HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT @WORK

Can you measure Psychosocial Risk?

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SACS CONSULTING

ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY MEASUREMENT AND CONSULTING

What is SACS?

- Organisational psychology business
  - Psychological testing, Wellbeing surveys, 360° feedback
  - Organisational and individual development – coaching, career transition management, workforce planning, change management
  - Recruitment process design and delivery
- Scientist practitioner model – https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Andrew-Marty
- Evidence based approach to people management.

SACS services

Psychometric testing

Modern, evidence based workplace assessments with easy to understand reports.

360 degree feedback

A short evidence based survey which supports leadership development and optimisation.

High Performance Modelling

Customised reports that indicate whether a candidate should progress based on agreed success factors.

Leadership development

Contemporary, evidence based leadership assessment and coaching.

Wellbeing, engagement and productivity

Psychological measurement of engagement, stress, stressors, diversity climate and more.

Diversity and inclusion

Do you know how diverse your workforce is? SACS can help you find out!

Recruitment optimisation

Expert advice on candidate attraction and candidate evaluation using best practice methods.

Events

Presentations and workshops specifically tailored to the needs of each organisation.

Workforce planning

How can you ensure that the workforce of the future will help you to meet your objectives?

Research

We can use research techniques to help you to unravel any human resources problems you have.

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Objectives…

- **What is psychosocial risk?**
- The balance of good and bad at work
- The good – engagement and wellbeing
- The bad (sometimes) – stressors and stress
- SACS study of psychosocial negatives
- A new measure of psychosocial risk.

Government policy

Jurisdiction	Status	Regulation / Code of Practice	Commencement
Australia	**Model laws** developed for implementation by all Commonwealth jurisdictions; **updated code of practice in force.**	• Work Safe Australia: Model Work Health and Safety Regulations, Division 11 – Psychosocial Risk • Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work) Code of Practice 2024	• April 2022 • November 2024
NSW	**Mandated management of psychosocial risk**	• New South Wales Work Health and Safety Amendment Regulation 2022.	• October - December 2022
QLD		• Queensland Work Health and Safety (Psychosocial Risks) Amendment Regulation 2022 (subordinate Legislation 2022 No. 141 made under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011)	• April 2023
WA		• Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 • Code of Practice on Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace	• March 2023 • February 2022
TAS		• Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022 • Code of Practice: Managing psychosocial hazards at work (published by Safe Work Australia in July 2022)	• December 2022 • Jan 2023
NT		• Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011 • Code of Practice - How to manage work health and safety risks	• April 2023 • July 2023
SA		• South Australia Work Health and Safety (Psychosocial Risks) Amendment Regulations 2023 under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012	• December 2023
ACT		• Strategy For Managing Work-Related Psychosocial Hazards 2021-2023 • Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice) • Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Republication No 27	• October 2021 • Approval 2023 • Updated August 2024
VIC		• Occupational Health and Safety (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025	• December 2025

Workplace management of psychosocial risk – You are expected to:

- Identify hazards
- Assess psychosocial risks
- Implement control measures
- Regularly review the success of these measures
- Consequences?

Work related psychosocial hazards – SafeWork NSW…

- Low levels of control at work
- High and low job demands and workloads
- Poor support
- Poor organisational change management
- Poor organisational justice
- Low recognition and reward
- Low role clarity
- Poor workplace relationships
- Poor environmental conditions
- Remote and isolated work
- Violent or traumatic events

SafeWork NSW. (2026, June 25). *What are psychosocial hazards.* https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/psychosocial-hazards

