

On the **Agenda**



Facilitator's Guide

Involvement & Influence

Involvement & Influence



Slide # 1

For this slide, you want to ensure that you have already introduced:

- yourself
- your role within the organization, if unknown to the group
- why you are engaging the group in this discussion
- the importance of addressing psychological health and safety in your organization

The importance of addressing psychological health and safety in your organization can be highlighted by stating the following:

1. Depression will rank second only to heart disease as the leading cause of disability worldwide by the year 2020, which can impact the workplace in areas such as bottom-line production and team work.
2. There are current and emerging legal requirements in Canada for the protection of employee psychological health and safety and the promotion of civility and respect at work.
3. Organizations that value and improve the health of the workplace can improve their organization profile. An improved profile can result in better recruitment and retention rates, enhancing the potential for growth. We want you and potential employees to know that we value your contribution to the organization, that you do good work and that we want to help you to continue to be successful at work.

After these statements, you might say: “The focus of this session is to discuss the importance of involvement and influence in the workplace”.

On the Agenda



Slide # 2

This slide provides a definition of employee involvement and influence in the workplace. We recommend starting with the proposed definition provided by *Guarding Minds @ Work™*: “Employee involvement and influence in the workplace occurs in a workplace where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.” Then open the floor for questions about the definition. An idea to get employees to start participating in your presentation is to ask a volunteer in the audience to read the slide. You may wish to share additional information such as:

1. What do employee involvement and influence in the workplace mean?

Possible Answer: Employee involvement and influence in the workplace can relate to an employee’s specific job, team or department. These discussions can sometimes lead to the employee’s involvement in greater organizational areas as a whole (i.e., representing the organization in community events).

2. Why is employee involvement and influence important?

Possible Answer: When employees feel that they have meaningful input into the work that they do, they are more likely to be engaged in the workplace and to take pride in working for their organization.

About PF8: Involvement & Influence

What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

What is PF8: Involvement & Influence?

GM@W defines PF8: Involvement & Influence as present in a work environment where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made. Opportunities for involvement can relate to an employee's specific job, the activities of a team or department, or issues involving the organization as a whole.

Why is Involvement & Influence important?

When employees feel they have meaningful input into their work they are more likely to be engaged, to have higher morale, and to take pride in their organization. This, in turn, increases their willingness to make extra effort when required. Job involvement is, thus, associated with increased psychological well-being, enhanced innovation, and organizational commitment.

What happens when employees lack involvement or influence?

If employees do not believe they have a voice in the affairs of the organization, they are likely to feel a sense of indifference or helplessness. Job alienation, or non-involvement, is associated with cynicism and distress, greater turnover, and burnout.

How can Involvement & Influence be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If **Involvement & Influence** is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve **Involvement & Influence**. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how **Involvement & Influence** can be enhanced.

Further information about Involvement & Influence:

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Elloy, D., Everett, J., & Flynn, W. (1991). An examination of the correlates of job involvement. *Group & Organization Studies*, 16(2), 160-177. doi: 10.1177/105960119101600204
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf
- Misra, S., Kanungo, R., von Rosenstiel, L., & Stuhler, E. (1985). The motivational formulation of job and work involvement: A cross-national study. *Human Relations*, 38(6), 501-518. doi: 10.1177/001872678503800601
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF8: Involvement and Influence. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

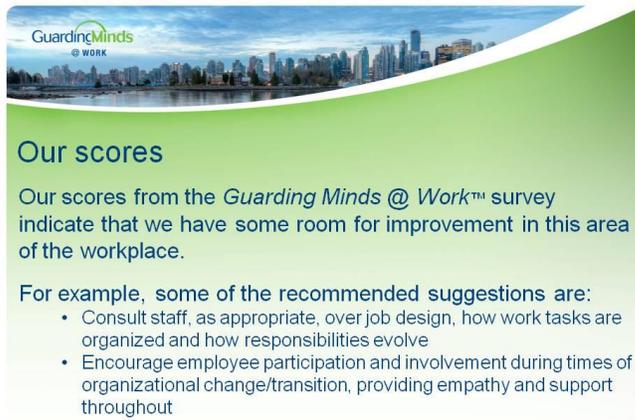
www.guardingmindsatwork.ca



Slide # 3

This slide details what employee involvement and influence may look like. Simply read the points on the slide. If you would like to expand on the information, we suggest elaborating on what a non-involving workplace place may look like. You can suggest the following and why you don't want this for your group:

- Greater cynicism
- Greater burnout
- Greater employee distress



Our scores

Our scores from the *Guarding Minds @ Work™* survey indicate that we have some room for improvement in this area of the workplace.

