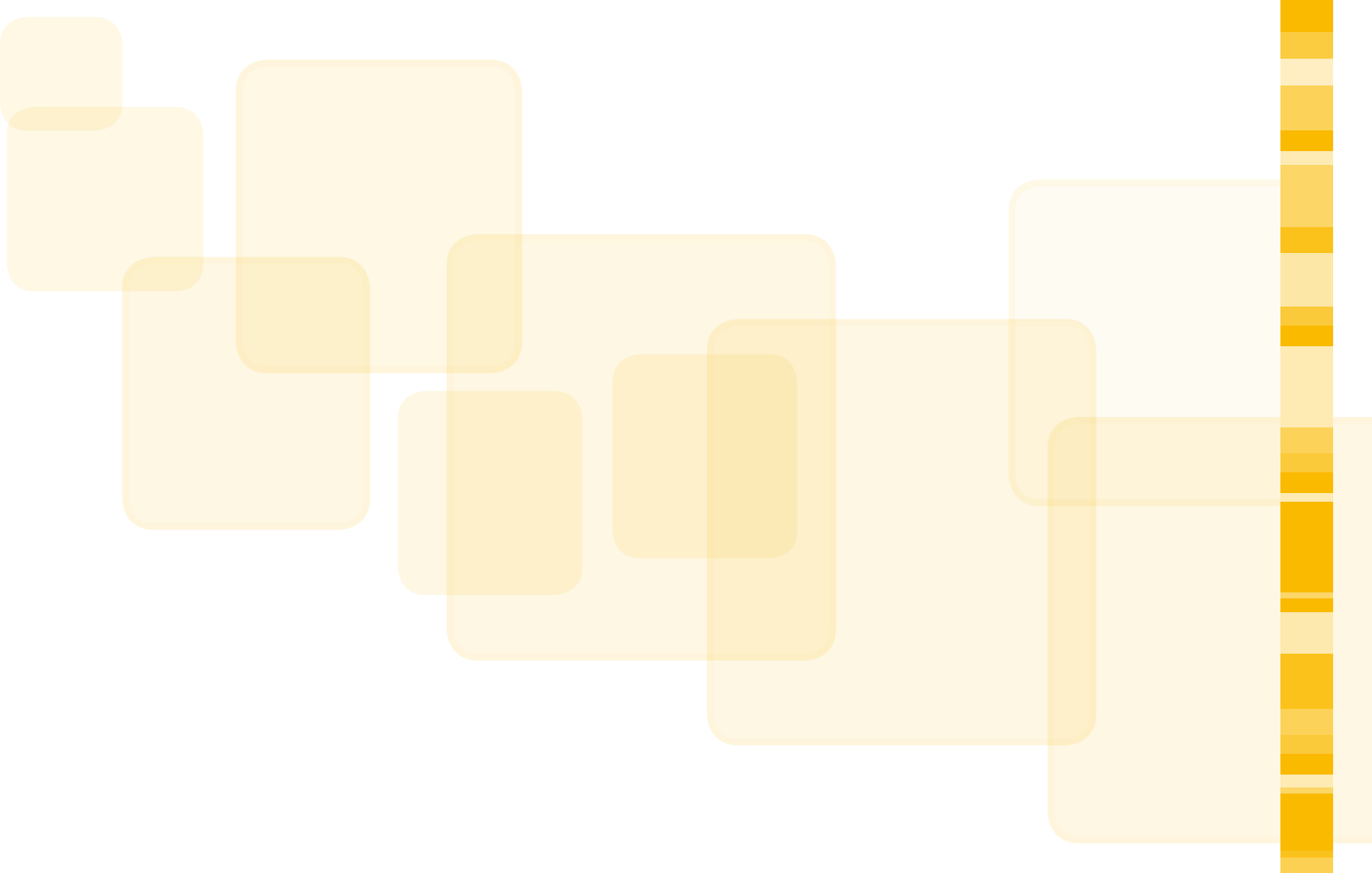
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Introduction



Being an effective manager

This self-paced learning resource aims to guide you through some aspects of management and your role in a Disability Business Service. There is no one right way to manage, however, there are some fundamental principles and practices that can help ensure management techniques are effective. This resource aims to provide you with an overview of some of these techniques.

The resource is divided into six areas:

- ▶ the role of managers
- ▶ handling conflict and discipline
- ▶ workplace communication
- ▶ workplace committees and meetings
- ▶ challenges and issues
- ▶ quality assurance.

Using the resource

The resource requires you to use your previous experience in the workforce as a team member or team leader and apply your knowledge and skills to managing in a Disability Business Service. There are questions and activities to help you decide what will work best for you in your workplace. It is recommended that you discuss the topics and issues covered in the case studies with other people such as workplace trainers, human resource managers or other managers or supervisors. This will help you gain a broader view of the various ways managers can be effective.

Terms

You may find that the terms used throughout the resource differ from those in your workplace. For example, you may use the term 'client' instead of 'supported employee', 'business service' instead of 'Disability Business Service'.

Other resources

An important aspect of successful management is good communication. As you are aware, there are some ways of communicating with supported employees that are more effective than others. This resource only briefly discusses communication in management, however, the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) has produced a series of products called *Work Talk*. The *Work Talk* series provides information about communicating with people with:

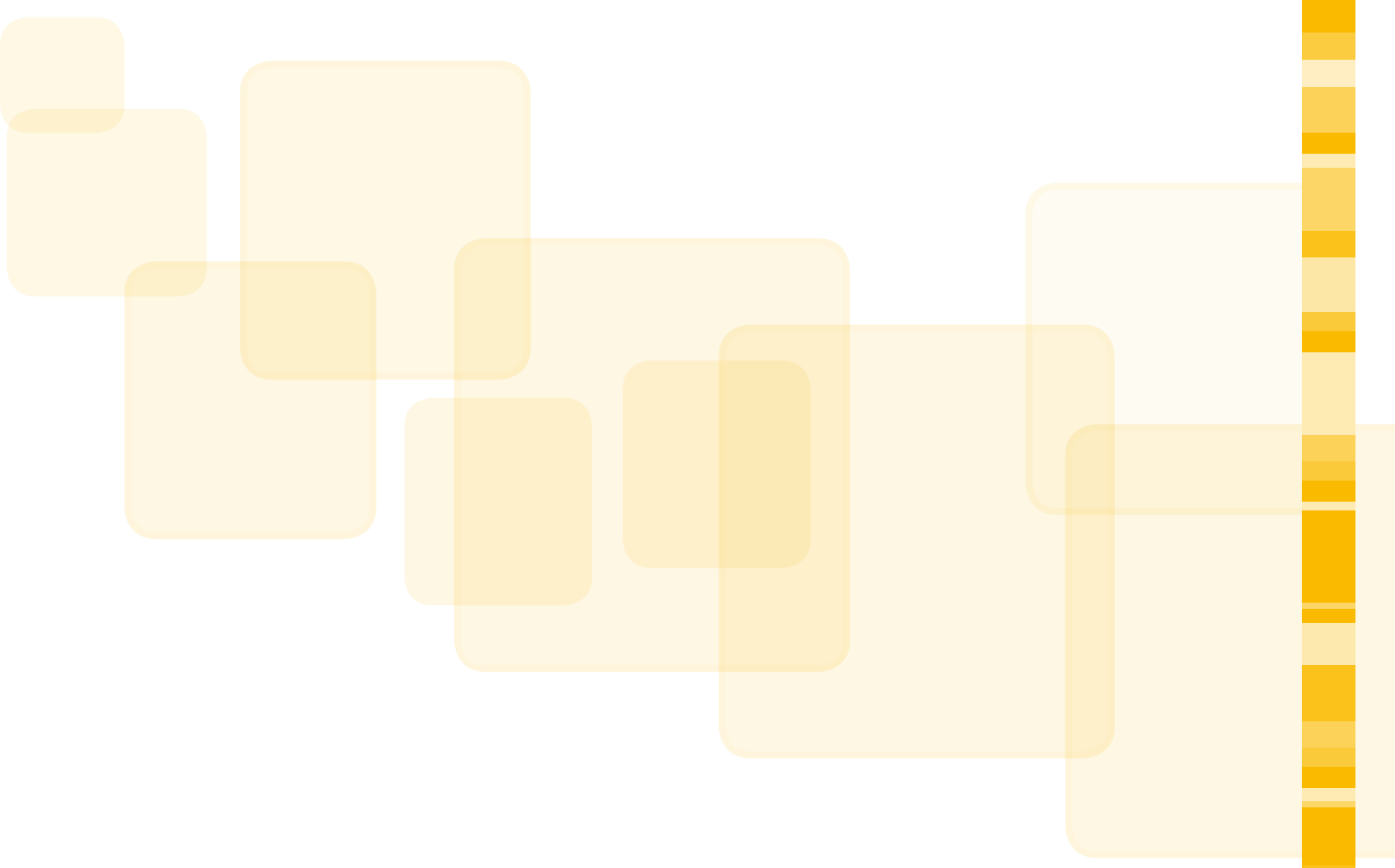
- ▶ an acquired brain injury
- ▶ intellectual disability
- ▶ psychiatric disability
- ▶ physical/sensory disability.