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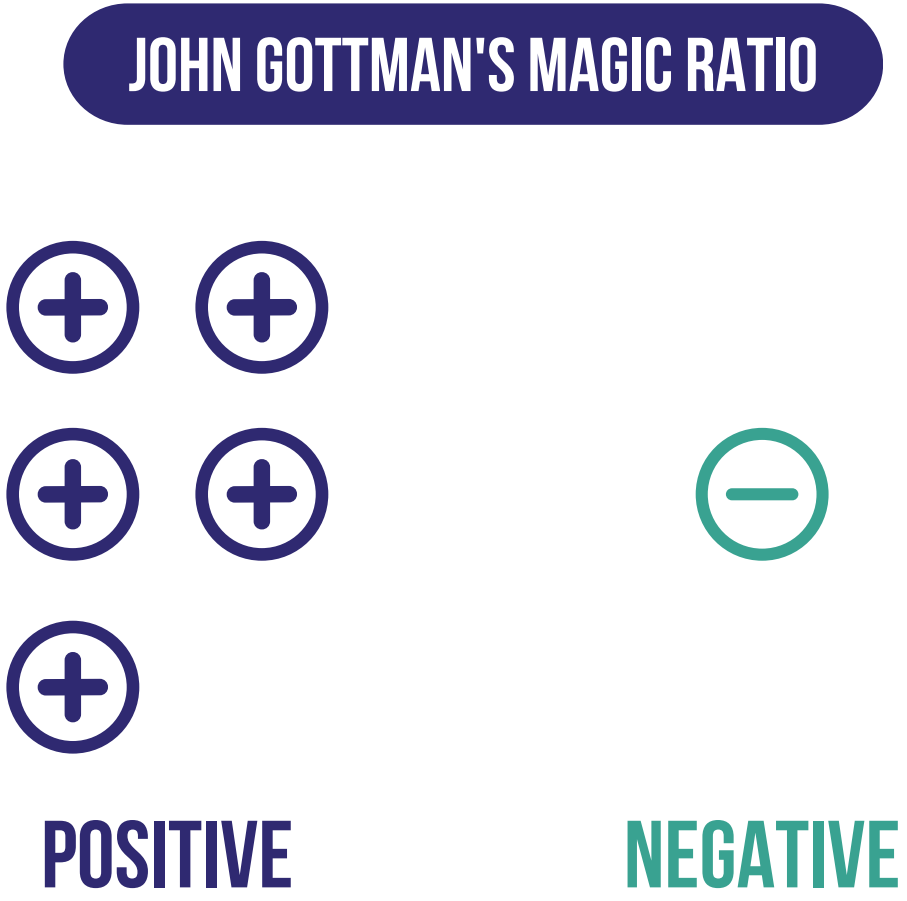
Psrisk is a product of the good and bad stuff…



Gottman, J. M. (1999). *The Marriage Clinic: A scientifically-based marital therapy*. W.W. Norton.

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Bakker 2011 – work engagement

Vigour

- High levels of energy and mental resilience

Dedication

- Strongly involved in work. A sense of significance, enthusiasm and challenge

Absorption

- Fully concentrated and happily engrossed in work such that time passes quickly. A sort of extended version of “flow” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002).

Bakker, A. (2011). An evidence-based model of work engagement. *Current Directions In Psychological Science, 20*(4), 265-269.
Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2002). *Flow: The classic work on how to achieve happiness.* Random House.

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The business case for engagement

- Productivity – varies with increases and decreases in engagement
- Internal measures – job satisfaction, absenteeism, attraction, retention, organisational citizenship behaviours – vary with engagement
- External measures – client satisfaction, stakeholder satisfaction – vary with engagement – some studies indicate 50-60% causation
- OH+S is affected by engagement
- Profit varies with engagement
- Engagement leads to creativity and innovation
- It is one of the best predictors of job and organisational performance we have found.

Bakker, A.B. (2017) Strategic and proactive approaches to work engagement. *Organizational Dynamics, 46*, 67–75.
Schneider, B., Yost, A.B., Kropp, A., Kind, C. & Lam, H. (2018). Workforce engagement: What it is, what drives it, and why it matters for organizational performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 39*(4), 462–480.

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Work stressors – two types

- **Challenge demands – "good stressors":**
  Pressure of workload
  Pressure of processing lots of information
  Pressure of problem solving.

- **Hindrance demands – "bad" stressors:**
  - Lack of social support
  - Job insecurity
  - Inadequate resources
  - Role ambiguity
  - Role conflict – contrary requirements from people around you.

Podsakoff, N. P., LePine, J. A., & LePine, M. A. (2007). Differential challenge stressor-hindrance stressor relationships with job attitudes, turnover intentions, turnover, and withdrawal behavior: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*, 438–454.