For example, some of the recommended suggestions are:

- Consult staff, as appropriate, over job design, how work tasks are organized and how responsibilities evolve
- Encourage employee participation and involvement during times of organizational change/transition, providing empathy and support throughout

Slide # 4

If your workplace or a sector in the workplace completed the *Guarding Minds @ Work* (GM@W) Survey, you may wish to review the scores now. Let your employees know that there is always room for improvement, and it is important to recognize and retain what is already working.

- Review the suggestions on the slide and let them know that putting psychological health and safety on the agenda is an active step to increase employee involvement and influence in the workplace.
- If your workplace has not undertaken the GM@W Review or Survey, ask the employees if they feel the suggestions on the slide would be helpful, and why or why not.

GM@W Suggested Responses

Please consult the *Selection of GM@W Suggested Actions* and *Selection of Effective Actions: Applying a Quality Framework* documents to help you select GM@W suggested actions to undertake for Involvement & Influence.

PF8: INVOLVEMENT & INFLUENCE

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.

PF8: GM@W Survey Results (check rating, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> MINIMAL CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVE STRENGTHS
PF8: GM@W Organizational Review Results (check rating, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> MINIMAL CONCERNS	<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIVE STRENGTHS

Serious Concerns = 5 to 9 Significant Concerns = 10 to 13 Minimal Concerns* = 14 to 16 Relative Strengths = 17 to 20**

* Although this is a Minimal Concern, it is important to attend to it and review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

** Although this is a Relative Strength, it is important to review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

The list below contains actions that you can take to respond to actual or potential concerns related to **Involvement & Influence**. Many of these actions have been found to be effective in research studies, have been recommended as best practices, or have been found valuable in applied settings. Some have been informed by emerging case law and regulatory requirements. The actions are drawn from diverse industries and sectors, and not all may be applicable or feasible in your particular workplace. This list is not exhaustive, nor is it intended to be prescriptive. Rather, these are suggestions for possible courses of action.

If **Involvement & Influence** has been flagged as a **Relative Strength** in your workplace, it is important not to overlook this finding. You can do this by developing policies that protect this relative strength and engaging staff in discussions of how this strength can be enhanced by implementing the suggested actions below.

If **Involvement & Influence** has been flagged as an area of concern in your workplace, consider which of these actions might be appropriate. In making your decision, it can be helpful to keep the following six key quality dimensions in mind: Appropriateness, Acceptability, Accessibility, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Safety (see *Selection of Effective Actions: Applying a Quality Framework* for more information).

The actions below fall into four main categories: (1) norms, values and practices of the work environment; (2) training and development initiatives; (3) communication strategies and approaches; and (4) formal policies and programs. You may have already initiated some of the actions – but consider the others. You may also have other ideas for actions you could implement – there is a space for writing these down at the end of this document. **Remember, not every action that might enhance Involvement & Influence in your workplace is listed here. Implementing the following actions, however, will provide a strong foundation for building a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.**

Work Environment (Norms, Values & Practices)

- Foster a culture where all staff have some level of responsibility, autonomy and accountability (i.e., avoid “micro-management”)
- Combine top-down (leadership-driven) and bottom-up (employee-driven) approaches to work-related decisions, ensuring formal and informal mechanisms for soliciting input and feedback on how to make improvements to work (e.g., suggestion boxes, opinion surveys)
- Provide staff control, as appropriate, over job design, how work tasks are organized, and how responsibilities evolve

Training & Development

- Provide training to help staff maintain a sense of control over work (e.g., priority-setting and time management)
- Provide training in effective communication skills (e.g., interpersonal problem-solving and negotiation)
- Provide training and support that allow work units/work teams to operate autonomously (e.g., self-directed work teams)

Communication

- Minimize the impact of organizational/work unit change by communicating effectively about impending transitions or workflow changes and providing rationale for decisions
- Encourage employee participation and involvement during times of organizational change/transition
- Encourage discussions between supervisors/managers and employees about how work is done and how it could be improved
- Provide timely response to employee suggestions regarding how work could be improved or enhanced

Formal Policies & Programs

- Maintain current and accurate written job descriptions that specify roles and responsibilities
- Create employment agreements/contracts that explicitly value and encourage employee input into how work is conducted
- Ensure that all staff have an identified contact person (e.g., supervisor, office manager, union steward) for issues pertaining to how their work is done
- Provide profit-sharing/stock option opportunities, as appropriate

Additional resources have been created to help you take action, including: presentation slides and supporting materials (freely available at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/ota) and a new resource - *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*, developed on behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada Workforce Advisory Committee, that is a practical tool designed to help employers develop implementation plans on the basis of GM@W findings (freely available at www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf).