These products, together with other useful training and information products, can be located in the yellow and blue folders provided by FaHCSIA to your business service. They can also be accessed from FaHCSIA's website:

www.ofw.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/disabilities/representation-consumer_training_support_products.htm

Your local library may have books, DVDs and other resources that can help you learn more about management.

The role of managers



Planning

Planning is one of the key activities for management in any organisation. The results of the planning process provide organisations with a purpose and a framework for activity to ensure everyone is working toward the same goal/s. The planning process also enables organisations to identify problems and opportunities as well as to highlight strengths and weaknesses.

Organisations need a range of different plans to assist them in achieving their goals. An organisation's strategic plan sets the foundation for all other planning activities. The strategic plan is a long-term approach to the organisation's future. They are generally five to ten years in duration, with some strategic plans looking up to twenty years ahead. Strategic plans assist managers to:

- ▶ prepare for and deal with the internal and external environments the organisation is operating within
- ▶ determine the best allocation of resources
- ▶ identify where the activities of each work team fit into the overall operation.

From the strategic plan the departments, sections and teams can develop operational plans for how their activities will fit with the activities of other departments, sections and teams, and support achievement of the organisation's goals. Plans offer a reference point for communication between all employees in an organisation.

Flexibility is essential in the planning process, as it enables organisations to take advantage of opportunities as they arise and to act quickly to reduce the impact of any unforeseen problems. Good planning involves consideration of contingency measures – answering the question 'what will we do if this doesn't happen?'.

Case study: K9

In 2006, Longford Enterprises, a large Disability Business Service, decided to extend its business operations into pet services. Senior management accepted a recommendation that K9 Pet Service be established to provide a pet care service for people needing assistance caring for their cats, dogs, rabbits, birds and other domestic animals. The agreement was that Longford would support the new business for two years and then review its operations.

Two years later, K9 was operating with a team of five people very successfully. Business was booming and the demand for the service was more than the current team could handle.

Ailsa Flemming, the manager at Longford met with Harry Trimbole to discuss the future of K9. Harry reported that it was doing well, but that he had a concern that K9 didn't have a direction, and was not using its resources to best advantage. He agreed that a plan was required.

They listed the key questions to commence the planning process, including:

- ▶ What are the goals?
- ▶ Where are we now?
- ▶ What is the current situation?
- ▶ What is the forecast?
- ▶ What alternatives are there for reaching our goals?
- ▶ What actions will we take to reach our goals?
- ▶ What potential barriers are there to reaching our goals?

After consulting with managers, team leaders and employees from Longford and K9 Ailsa and Harry wrote a strategic plan for K9. In the plan they included a review process and a plan for monitoring progress against the goals.

In your workplace

Describe the strategic planning processes in your workplace. How do the team's operational plans fit in this process?

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What suggestions would you make to improve the planning process in your workplace?

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Key learnings

- ▶ Planning is a key part of all managers' and supervisors' roles.
- ▶ Plans provide a reference point for all work activity in an organisation.
- ▶ Managers and supervisors should involve team members in planning processes.
- ▶ Plans should be regularly reviewed.

Leading

Successful leadership of work teams requires managers and supervisors to have an understanding of the organisational goals and the team's role in assisting the organisation to meet its goals. Leadership means that managers and supervisors have to undertake a number of actions including:

- ▶ establishing clear goals and priorities
- ▶ planning who does what, when and how
- ▶ organising and allocating workflow
- ▶ briefing the team about tasks and their importance
- ▶ making sure supplies and equipment are available
- ▶ making sure work is done correctly and on time
- ▶ monitoring and minimising costs
- ▶ finding better ways to do things.

In addition managers and supervisors have to focus on both the team as a whole and team members as individuals.

Actions that build the team include:

- ▶ encouraging people to work cooperatively
- ▶ providing a sense of purpose
- ▶ giving feedback on performance
- ▶ building team members' team-working skills
- ▶ recognising success and learning from failure.

Actions that develop individuals include:

- ▶ training and coaching to meet individual needs
- ▶ recognising efforts
- ▶ keeping people informed
- ▶ helping people feel part of the team
- ▶ trying to match individual skills and work preferences with available work.

Case study: What makes a leader?

Jason, who had recently joined Garden Sheds, was discussing leadership in the organisation with Michael, a long-term employee. Michael was dissatisfied with the way his new supervisor was leading the team. He asked Jason about his supervisor in his previous job. Jason described how his previous supervisor had been considered to be a good leader.

One of the key points Jason talked about was how Marie, his supervisor, had focused on what the team was there to do, and on the people in the team. In particular he described how she had made sure that the team members knew the standards they had to reach, including quality and quantity measures. She had also made sure that everyone in the team had the skills and knowledge needed to do their jobs. She trained them on the job and arranged other types of training they needed, either as individuals or as a team. He offered an example of how she had organised for the team to attend an occupational health and safety seminar, and when everyone was back in the workplace she had followed it up with one-on-one training for individual team members.

Jason believed that Marie's skills in communicating well with team members at the right time and in the right manner and her inclusive and respectful behaviour meant she was an effective leader.

In your workplace

What does leadership mean for you?

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How do team leaders in your workplace show that they are focused on what the team is there to do?

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How do team leaders in your workplace show that they are focused on the team members?

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Key learnings

Effective leaders need good communication skills as well as a clear understanding of workplace plans, policies and procedures. In addition leaders must have the ability to focus on individual needs and team needs.

Team building

Team building requires managers and supervisors to undertake three key actions. These are to:

- ▶ communicate the expectations of the organisation's management clearly to the team
- ▶ ensure employees know why they are part of a team
- ▶ build commitment of the individuals as well as the team.

When managers and supervisors are able to respond to the following questions positively they are working towards building a team:

- ▶ Do team members know why the team was created?
- ▶ Is the team being supported with appropriate resources such as enough people to do the work they need to do, the right equipment and realistic timeframes?
- ▶ Does the management team give enough attention to the teams and how they are operating?
- ▶ Are team members aware of how they fit into the team and how the team fits into the organisation's business objectives?
- ▶ Is there a shared set of values about how the team will work together?
- ▶ Do team members see their work as important to themselves and to the business?
- ▶ Does the business recognise team members' contributions appropriately?
- ▶ Are team members all working to the same set of objectives?

Teams are built over time with constant attention to the needs of individuals and the team as a whole.

Case study: The first pieces of the puzzle

Marny was employed as a supervisor at Puzzles, a Disability Business Service that made jigsaws and wooden puzzles. After a managers' meeting, where the general manager had emphasised the importance of the role of managers and supervisors as team builders, Marny decided to talk to Walter, a well-respected supervisor, about how he saw the role of supervisors as team builders at Puzzles.

Walter had explained that when Puzzles had been established it had been decided that a team-based approach would be a way to involve all the employees in creating a successful business. Puzzles had wanted to meet customer demands as well as create opportunities for employees to gain skills and knowledge. One of the first steps had been for management to communicate Puzzles' objectives to each employee in ways that best met the employee's communication needs.

Management realised that the key to building effective teams was to make sure that each supported employee knew what their job was and how it fitted within the overall purpose of the business. It was part of the supervisor's job to make sure team members knew this. Walter gave the example of how, each day, he had talked to the team about what they had achieved including the number of puzzles produced, and the quality of the work completed. He mentioned how important it was to take the time to regularly check that team members were clear about what they were doing at work (their jobs), and what they were achieving (the end product) and where each team fitted in the production of the puzzles and games.

In your workplace

Do all team members understand their jobs and how they contribute to the end product or service? If not, what can be done to rectify this?

Do team members have the knowledge, skills and capabilities to do their work? If not, how can this be achieved?

Does the team have the resources and support needed to do its work? If not, how can the team get the resources and support it needs?

Describe how the team demonstrates that it knows its goals and objectives.

Describe how the team knows how the outcomes of its work are measured.

Key learnings

Team building is an ongoing and daily part of managers' and supervisors' work. As with other key parts of a manager's and supervisor's role, good communication skills are essential. The ability to communicate expectations clearly and appropriately to employees is a skill that requires constant practice and attention to feedback.

Appraising performance

Performance appraisal involves determining how well employees are doing their job, communicating that information to the employees, and establishing a plan for performance improvement. Information from an appraisal process is used for linking rewards to performance, identifying training and development needs, and making job placement decisions. Performance appraisal is usually a formal process conducted on a regular basis and should be consistent with an organisation's induction program and performance planning process. A successful performance appraisal process has to be approached carefully, it must be well planned, and the people involved need to be informed about the roles they have as part of the process.

The benefits of a performance appraisal process include:

- ▶ providing an opportunity for an organisation to review the scope and responsibility of an employee's current position
- ▶ improving communication between a team leader and a team member
- ▶ enabling team members to discuss career paths and options
- ▶ providing a formal opportunity for team members to raise issues of concern
- ▶ helping to identify training and development needs.

Managers and supervisors appraising performance should:

- ▶ undertake the training required to conduct appraisals proficiently
- ▶ ensure they are prepared for the discussion
- ▶ be open to feedback from the team member
- ▶ maintain appropriate records
- ▶ recognise that performance appraisal should be a positive process for employees and not confused with a discipline procedure.

Case study: It's that time of the year again

Selma, the new HR manager at Parcel Packers, had been informed that the business had a very successful performance appraisal program in place. However, as the time for the annual appraisal drew closer, she began to hear comments from team leaders that indicated there were a few problems with the process.