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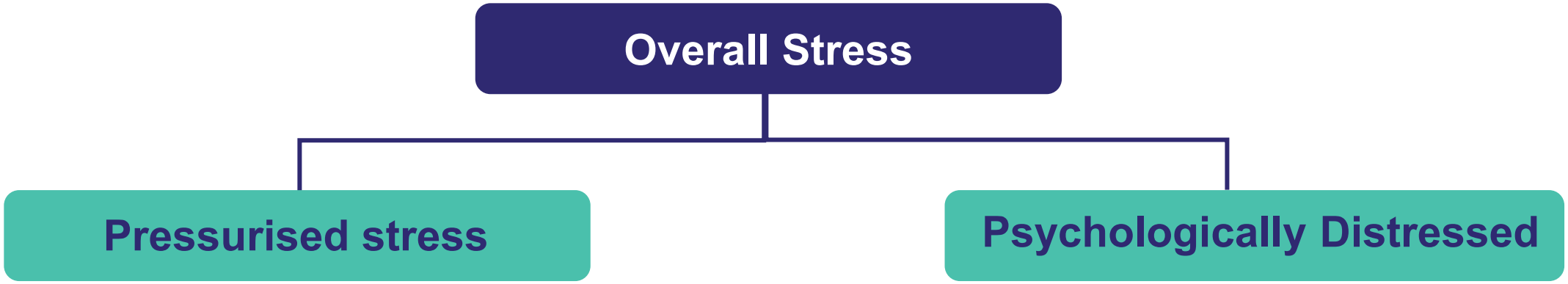
The components of stress



- Experiencing pressure and tension at work

- Experiencing negative emotions such as nervousness and anxiety arising from work stress

Pejtersen, J . H., Kristensen, T. S., Borg, V., & Bjorner, J. B. (2010). The second version of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ II). *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health, 38,* 8-24

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A major study by SACS…

Wellbeing surveys measuring:

- **Engagement** – energy, commitment and flow
- **Job Resources** – optimism, variety, learning, self confidence and knowledge of processes
- **Team Resources** – freedom to make decisions, feedback, customer commitment, optimism and clarity of goals
- **Leader Resources** – support, fostering teamwork, helping people learn, clear performance standards and behavioural expectations, empowering others, management of underperformance and counterproductive behaviour, optimism and celebrating success
- **Organisation Resources** – optimism, willingness to change, encouragement, freedom to make decisions, recognition of performance, clear goals, feedback and customer commitment
- **Stressors** – challenge demands (good stressors) and hindrance demands (bad stressors)
- **Stress**
- **Safety Climate**
- **Intention to Leave**
- **Diversity Climate**

Typically 140 questions.

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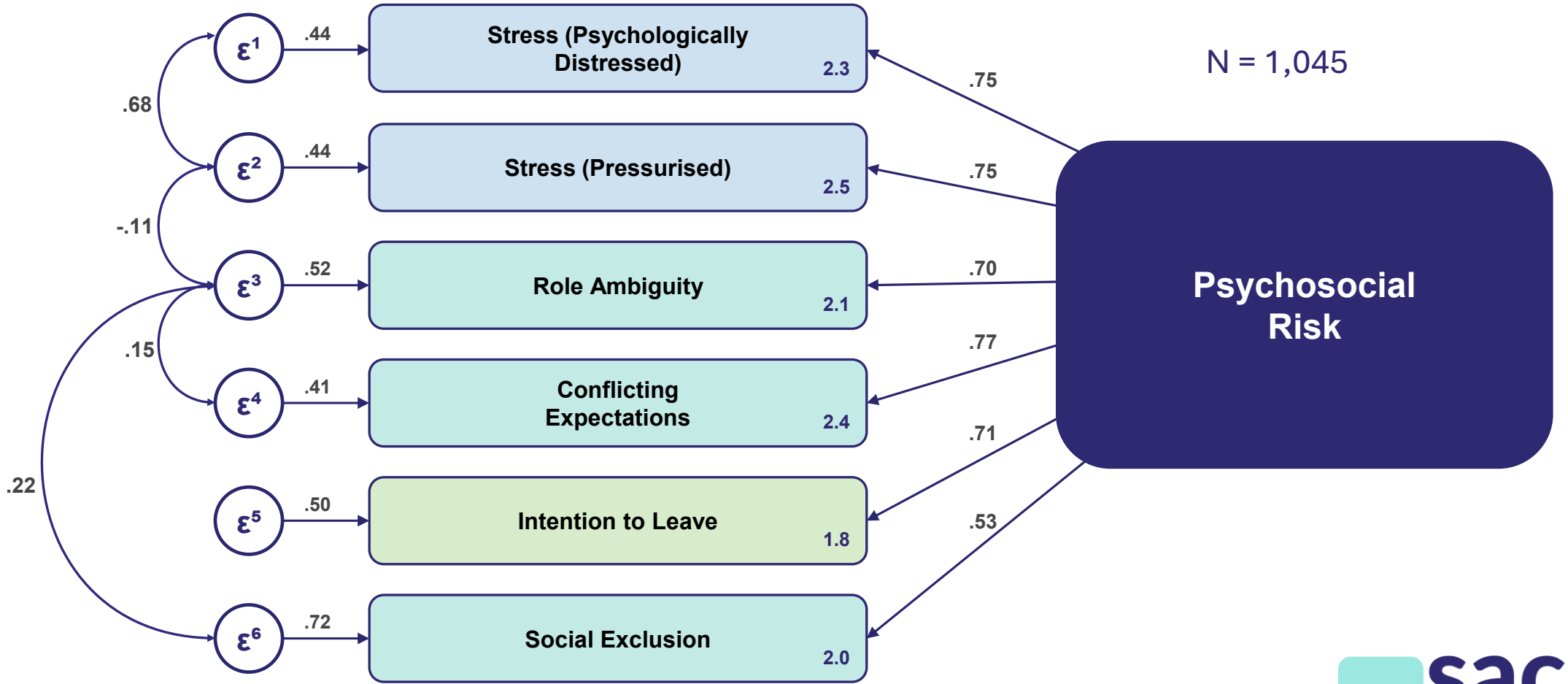
SACS study of psychosocial negatives…



