What is safety capability?

Safety capability can be defined as the potential an organisation has to maintain work health and safety (WHS) when faced with uncertainty, risks, and other modern work environment challenges. A capable workplace manages and responds to these challenges in ways that promote safe and productive work, prevents injuries and illnesses, and supports sustainable recovery and return to work (RTW).

How to build safety capability in your workplace

You can take action to improve processes and structures, leadership and teamwork, and skills and motivation in your workplace. This will strengthen your organisation's systems, culture and competence - the foundations of safety capability. These three areas work together to inform the organisation's direction, which impacts safety capability and overall business performance. Benefits of building safety capability in your workplace can include prevention of injuries and illness, promotion of safe and productive workplaces and supporting RTW.

Safety capability framework

The Safety capability framework demonstrates the holistic approach to WHS that safety capability offers. It shows how the 14 focus areas ('building blocks') of safety capability work alongside each other and complement one another across WHS and recovery and RTW foundations. These building blocks strengthen the mechanisms of safety capability through:

- **systems** (through processes and structures)
- **culture** (through leadership and teamwork)
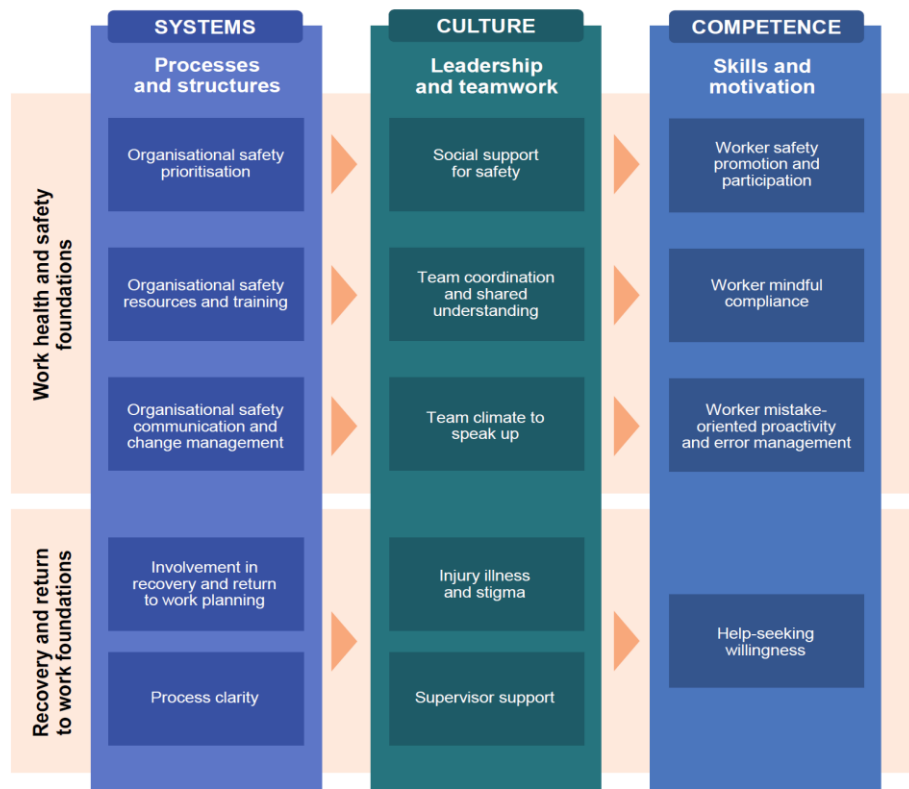- **competence of the workforce** (through skills and motivation).

Figure 1 - Safety capability framework

WHSQ
Workplace Health and Safety Queensland
worksafe.qld.gov.au

Queensland
Government

How to measure your safety capability

The Safety capability survey tool provides information on which areas organisations should focus their energy and resources on to improve safety capability through WHS and recovery and RTW outcomes.

The survey asks participants forty-two (42) questions on how WHS and recovery and RTW is perceived and managed in their workplace.

When your organisation completes the survey, your results will be provided in a report. Each safety capability focus area will be scored to give you an overall picture of your current level of safety capability. Your organisation's key strengths and improvement opportunity areas will be highlighted. From here, you can use our resources to develop an action plan and communication strategy to make positive changes to safety capability at your workplace.

Setting up the survey for your organisation

Registration is via worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/creating-safe-work/safety-capability-leadership-and-culture (we recommend using Edge or Chrome). Select 'Register my organisation' to get started.

Your organisation must have ten (10) or more workers to participate. This is to ensure the anonymity of survey respondents. You will need to provide your ABN, registered business name, trading name, industry sector, business size and postcode of your head office to access the survey.

Once you have registered your organisation, navigate to the home page and select 'Start my survey.' You will receive a unique survey link to forward to your employees to complete. They will be able to complete the survey on desktop, tablet or mobile devices.

We recommend adding the email address fowi.surveys@curtin.edu.au to your safe sender list along with https://safety-capability.web.app/ to your browser safe site list. For technical support with the survey please contact mosc@curtin.edu.au

More information

To find out more about safety capability, leadership and culture and access the survey, tools and resources visit https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/creating-safe-work/safety-capability-leadership-and-culture