The comments were generally negative and included statements such as:

'A few weeks before the annual performance appraisal time and everyone starts working really hard. It's ridiculous.'

'I hate performance appraisals. They take time and don't mean a thing to anyone. Nothing happens after they are done. We just go on like nothing has happened.'

'Why do we wait until performance appraisal time to let someone know they are doing the wrong thing?'

'Performance appraisals are a one-way street. The bosses do all the talking and we just sit there and say nothing.'

'How are we supposed to contribute to a performance appraisal if we don't know what we are supposed to be doing in the first place?'

'The trouble with performance appraisals is I don't know what is being appraised.'

'It's time something was done to fix it up. We need a program that helps us do our job,' said one team leader.

Selma decided to brief the team leaders about what the performance appraisal process set out to achieve for Parcel Packers. She made sure that the team leaders were aware that the formal performance appraisal was not a time to talk to team members about performance problems. She reminded the team that giving regular feedback was still an essential part of the daily role of team leaders and that the performance appraisal process needed to look at past performance and also plan for the future.

In your workplace

List some benefits of the performance appraisal process in your workplace.

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List some disadvantages of the performance appraisal process in your workplace.

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Describe the strengths of the performance appraisal process in your workplace.

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What recommendations would you make to improve the performance appraisal process in your workplace?

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Key learnings

Performance appraisals do not replace the day-to-day roles of managers and supervisors but they can be useful tools for helping organisations and employees clarify expectations and plan for future activity. Successful performance appraisal requires skills and planning and should be linked to organisational goals as well as the employee's career goals.

Maintaining duty of care, confidentiality and privacy

Managers and supervisors have legal responsibilities to meet duty of care, privacy and confidentiality requirements as part of their roles in Disability Business Services.

Duty of care is a general legal duty on all individuals and the organisation to avoid carelessly causing injury to people. It requires everything reasonably practicable to be done to protect the health and safety of others at the workplace. This duty is placed on:

- ▶ all employers/organisations
- ▶ their employees/volunteers
- ▶ any others who have an influence on the hazards in a workplace, for example, contractors and people/organisations that design, manufacture, import, supply or install plant, equipment or materials used in the workplace.

Duty of care to employees means that organisations must:

- ▶ provide a safe environment
- ▶ provide information and instruction on workplace hazards and supervision of employees in safe work
- ▶ monitor the health of employees and keep appropriate records
- ▶ provide health and safety advice
- ▶ monitor the conditions in the employment environment.

Managers and supervisors must ensure that:

- ▶ for each activity, the organisation has carried out a risk assessment to identify hazards, assess risks and put control measures for these in place
- ▶ all employees are made aware of the relevant policies, for example, occupational health and safety.

Confidentiality requires employees not to misuse personal information about the operations of a workplace or about employees or clients of the workplace.

Confidentiality relates to the actions of individual employees.

Privacy relates to the collection, protection and disclosure of personal information provided to a workplace by customers and employees.

Privacy relates to the practices of the workplace.

It is generally recognised that privacy relates to the:

- ▶ collection of information
- ▶ storage and security of information
- ▶ recording, access and alteration of information
- ▶ disclosure of information.

For example, in relation to the collection of information, organisations must ensure that:

- ▶ only relevant information is collected
- ▶ the person providing information understands why the information is being collected.

Case study: We need to be clear

Brenda, the CEO of a Disability Business Service, was speaking to a group of team leaders about confidentiality and privacy. She was concerned that while attending a BBQ the previous weekend she had been told about an incident in her workplace the previous week involving an argument between two supported employees.

It had been made clear that the person recounting the incident had been told the story by a supervisor currently working at that Disability Business Service. Brenda spoke to the managers and supervisors about the importance of keeping information about the activities in the workplace as confidential information. She emphasised to the supervisors and managers that confidentiality in the workplace involved relationships between employees and employers as well as financial and operational information.

In your workplace

How is duty of care demonstrated in your workplace?

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What practices and policies exist in your workplace regarding confidentiality?

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What practices and policies exist in your workplace regarding privacy?

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Key learnings

Each organisation will have specific requirements regarding duty of care, confidentiality and privacy provisions. Managers and supervisors should familiarise themselves with the particular requirements of their workplace.

Record keeping

Records include papers and documents, emails, spreadsheets, information in business systems, notebooks and diaries, and even Post-it® notes.

Photographs, films and sound recordings can also be considered to be records. Records are valuable assets and good recordkeeping supports improved productivity because it enables easy access to the information needed to make the right decisions at the right time.

Useful records help organisations do their work; important records assist organisations to meet their obligations. However, not all records need to be kept indefinitely.

The value of a record is dictated by its content (for example, whether it is trivial or important), its scarcity (for example, whether it is unique, or one of many copies), and its context (for example, the considerations that gave rise to its creation). It is vitally important to ensure that personal records about individuals (especially file notes) are prepared in an accurate, factual, appropriate and sensitive manner without personal bias. It is important to be aware that at some time they might be viewed by the subject, his/her family, and possibly in an alternative forum such as worker's compensation or industrial. A number of agencies offer courses on preparing appropriate file notes.

Efficient and effective recordkeeping means focusing on managing only the useful and important records. Even though a record has been created, this does not mean that the record needs to be kept. Non-essential records should be disposed of as part of normal administrative practice and records of short-term value via other methods.

Every manager and supervisor has an obligation to ensure that their records are accurate with sustainable details, are kept appropriately and that useful or important information is available to other employees and managers.

Disability Business Services have a responsibility to gather, retain and maintain information for Commonwealth records. These records can be used only as authorised by the Commonwealth or by the law, and information contained in Commonwealth records may only be disclosed with authorisation or in accordance with the law.

Case study: It's all on the record

Regent Enterprises manufactured boogie board and surf board covers for travellers. The company had a good reputation for making well-constructed, strong covers and in recent months had begun building a reputation overseas. Orders were coming from countries around the Pacific Ocean.

The growth in business meant that Regent could employ more supported employees and supervisors. It had also meant that manufacturing equipment had been upgraded and a new computer-based, order-tracking system had been purchased. There was a lot happening in the business. Unfortunately the fast growth had meant that the recordkeeping system hadn't been kept up to date. It had also meant that some managers and supervisors were behind with their record keeping.

The general manager recognised that Regent needed to undergo a review of its recordkeeping system if it was to continue as a viable business.

In your workplace

What recommendations would you suggest to improve the records management system in your workplace?

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How would you go about implementing each of the recommendations? Who would you discuss the recommendations with? For example, you can discuss personnel records with the human resources manager.

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Who should be involved with changes to recordkeeping processes and procedures?

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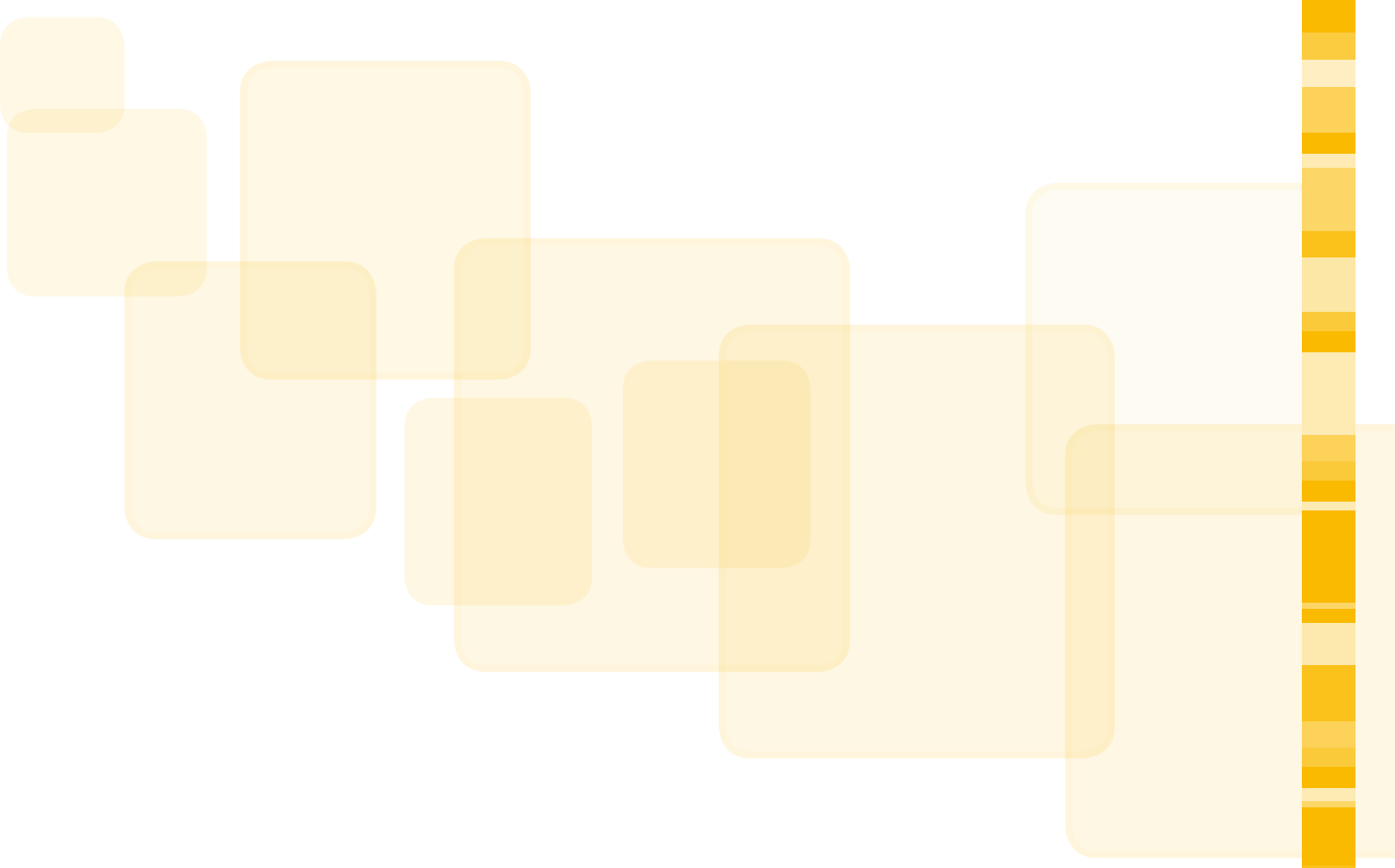
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Key learnings

