

# The Wellbeing and Performance Agenda

*making the workplace a fabulous,  
high performing place to work*

Derek Mowbray  
2019

## What is the problem?

We know that the problem facing many organisations is a general lack of energy amongst the workforce, depriving the organisation of potential high level performance and success.

We know that people coming to work in body but not in mind is now the majority of the workforce in some organisations.

We know that productivity in the UK is generally flat and has been for almost a decade, and that no amount of financial encouragement has made much difference.

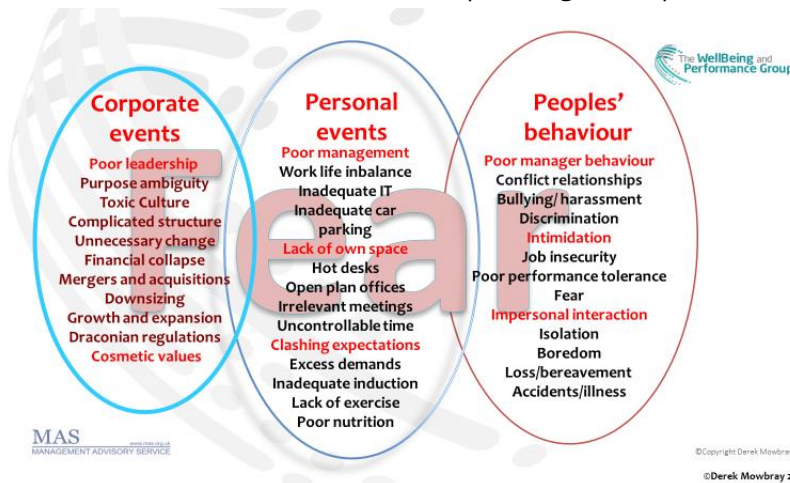
We know that individual confidence in some national institutions has disappeared, such as the banks, politicians, church, police and the NHS. We know this makes people unsettled and more inward looking.

We know all this costs a fortune, and isn't in the interests of anyone, any organisation or any Government.

## What impedes organisational success?

The biggest impediment to organisational success is leaders and managers having a low expectation of what is possible. They devote themselves to leading and managing projects in the vain hope that these will energise the workforce and restore it to a high performing machine. Many of these projects are about achieving arbitrary and unrealistic targets, often perceived as proxies for performance.

Instead, what has been happening is that leaders and managers have 'allowed', by default, events and behaviours to occur that impede high level performance.



These events and behaviours do not occur by chance; they occur because the culture, leadership and management of the organisation 'allow' them to happen. They happen because little or no action is taken to prevent them from occurring in the first place.

A toxic ingredient in the mix is fear. Many people are fearful of the repercussions of saying or taking action that might encourage people to behave better and prevent adverse events from happening in the first place. Why fear causes such under performance is hard to understand, as experiencing fear is not in the interests of anyone, other than those seeking to maintain 'power' over others.

Many are fearful for their jobs, their reputation, or how others may think of them. They may be fearful of the reaction they may get to something they say, which, in turn, may make them isolated, or worse, acquire an identity that forever portrays them as someone they would prefer not to be.

## The Psychological Contract

The Psychological Contract is an implicit set of expectations that employees expect to be delivered by their employers. When these are not delivered, the intensity of engagement the employee has with the employer (and, therefore, the work to be performed) becomes diluted to the point of dis-engagement.

We expect banks to be helpful, politicians to solve difficult problems, behave logically and treat everyone fairly, the church to represent basic ethical values and be the bedrock of good behaviour, the police to be honest and help us when trouble occurs, and the NHS to be always there, with a friendly face when we are at our most vulnerable. When these implicit expectations are not delivered we turn inwards and fend for ourselves. The Psychological Contract is fractured.

It is the same in the workplace. We turn inwards and fend for ourselves when the workplace doesn't deliver what we expect it to deliver. We conserve our energy to ensure our own survival, and don't expend it on helping the organisation become more successful. The idea that a more successful organisation will help individual survival doesn't penetrate the consciousness when individuals feel their own survival is threatened. The risk of relying on others becomes too great.

## Changing attitude; changing the workplace – making it a fabulous and high performing place to work

Everyone is driven by their self-interest. Discovering what this is forms part of the task for leaders and managers. In general, many, if not most, people have the self-interest to remain psychologically healthy and in mental control. Mental control means having a clear head to think and act. Without mental control the ability to take decisions about survival becomes difficult. Survival is the ultimate self-interest.



On this basis, individuals want to feel psychologically well.