We encourage you to review these resources for additional suggested actions.

Other Actions:

- _____

- _____

- _____

There won't be a perfect set of actions – often it's a matter of choosing the actions most likely to accomplish positive outcomes while generating the fewest potential problems.

Once you have selected one or more actions to undertake, enter them into the corresponding *GM@W Action Planning Worksheet*, pick your start date, identify who will be involved – your Action Team, and get started!



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@ WORK

Activity

Review actions recommended by research or best practices

Choose the recommended actions that:

- Are most likely to be effective in promoting involvement and influencing employees
- Are low cost or no cost in terms of both time and expense
- Will have a measurable benefit to the workplace as a whole

Slide # 5

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- Review the recommended actions in the GM@W Suggested Responses document or choose those that you wish to share with the group as possibilities.
- Ask the employees to work in groups of three or more to review the suggested responses and discuss what each of these may mean for your workplace in regards to practicality, profit, cost and challenges.
- Ask that someone keep notes, and let them know that their group is to report back to the larger group in 15 minutes.
- Ask for a group to volunteer to start the report back and begin the discussion to choose which initiative(s) to begin with.
- Check out the Centre website at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com for free resources related to involvement and influence.

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Activity

Consider the first plan of action:
Choose or vote on the most valuable recommendation and develop a cost-benefit analysis for this team

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Slide # 6

- Ask the employees to vote on the most important recommendation that they heard from the previous exercise. Ballots, Post-it Notes, stickers or raised hands are all ideas that could be used for voting.
- If there is a discrepancy, see if you can narrow the options down to two and discuss the potential pros and cons of each option and then re-vote, or consider implementing more than one option at once if this would be practical.
- Develop a statement with the group about why the chosen recommendation is important to them; get to the underlying need that is being met.



The slide thumbnail features a green background with a city skyline at the top. The logo 'Guarding Minds @ WORK' is in the top left, and the word 'Activity' is in red in the top right. The main title is 'Create a plan to implement'. Below it, it says 'Use the handout provided to:' followed by a bulleted list of five steps: 'Describe the action', 'Assign tasks to individuals on the team', 'Create a start date', 'Develop an indicator to determine if the action had the desired effect', and 'Create a date to evaluate'.

Slide # 7

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- Hand out the Action Planning Worksheet to each employee so he or she can follow along.
- Identify each step required to implement the chosen action(s).
- Review the steps and ask for volunteers to take on different actions. If individuals feel uncomfortable taking on an action by themselves, suggest working in pairs or groups.
- Set a follow-up date to review progress on the action items together, as well as an expected completion date.

GM@W Action Planning Worksheet

Name: _____

Position: _____ Date: ____/____/____

PF8: INVOLVEMENT & INFLUENCE

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.

PF8 GM@W Survey Results

PF8 GM@W Survey Score: _____ (5 to 20)

Date administered: ____/____/____



PF8 GM@W Organizational Review Results

PF8 GM@W Organizational Review Score: _____ (5 to 20)

Date administered: ____/____/____



Serious Concerns = 5 to 9 Significant Concerns = 10 to 13 Minimal Concerns* = 14 to 16 Relative Strengths = 17 to 20**

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** Although this is a Relative Strength, it is important to review the GM@W Organizational Review Results and the GM@W Survey Results for any additional or individual-identified areas of concern.

	Selected Action(s) (What exactly are you planning to do?)	Starting Date (What is a realistic date to begin?)	End Date (Is the action ongoing or will it end? If so, when?)	Action Team (Who is involved? Be specific.)	Indicator(s) (What changes do you expect to result from this Action?)	Evaluation Date (When will you determine if the Action was successful?)
Action Priority 1:						
Action Priority 2: <i>(if applicable)</i>						
Action Priority 3: <i>(if applicable)</i>						



Slide # 8

For this slide, we suggest encouraging your employees to check out the *Workplace Strategies for Mental Health* website at www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com. The website features a number of employee-specific resources they can access for free:

- Self-assessment tools to check their current state of mental health
- Information about mental health, addiction and mental illness
- Approaches to mental wellness and coping with workplace stressors
- *Working Through It*, which is a video-based series of video clips by, and for, those struggling while at work, off work or returning to work