While organisations are responsible for establishing and maintaining recordkeeping systems, good recordkeeping depends on managers and supervisors being systematic about maintaining records and using good judgement about when records should be developed and which should be retained. Managers and supervisors should refer to their workplace's guidelines when making decisions about records and recordkeeping.

Handling conflict and discipline



Challenging behaviours in the workplace

Challenging behaviour in the workplace describes behaviour exhibited by an employee that interferes with other employees' work. Challenging behaviours also occur outside the workplace and affect many people in the community. It is not an inevitable result of developmental disability.

Common examples of challenging behaviour are aggression, self-injurious behaviour, property destruction, oppositional behaviour, stereotyped behaviours and socially inappropriate behaviour. Some examples are set out below.

Challenging behaviour	Example
Aggression	includes biting and scratching, hitting, pinching, grabbing, hair pulling, throwing objects, verbal abuse, screaming, spitting
Self-injurious behaviour	most commonly cutting, scraping, burning, biting or hitting
Stereotyped behaviours	repetitive movements, rocking, repetitive speech, and repetitive manipulation of objects
Socially inappropriate behaviour	includes damage to property, hyperactivity, stealing, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, destruction of clothing, incontinence, temper tantrums, lack of awareness of danger, withdrawal

It is important to remember that challenging behaviour may seriously affect a person's health and quality of life. Some examples are listed here.

Behaviour	Possible effect
Aggressive behaviour	accidental injury
Self-injurious behaviour (including ingestion or inhalation of foreign bodies)	blindness, bowel perforation, infection, haemorrhaging, brain damage and even death
Stereotyped behaviour	repetitive strain injuries
Socially inappropriate behaviour	loneliness or social isolation

There can be multiple reasons for people exhibiting challenging behaviour including:

- ▶ unrecognised pain or discomfort
- ▶ pre-existing medical conditions
- ▶ medication
- ▶ epilepsy
- ▶ disability specific conditions
- ▶ changes in the work environment
- ▶ significant life events
- ▶ communication issues
- ▶ the stage of life.

Important issues in communicating with a person with challenging behaviour include:

- ▶ making sure the person and other team members are safe
- ▶ focusing on abilities, not disabilities
- ▶ establishing rapport with each employee
- ▶ obtaining relevant information from other sources about the impact a disability may have on behaviour.

It is important to review incidents where challenging behaviours have been exhibited in the workplace. Some review questions include:

- ▶ What was the interaction between the employee and others prior to the incident occurring?
- ▶ What triggered the behaviour?
- ▶ How did others respond to the behaviour?
- ▶ Did the response of others strengthen or maintain the behaviour?
- ▶ What environmental features (for example, people, places, and activities) may be relevant?
- ▶ Are there any known medical factors associated with challenging behaviours, for example, the disability the supported employee has or a change in medication?
- ▶ Are there any educational or skill factors that are relevant, for example, communication difficulties?

Case study: I'm new around here

Matthew was a bit worried when he began his first day at Interquartz Inc. He had never worked with people with disability before and although he had been told he would receive some training he was concerned he wouldn't be able to deal well with challenging behaviours. He was delighted to discover that, following a short introduction to the organisation, he was to attend a workshop with other managers about dealing with challenging behaviour in the workplace.

The workshop began with the trainer asking for definitions of 'challenging behaviour'. The responses from the group included 'It's difficult behaviour', 'It's angry', aggressive behaviour', 'It's uncommunicative behaviour, like sulking or shouting and it makes my job really hard' and 'Sometimes when people are under stress their behaviour can change'. The trainer explained that working environments, significant life events, communication issues and the stage of life can affect behaviour. He went on to describe how changes in behaviour serve a function or purpose for a person. The trainer emphasised that challenging behaviour relates to individuals not to disabilities.

Matthew left the workshop with a clear message that because each person is different he would need to deal with each incident individually.

In your workplace

What guidelines or procedures are available to assist you in dealing with challenging behaviour in the workplace?

What hints would you suggest for managers and supervisors dealing with challenging behaviours in the workplace?

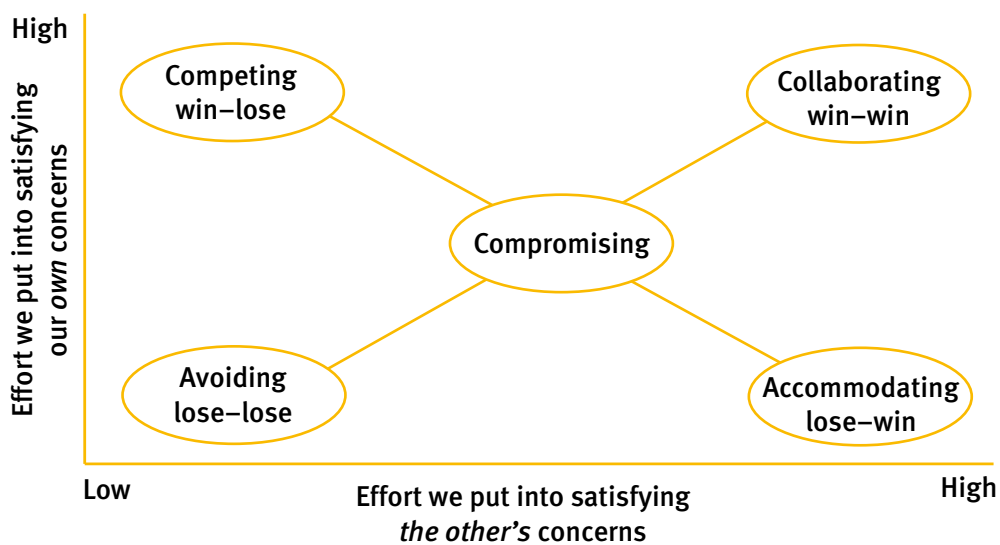
Where can you gain additional information or training about dealing with challenging behaviours in the workplace?

Key learnings

Each incident of challenging behaviour should be dealt with on its merits. Where additional guidance or training is needed managers and supervisors should talk to workplace trainers or human resources managers to get additional advice and information about dealing with challenging behaviours in the workplace.

Handling conflict

Conflict occurs when two people have perceived incompatible goals or experience interference from others in achieving their goals. Thomas and Kilmann (in Cole 2002, p.175) developed a conflict mode instrument that is designed to assess an individual's behaviour in conflict situations. They maintain that a person's behaviour can be scaled between assertive (the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his/her own concerns) or cooperative (the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns). These two basic dimensions of behaviour can be used to define five methods of dealing with conflict.



Source: Thomas and Kilmann in Cole 2002, p.175)

Competing is assertive and uncooperative – individuals pursue their own concerns at the other person's expense.

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative – individuals neglect their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person.

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative – individuals do not immediately pursue their own concerns or those of the other person; they don't address the issues.

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative – this involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of both people.

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness – the objective is to find a mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties.

Everyone is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes but some people use some modes better than others.

Case study: Talk it over

Jolene and Nick, supported employees working at Tea for Two, a Disability Business Service that packaged specialist tea, were arguing loudly about the best way for the finished cartons to be sealed. Loud voices and yelling were heard across the workshop and some other supported employees were becoming distressed at the level of noise.

Carla, Jolene and Nick's supervisor, asked them to join her in the tea room, away from the workshop. She recognised that moving to another area may help calm the discussion and would provide an opportunity for the three of them to sit and talk about the issue. Once they were in the tea room Carla asked Jolene and Nick to tell her about their ideas. Together they talked about different ways the work could be done.

In your workplace

Do you have a preferred method for dealing with conflict in the workplace? Can you describe it?

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What challenges would you face when trying some of the methods described above in your workplace?

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How would you overcome these challenges?

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Key learnings

Conflict can be positive and lead to improved work practices and procedures. Ideally managers and supervisors will choose from a range of conflict resolution strategies to resolve conflict in the workplace.

Workplace discipline

Most employees voluntarily follow workplace policies and procedures and meet rules and standards. Employees who fail to follow rules, standards, practices and policies should be disciplined according to the procedures set out in the Disability Business Service's discipline policy and procedure guidelines.