Does this measure stack up?

Fit statistic	Value	Description
RMSEA	0.06	Root mean squared error of approximation
CFI	1.00	Comparative fit index
TLI	0.98	Tucker-Lewis index
SRMR	0.02	Standardized root mean squared residual
CD	0.83	Coefficient of determination

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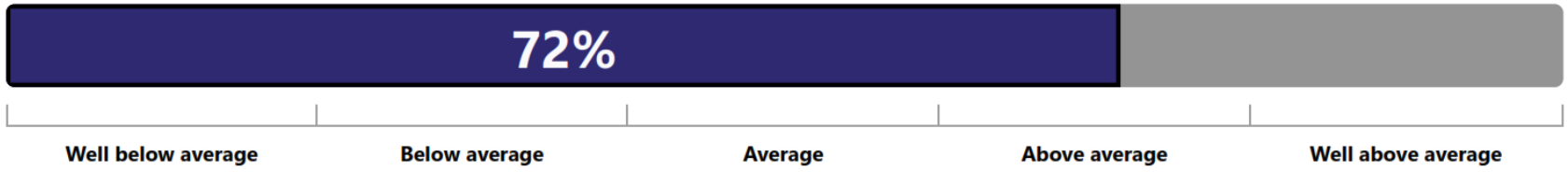
How is it reported?