There are usually specific procedures that managers and supervisors are expected to follow when dealing with disciplinary matters in the workplace. It is particularly important to know when discipline is required in accordance with organisational due processes, and that the associated concept of fairness is observed when deliberating any possible disciplinary action. In many instances managers and supervisors will need to use judgement to decide whether an action or set of actions require disciplinary intervention.

Depending on the situation, the policies, procedures and laws in place, workplace disciplinary action can be required. Disciplinary actions in the workplace could include:

- ▶ a counselling session
- ▶ a workplace interview
- ▶ a formal warning
- ▶ dismissal
- ▶ referral to appropriate authorities which could include the police.

Some common reasons for disciplining employees include the following:

Disruptive behaviours in the workplace include:

- ▶ fighting
- ▶ gambling
- ▶ use of drugs or alcohol
- ▶ sleeping in the workplace
- ▶ refusal/failure to follow safety procedures
- ▶ refusal to complete work.

Unethical behaviours in the workplace include:

- ▶ stealing
- ▶ damage to property.

Attendance behaviours in the workplace include:

- ▶ lateness
- ▶ absenteeism
- ▶ leaving early.

In circumstances where a corrective approach has been unsuccessful and additional disciplining is required, managers and supervisors should discuss the circumstances with their manager or the human resources manager.

Case study: Smoking again?

Aaron and Victoria, supported employees in a Disability Business Service, were close friends. While the Disability Business Service had a no smoking policy, it was well known that Aaron and Victoria regularly left their workstations to have a chat and a smoke behind the main building. This practice had been continuing for around two years.

Saundra, as the new human resources manager, decided the practice had to stop. There were numerous issues that concerned her including safety and duty of care to employees. Saundra approached Davo, Aaron and Victoria's supervisor, to discuss the issues.

Davo was reluctant to intervene to stop Aaron and Victoria smoking. Saundra had to move the issue from a conversation with Davo to a directive, where she instructed Davo to request Aaron and Victoria to stay at their workstations during work time and not to smoke on the premises. Aaron and Victoria ignored Davo's request and continued to leave their workstations. Davo repeated the request and explained the reasons why they needed to stop but the behaviour continued. Eventually Davo spoke to Saundra to get advice on what he should do. Together they met with Aaron and Victoria and explained the workplace rules and consequences of not following them.

In your workplace

Are you familiar with the discipline policy and procedures for your workplace? If not, access a copy and read them.

What additional information, advice or training do you believe you might need in relation to dealing with disciplinary matters in your workplace? What will you do to gain this?

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What skills do you need in order to carry out a discipline role? Who would you contact to get assistance in developing these skills?

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Key learnings

All employees need to be aware of the policies and procedures for disciplinary action in the workplace. It is part of the manager's and supervisor's role to ensure all team members are aware of and understand these rules and regulations.

Using the complaints procedure

Each workplace should have a customised set of policies and procedures for dealing with complaints. Ideally these documents will be readily accessible to all employees and provide clear means for employees to have complaints dealt with. Effective use of a complaints procedure will depend on Disability Business Services:

- ▶ reviewing and regularly updating the complaints policy and procedures to ensure currency
- ▶ ensuring a plain English version of the policy statement is readily available to all employees
- ▶ reviewing all procedures to ensure they offer consistency in approach and provide open and flexible opportunity for complaints to be lodged
- ▶ communicating revised procedures through appropriate communication channels to all employees
- ▶ ensuring the procedures can be used by all employees
- ▶ ensuring expert advice and assistance is available when required
- ▶ including information about the complaints policy and procedure in the employee induction program
- ▶ ensuring employees are regularly informed about the complaints procedure
- ▶ ensuring employees are aware of all avenues for lodging a complaint
- ▶ providing training and development opportunities to supervisors and managers to assist them in dealing with complaints.

Case study: No news is not good news

Deanne Nunnan, the CEO of Paksafe, a Disability Business Service, was concerned that there had not been one complaint from within Paksafe, or from outside, for more than three months. At a managers' meeting she explained that she viewed complaints as opportunities for improvements to be made. She described them as a free advisory service.

She requested that the complaints policy and procedure documents be reviewed to make sure they were up to date and flexible for use by all employees. Paksafe had grown significantly since they had been written and they were outdated. She also asked that plain English versions be developed at the same time. Deanne also asked that Paksafe's policies and procedures for occupational health and safety and sexual harassment in the workplace be reviewed to ensure the complaints procedures were consistent and clear.

In your workplace

How does your workplace deal with complaints from employees?

How does your workplace deal with complaints from customers?

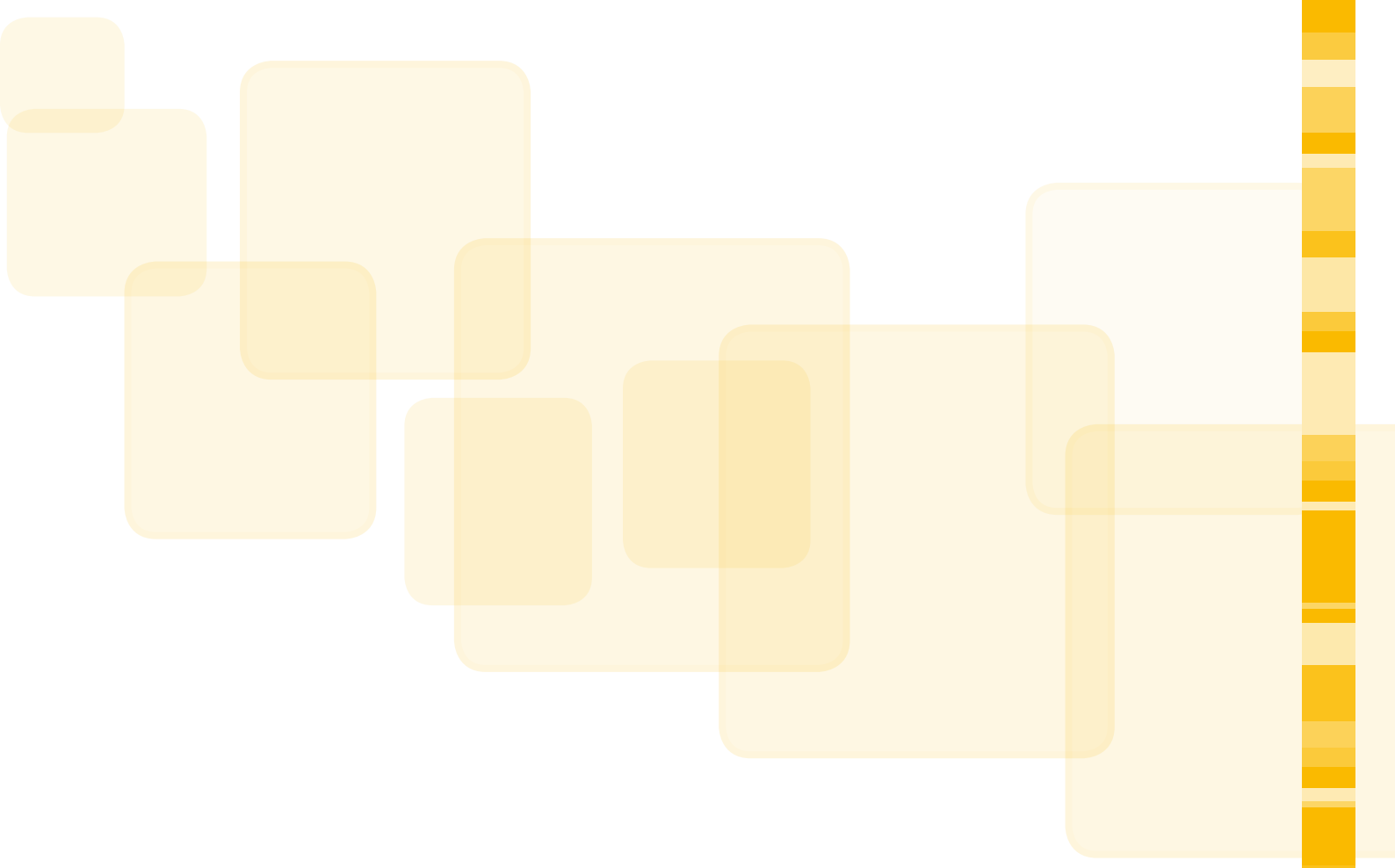
What action should be taken within your workplace to ensure the complaints policy and procedures are up to date and work well?

Key learnings

Managers and supervisors need workplace support in up-to-date policies and procedures in order to deal effectively with complaints.

General recognition that complaints can be beneficial can help managers and supervisors deal with complaints in a timely manner.

Workplace communication



Providing work instructions

Work instructions should be clearly understood by the employee receiving the instructions. Consequently, the communication method should vary according to individual communication preferences. It can assist managers and supervisors working with supported employees to have a range of communication methods available to them. For example, when working with supported employees who have difficulty understanding spoken words, pictures, posters and highly visual aids can help make work instructions clear.

The key to providing work instructions revolves around ensuring there is shared understanding between the manager or supervisor providing the instruction, and the supported employee receiving the instruction. Giving and receiving feedback is critical, as is careful supervision to ensure understanding.

Case study: Is a picture worth a thousand words?

Lina sighed. Beth, a new team leader, was starting today and Lina was worried about how she would be able to communicate with her. Lina had been a team member at Framed Up for more than five years, loved her work and enjoyed the company of the people she worked with. Edward had been the team leader for as long as Lina had worked there and they had developed their own style of communicating. Lina was deaf and had difficulty speaking but she and Edward knew and understood each other so the work instructions Edward gave Lina were followed. As far as Lina was concerned a new team leader wouldn't be as good.

Beth was a bit concerned as well. She had years of experience as a team leader and was confident she knew the role but she hadn't worked in a Disability Business Service before. She was unsure of her ability to communicate well with people with disability. Alma, a friend who had worked at Framed Up for a long time, had a chat with Beth about how she might communicate with supported employees. She suggested that Beth treat each supported employee individually and use the methods of communication that they were comfortable with. She also suggested that Beth talk to Framed Up's training manager to get some hints.

In your workplace

What have you found to be successful when providing work instructions to supported employees?

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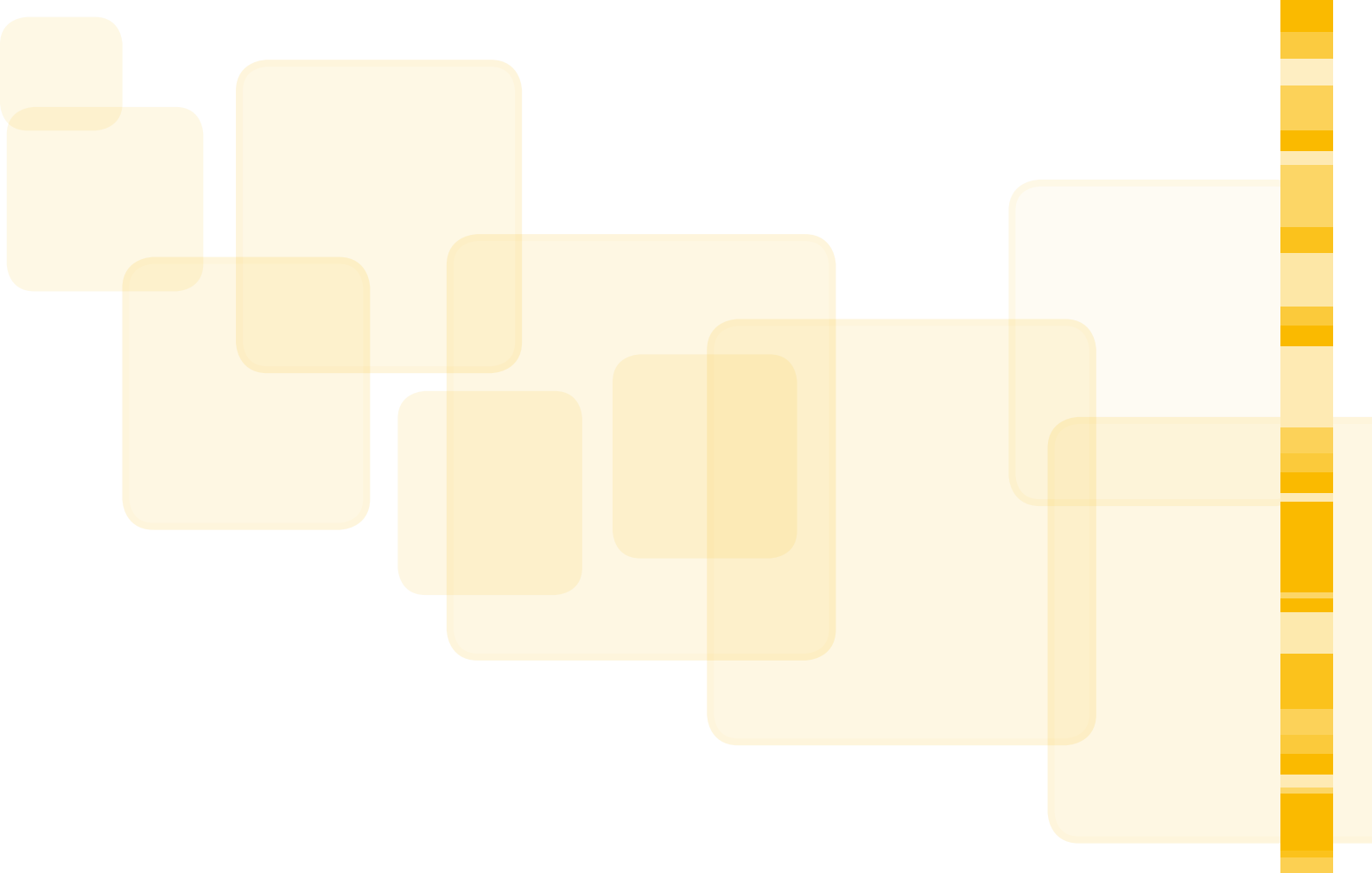
Are there additional skills or information you would like to have to help you when working with people with disability? Who can you talk to about this?

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Key learnings

Work instructions must be clearly understood by each individual being provided with the instructions. The most effective way to ensure this is to listen to people, watch their body language and use methods of communication that suit the individual as well as actively sending and receiving feedback.

Workplace committees and meetings



Involving staff in workplace committees

A Disability Business Service may have a range of committees operating at any one time including boards of management, worker committees, occupational health and safety committees, quality assurance committees and standards committees. Business services are actively seeking to make committees representative and are involving staff in workplace committees.

Supported employees may need additional training and assistance when working as part of a workplace committee. For example, meeting agendas and minutes may need to be provided in Easy English, and governance issues will need to be explained in terms relevant to the employee. Managers and supervisors may be required to explain committee processes, including nomination for membership and responsibilities to supported employees, as well as providing ongoing support during a supported employee's membership of a committee.

In broad terms, the process of setting up an effective workplace committee that involves staff can be time consuming. The rules and guidelines about membership should be clear and communicated to all employees and the committee structure reflective of organisational needs. Of particular importance is that committee members be familiar with their role. To meet this need appropriate training may need to be offered.

Case study: Hearing from everyone

SouthWest Enterprises, a Disability Business Service, had embarked on an ambitious plan to introduce a new style of management. The service had been operating for 27 years with 125 employees across five departments. Over the years it had substantially diversified and now offered an office cleaning service, house cleaning service, gardening service, bulk post distribution and a laundry service.

In a bid to increase employee participation in decision-making, workplace committees were formed. There was quite a bit of interest from staff about how the new practices would be put into place and Greta Taysmith, the CEO, was keen to see some evidence of the practices at work as soon as possible. She recognised that many of the practices that had developed over the years were not going to help SouthWest Enterprises move successfully into the future. She requested that a Quality Improvement Committee be established that was representative of the employees at South West.

The committee membership included:

- ▶ employees from across the different departments at SouthWest
- ▶ representation from management, supervisors and supported employees
- ▶ a mix of males and females
- ▶ a representation from different racial and ethnic groups.

All employees were invited to nominate. Managers and supervisors were provided with briefings about how they could explain the committee requirements and operations to supported employees.

In your workplace

What suggestions would you make to ensure that committees in your workplace involved employees?

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What assistance would employees in your workplace need in order to work effectively as a committee member?

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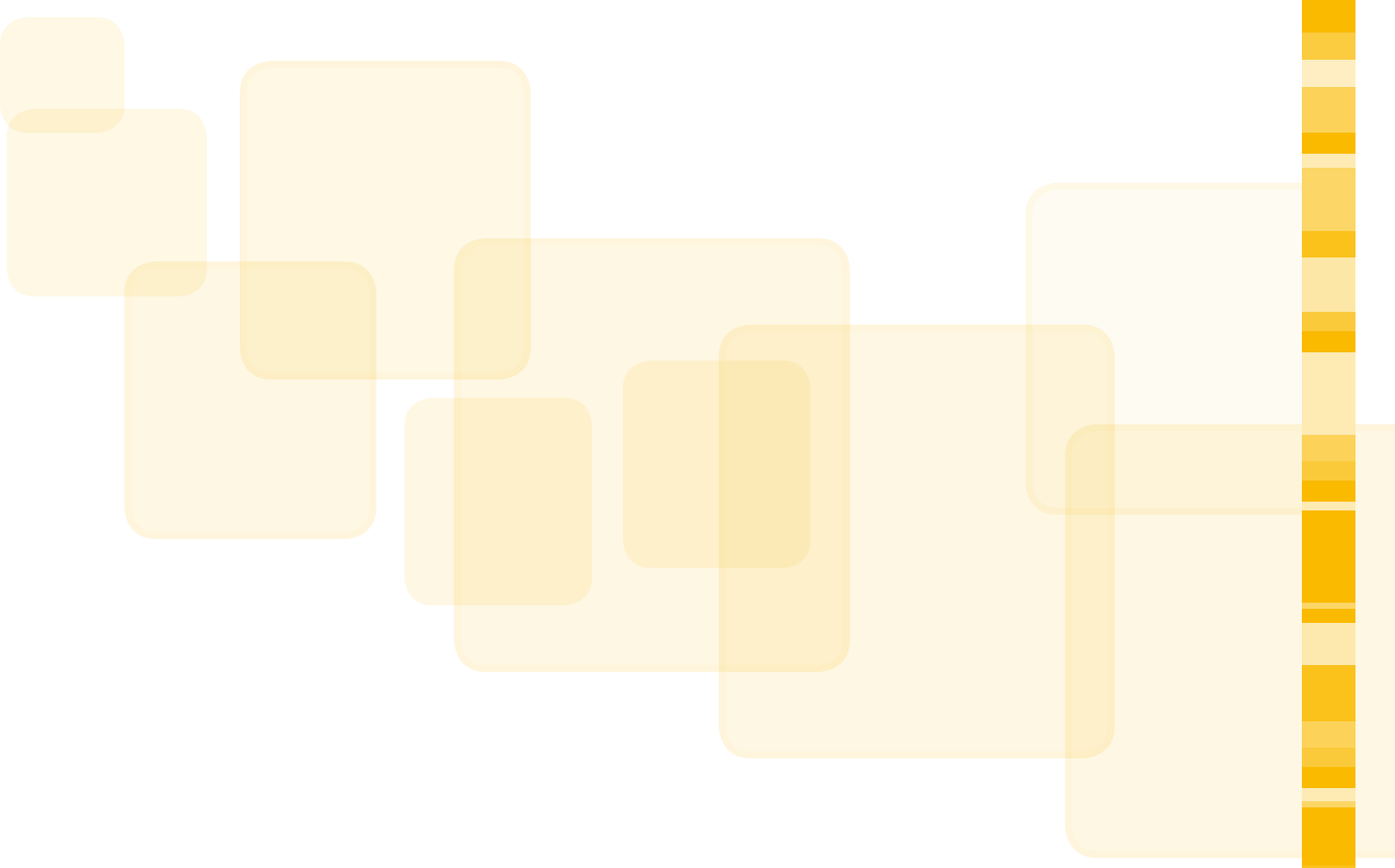
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Key learnings