Psychosocial risk

Organisation results

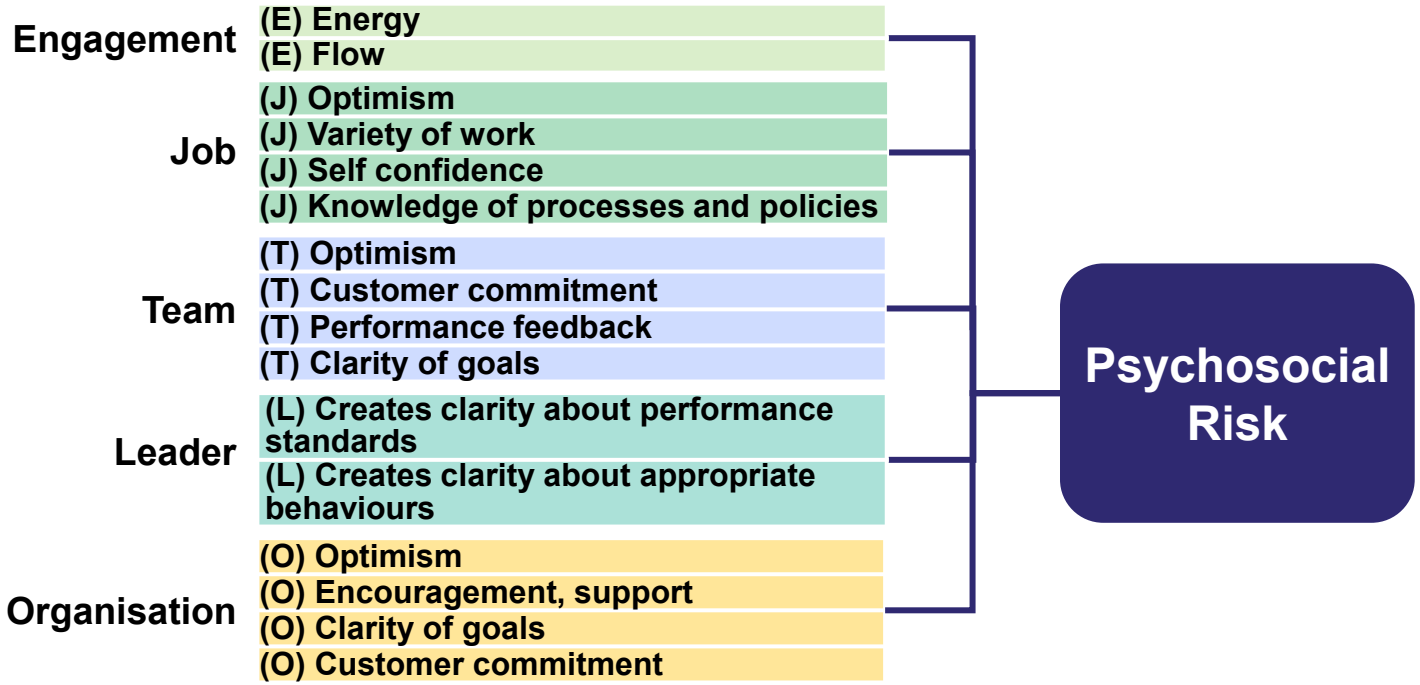
Psychosocial risk refers to aspects of work that have the potential to negatively affect an employee's psychological health and wellbeing. As part of this survey, psychosocial risk has been measured using an evidence based combination of indications, including psychological distress, feelings of work-related pressure, role ambiguity, social exclusion, conflicting expectations and employees' intention to leave.

Together, these measures provide an overall indication of the psychosocial risks present within a workplace, presented below as a percentile. A results below 50 represents lower than average psychosocial risk, a result higher than 50 represents higher psychosocial risk.



Your employees overall psychosocial risk scores put them at **72nd percentile** relative to the norm group.

Relationship between SACS Psychosocial Risk Index, Engagement and JTLO



Model Summary

F(31, 1013)	Prob > F	R Square	Adjusted R Square	N
46.64	< .001	0.59	0.58	1,045

Predictors	Beta weights
(E) Energy	-0.13
(E) Flow	0.05
(J) Optimism	-0.23
(J) Variety of work	0.16
(J) Self confidence	-0.12
(J) Knowledge of processes and policies	-0.07
(T) Optimism	-0.11
(T) Customer commitment	0.12
(T) Performance feedback	-0.10
(T) Clarity of goals	-0.12
(L) Creates clarity about performance standards	0.14
(L) Creates clarity about appropriate behaviours	-0.15
(O) Optimism	0.11
(O) Encouragement, support	-0.08
(O) Clarity of goals	-0.08
(O) Customer commitment	-0.08

Engagement and Psychosocial Risk

	Measure	Correlation with PSR
Engagement	(E) Energy	-0.56*
Job	(J) Optimism	-0.62*
	(J) Learning at work	-0.49*
Team	(T) Freedom to make decision	-0.45*
	(T) Optimism	-0.58*
	(T) Performance feedback	-0.59*
	(T) Clarity of goals	-0.62*
Leader	(L) Helps people to learn	-0.57*
	(L) Supportive leadership	-0.54*
	(L) Fosters teamwork	-0.57*
	(L) Creates clarity about performance standards	-0.56*
	(L) Effective management of underperformance	-0.57*
	(L) Creates clarity about appropriate behaviours	-0.56*
	(L) Effective management of counterproductive behaviour	-0.52*
	(L) Celebrating success	-0.55*
	(L) Optimism and positivity	-0.55*
Organisation	(O) Encouragement, support	-0.56*
	(O) Recognition of performance	-0.52*
	(O) Clarity of goals	-0.54*

N = 1,045

* = p < .05

Find out more about our Psychosocial Risk Index

Use your camera to scan the QR code or visit

bit.ly/PsychRiskIndex

to find out more about the SACS Psychosocial Risk Index

References

- Pejtersen, J . H., Kristensen, T. S., Borg, V., & Bjorner, J. B. (2010). The second version of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ II). *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health, 38,* 8-24.