Involving employees in workplace committees requires planning to ensure time and skills are best used. Training and development activities can assist employees to gain the skills needed to work as effective committee members.

Challenges and issues



Managing an ageing workforce

Managers and supervisors in Disability Business Services should be aware of the implications of ageing on supported employees. In addition to the 'normal' health issues associated with ageing, such as a reduced hearing, vision acuity, and physical capacity for lifting and fast movement, many supported employees have degenerative health conditions. Managers and supervisors should ensure that regular reviews of work requirements, equipment and training and development needs take into account the changing health needs of supported employees as they age.

There are a number of other issues that managers and supervisors must consider when working with an ageing workforce. They include:

- ▶ retirement planning
- ▶ succession planning
- ▶ reduced labour force availability
- ▶ changing family responsibilities and working arrangements.

There is legislation that organisations must comply with that relates to an ageing workforce such as equal employment opportunity, occupational health and safety, disability and employment legislation.

Case study: Moving on

Movers was a Disability Business Service specialising in packing for house and business removals. The business had been operating for 25 years in a large regional town and had a good reputation for its ability to respond to requests within 24 hours.

There were 27 employees at Movers including a management team of three, four supervisors and twenty supported employees. The service had a low staff turnover. Only rarely did someone leave. The supported employees were mainly in their 30s and 40s with three in their 50s. At least four staff members would be retiring in the next few years. One supported employee was having more difficulty each year moving around and a number of the employees had health problems that were degenerative.

The management team decided that Movers needed to develop a succession plan and commence a retirement planning program for all employees. It also decided to review its policies and procedures relating to employment, training and development, and family leave arrangements.

In your workplace

What are the management issues relating to an ageing workforce in your workplace?

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What legislation is your workplace required to comply with that relates to an ageing workforce? How does it affect your job as a manager or supervisor?

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Key learnings

Regular review of work requirements, equipment, and training and development needs take into account the changing health needs of supported employees as they age.

Ensuring ethical behaviour

Ethical behaviour in the workplace refers to actions that are socially responsible and are in line with the Disability Business Service's standards. In some instances workplace culture is used as a justification for unethical behaviour, however, common practice or 'everybody does it', isn't a justification for unethical behaviour.

Organisations have policies and procedures in place, such as a code of conduct that sets out the required standards of workplace behaviour. When a decision is required involving a conflict about ethical behaviours in the workplace, it is best to seek advice from appropriate sources.

The range of unethical behaviour is broad. Examples of unethical behaviour include taking stationery items such as pens, using work time to look up personal information on the Internet, falsifying business records, harassment of employees and favouritism.

Each manager and supervisor brings an individual set of values and beliefs to the workplace and each has a responsibility to ensure that high standards of personal conduct are applied in the workplace. Organisations have a responsibility for managing unethical behaviour in the workplace that is often guided by policies and procedures that articulate acceptable behaviours and processes for dealing with unethical behaviour. Examples of these are equal employment opportunity policy statements and organisational property use and borrowing guidelines.

Case study: All sides of the story

Sandy Rankin, the CEO of AbilityAll, a large metropolitan Disability Business Service that provided services in shrink wrapping, blister packaging, and plastic bagging, was feeling overwhelmed. He was beginning to wonder if he had made the right choice by moving to AbilityAll.

One of the first problems he had encountered concerned Joan Peters, a supervisor, who had been with AbilityAll for seven years, and Rik Osanne, also a supervisor at AbilityAll, who had joined about six months earlier. Joan and Rik had formed a good working relationship. As Sandy recalled, one Monday morning Rik had come to Joan and told her that he had borrowed the work trailer over the weekend without getting it approved first.

Joan had told Rik that she had chosen to ignore the previous times he had taken the trailer but she wasn't going to ignore it this time. She thought he 'was abusing the system'. Joan had told Sandy that Rik borrowed the trailer without getting approval first.

Another issue involved a romantic relationship that had developed between an older supported employee and a newly recruited teenager, also a supported employee. The relationship had become a concern to a numbers of supervisors who had recently been seeking Sandy's intervention to stop the relationship. Sandy was currently thinking through the ethics of the issue.

In your workplace

Are there issues regarding unethical behaviour or practices in your workplace? If so, what are they and what recommendations would you make to address them?

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Who would you talk to about addressing these issues?

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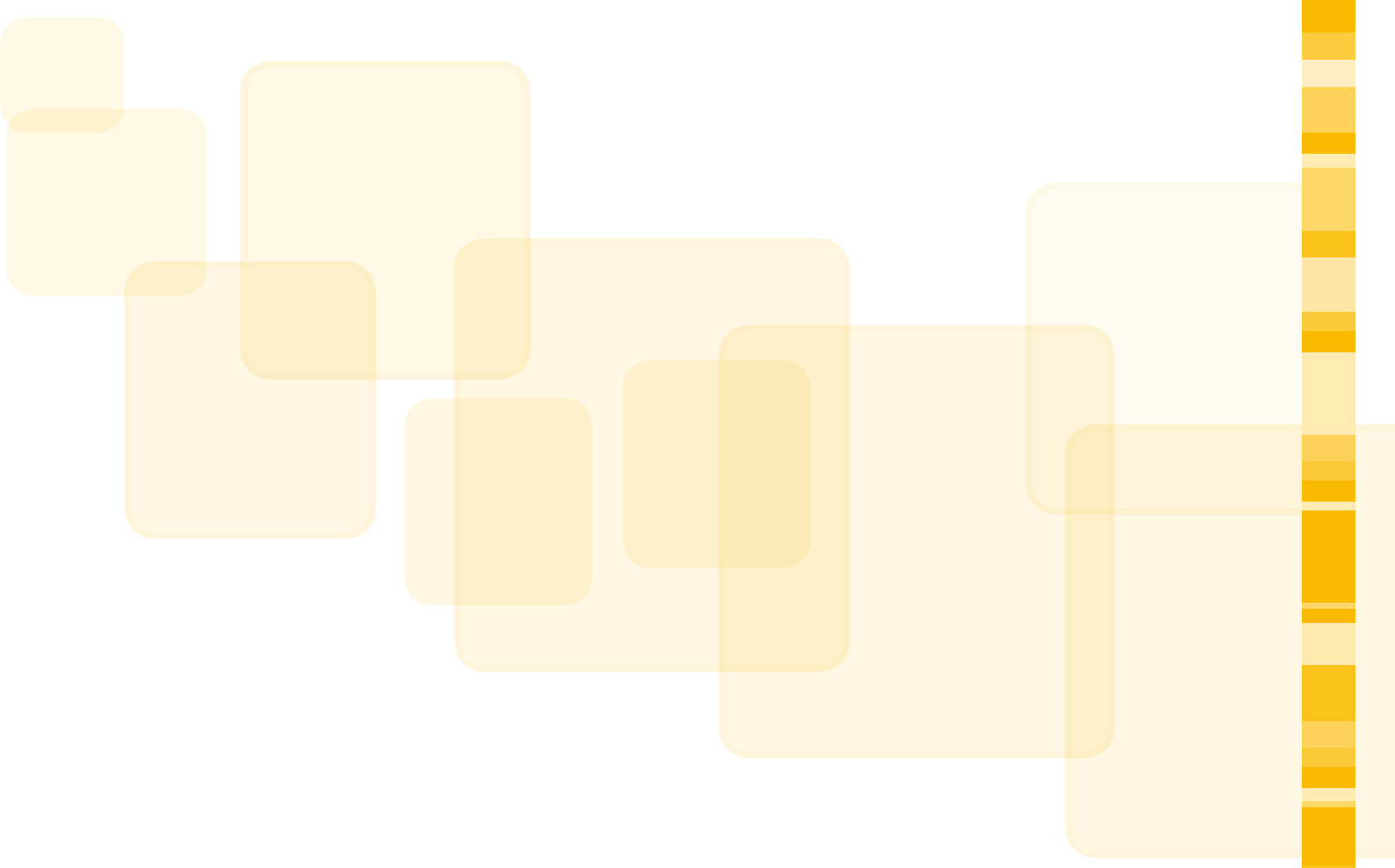
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Key learnings

Ethical behaviour involves more than ensuring legal responsibilities are met. Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to behave in an ethical manner at all times. They also need to assist supported employees to understand what is meant by ethical behaviour and how it is practised in the workplace.

Quality assurance





Helping staff understand the links between workplace activity, procedures and the Disability Services Standards

The 12 Disability Services Standards set out service standards for supported employees working in Disability Business Services. The Standards specify key performance indicators relevant to each Standard to be applied in assessing whether the Standard has been observed in the provision of those services.

It is important for managers and supervisors to be aware of the Standards and how they apply for each workplace, work team and individual.

Case study: The Standards and us

Kim and Keegan had recently been employed as supervisors at Trinkets Inc, a Disability Business Service that packaged small toys and costume jewellery. As part of an activity during their induction program they had been provided with a copy of the Disability Service Standards and asked to discuss how they might implement the Standards as part of their daily work.

They started talking about Standard 1 and how they would need to explain to team members that Trinkets Inc had rules about how people would behave with each other in the workplace. Both supervisors realised that they would need to think carefully about how they explained the Standards. In particular they realised that they would need to choose language and examples that were relevant to the teams and the individuals in the teams that they were supervising.

In your workplace

On the following page is an Easy English version of the Standards. An example of how a Disability Business Service may apply each Standard has been supplied. Complete the table with specific examples of how you, as a manager or supervisor, can help supported employees understand how the Standards apply in your workplace.

A copy of the Disability Service Standards is provided as an appendix.

Disability Service Standards - Easy English Version

Standard	Example	Example for your workplace
1 Service access A fair go for everyone	We need to make sure everyone that works here gets a fair go.	
2 Individual needs Getting help that is right for you	We need to make sure you get the help that is right for you to help you do your job.	
3 Decision making and choice Having your say	We think it is very important that you help make decisions about your work and our workplace, for example, if you have ideas about how we can do things better, let me know.	
4 Privacy, dignity, and confidentiality Respecting your privacy	We are not going to talk about your private business, like money, to other people at our work or at other places.	
5 Participation and integration Taking part in the community	We want to help team members get jobs in other places, if that is what they want.	
6 Valued status Being important in the community	We want to make sure that our business does things the people in our town thinks are important, like employing people and making a good product.	
7 Complaints and disputes Getting something done about a complaint	We have a complaints process that can help employees with workplace problems.	
8 Service management Running the service well	Our managers have to make sure the business obeys the laws, like occupational health and safety laws.	

Standard	Example	Example for your workplace
9 Employment conditions Your right to fair wages and conditions	We need to make sure you are paid the right amount of money each week.	
10 Service recipient training and support Learning the right skills for your job	We need to help you get the skills to help the team do its work.	
11 Staff recruitment, employment and training Having staff who know the best ways to help you	We need to train you so that you can do your job well.	
12 Protection of human rights and freedom from abuse Being safe and respected	We need to make sure you use the right safety equipment when you are at work.	

Key learnings

All managers and supervisors need to:

- ▶ be familiar with the Disability Service Standards
- ▶ have the skills and abilities to communicate to supported employees how the Standards apply to teams and team members in the workplace.

Appendices

- ▶ Disability Services Standards
- ▶ References

Disability Services Standards

Standards	Key performance indicators
<p>1 Service access</p> <p>Each person with disability who is seeking a service has access to a service on the basis of relative need and available resources.</p>	<p>The service provider adopts and applies non-discriminatory entry rules in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability, consistent with the contractual obligations of the service provider and the purpose of the service.</p>
	<p>The service provider's entry and exit procedures are fair and equitable and consistently applied.</p>
<p>2 Individual needs</p> <p>Each person with disability receives a service that is designed to meet, in the least restrictive way, his or her individual needs and personal goals.</p>	<p>Each individual's employment goals are established objectively to reflect his or her needs and personal goals.</p>
	<p>Each individual's employment goals are used as a basis for service provision, with the service provider undertaking a process of planning, implementation, review and adjustment to facilitate the achievement of these goals.</p>
	<p>Services are delivered to meet each individual's employment goals through pathways and plans that do not have any unnecessary restrictions or constraints.</p>
<p>3 Decision making and choice</p> <p>Each person with disability has the opportunity to participate as fully as possible in making decisions about the events and activities of his or her daily life in relation to the service he or she receives.</p>	<p>The service provider provides appropriate and flexible opportunities for each individual to participate in decision-making at all levels, including individual choices in pre-employment and employment planning, service delivery planning and corporate and business planning.</p>
	<p>The service provider acts upon the outcomes of service recipient input into decision-making.</p>
<p>4 Privacy, dignity and confidentiality</p> <p>Each service recipient's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life is recognised and respected.</p>	<p>The service provider complies with the Information Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act 1988 in order to protect and respect the rights of individual service recipients. The service provider does not disclose personal information about service recipients without their informed consent.</p>
	<p>The service provider promotes tolerance and respect for each service recipient's personal needs and circumstances.</p>

Standards	Key performance indicators
<p>5 Participation and integration</p> <p>Each person with disability is supported and encouraged to participate and be involved in the community.</p>	<p>The service contributes to individual outcomes for service recipients that progressively builds opportunities for their participation and involvement in the community through employment.</p>
<p>6 Valued status</p> <p>Each person with disability has the opportunity to develop and maintain skills and to participate in activities that enable him or her to achieve valued roles in the community.</p>	<p>The service promotes the belief and ability of service recipients to fulfil valued roles in the community.</p>
	<p>The service promotes employment opportunities for service recipients to fulfil valued roles in the community.</p>
	<p>The service develops and maintains service recipients' skills relevant to their roles in the community.</p>
<p>7 Complaints and disputes</p> <p>Each service recipient is encouraged to raise, and have resolved without fear of retribution, any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding the service provider or the service.</p>	<p>The service provider encourages the raising of complaints by service recipients regarding any areas of dissatisfaction with the service provider and the service.</p>
	<p>Service recipients have no fear of retribution in raising complaints.</p>
	<p>The service provider facilitates the resolution of complaints or disputes by service recipients regarding the service provider and the service.</p>
<p>8 Service management</p> <p>Each service provider adopts quality management systems and practices that optimise outcomes for service recipients.</p>	<p>The service provider has management systems in place that facilitate quality management practices and continuous improvement.</p>

Standards	Key performance indicators
<p>9 Employment conditions</p> <p>Each person with disability enjoys working conditions comparable to those of the general workforce.</p>	<p>The service provider ensures that people with disability, placed in open or supported employment, receive wages according to the relevant Australian Pay and Classification Scale (APCS), Special Federal Minimum Wage (SFMW), award, order or industrial agreement (if any). A wage must not have been reduced, or be reduced, because of award exemptions or incapacity to pay or similar reasons and, if a person is unable to work at full productive capacity due to disability, the service provider is to ensure that a pro-rata wage based on the applicable special SFMW, APCS, award, order or industrial agreement is paid. This pro-rata wage must be determined through a transparent assessment tool or process, such as Supported Wage System (SWS), or tools that comply with the criteria referred to in the <i>Guide to Good Practice Wage Determination</i> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ compliance with relevant legislation ▶ validity ▶ reliability ▶ wage outcome ▶ practical application of the tool.
	<p>The service provider ensures that, when people with disability are placed in employment, their conditions of employment are consistent with general workplace norms and relevant Commonwealth and State legislation.</p>
	<p>The service provider ensures that, when people with disability are placed and supported in employment, they, and if appropriate, their guardians and advocates, are informed of how wages and conditions are determined and the consequences of this.</p>

Standards	Key performance indicators
<p>10 Service recipient training and support</p> <p>The employment opportunities of each person with disability are optimised by effective and relevant training and support.</p>	<p>The service provider provides or facilitates access to relevant training and support programs that are consistent with the employment goals and opportunities of each service recipient.</p>
<p>11 Staff recruitment, employment and training</p> <p>Each person employed to deliver services to a person with disability has relevant skills and competencies.</p>	<p>The service provider identifies the skills and competencies of each staff member.</p> <p>The service provider ensures that its staff have relevant skills and competencies.</p> <p>The service provider ensures the provision of appropriate and relevant training and skills development for each staff member.</p>
<p>12 Protection of human rights and freedom from abuse</p> <p>The service provider acts to prevent abuse and neglect and to uphold the legal and human rights of service recipients.</p>	<p>The service provider takes all practical and appropriate steps to prevent abuse and neglect of its service recipients.</p> <p>The service provider upholds the legal and human rights of its service recipients.</p>

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