Organisations are normally established to fulfil a purpose. The workforce is employed to achieve the organisational purpose. How effectively the workforce achieves the purpose is normally dependent on performance. The proxies for performance can include productivity and profit, both of which may be arbitrarily set as targets to be

achieved, and against which the performance of the workforce (and, therefore, the organisation) is measured.

On this basis the organisation wants performance.

If the organisation provides what the workforce wants, which is psychological wellbeing, the reciprocal process results in the workforce providing what the organisation wants, which is performance.

This is shown in the image above.

## The link between psychological wellbeing and performance

Feeling psychologically well and in mental control tends to help individuals concentrate on what they're doing.

Concentration is at the root of performance. You can have all the skills, knowledge and experience in the world, but if you cannot concentrate, these skills become a waste of time.

The events and behaviours cited earlier as impediments to success are impediments to concentration. The mind is hijacked by the events, behaviours and the toxic ingredient of fear. Concentration on what is expected or wanted is limited and fragmented, resulting in under performance.

If you feel well, you're able to concentrate effectively on what you want. Concentration is the essence of performance. If you feel well you have the **opportunity** of performing at your peak. If you feel fantastic you **will** perform at your peak, no matter what you're doing.

## Implementing change in organisations

The strategy of conviction is the most effective strategy of change. It is based on being able to argue and convince people of the merits for change, so that those involved can see for themselves that change will bring about improvements to their working lives.

It is common sense that if you feel well you perform well, and that if you feel fantastic you'll perform at your peak. In addition to common sense, there is plenty of evidence to support this position.

On the basis that organisations want performance and individuals want to feel psychologically well, the way to marry the two together and bring change about is by adopting The WellBeing and Performance Agenda.

## The WellBeing and Performance Agenda

The WellBeing and Performance Agenda (WP Agenda) provides a systemic (organisation wide) approach that creates the conditions for high level performance.

The overall aim of the WP Agenda is

- To make the workplace a fabulous and high performing place to work

The purposes of the WP Agenda are:

- To create the conditions that enable individuals to thrive and perform at their peak consistently.
- To create the conditions that enhance individual psychological wellbeing, so people feel fantastic and perform at their peak.
- To create the conditions that stimulate and provoke innovation, energy, motivation, morale, personal growth, and success.
- To create the conditions that prevent events and behaviours that may trigger stress in the workforce.
- To create the conditions that reduce the incidence of psycho-presenteeism (people coming to work in body but not in mind), together with the associated costs.

- To create the conditions that reduce sickness absence and staff turnover attributable to stress.
- To create the conditions that inspire positive attitudes to adverse events and difficult behaviours, so that active corporate and personal resilience is strengthened to successfully overcome these challenges.

**The attributes and behaviours of a psychologically healthy organisation**



A psychologically healthy organisation that has achieved the purposes above, exhibits the following attributes and behaviours in its workforce:

Commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement.

These attributes and behaviours are known to be strongly associated with psychological

wellbeing and peak performance.

Creating the conditions where individuals feel commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement requires each person to behave in a certain manner at work, and for the culture, leadership and working environment of the organisation to reinforce these behaviours and provoke individuals to be motivated to concentrate on the tasks expected of them.

**What is psychological wellbeing?**

Psychological Wellbeing is about how you feel, not about how you are.

In general terms individual psychological wellbeing is achieved and enhanced when the following ingredients are present in individual lives.

**The ingredients of psychological wellbeing**



Ingredient	Explanation	The workplace
<b>Purpose</b>	Everyone needs a purpose or purposes in life as this provides meaning for doing things, such as getting out of bed	A clear purpose at work provides a strong meaning for working. It starts the commitment and engagement process
<b>Safe</b>	A basic level of psychological wellbeing – experiencing no threat of harm	Providing the conditions where no threat of harm exists
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	Believing in oneself enough to believe you can do anything you think you're capable of doing	Providing the conditions that encourage people to feel they can do anything they feel capable of doing. Self-empowerment.
<b>Secure</b>	The next level of psychological wellbeing – experiencing no harm and feeling confident enough to cautiously engage with others	Providing the conditions where people feel confident to engage openly with anyone in the workforce, including leaders and managers.
<b>Self-esteem</b>	Feeling good about oneself and the things you do	Providing encouragement, recognition and performance appraisal. Providing challenges.
<b>Flow</b>	Being energised and thrilled by the activities you're engaged in.	Providing the conditions that enable the workforce to focus and concentrate on tasks they are able to complete within their capability, and to find tasks that resonate very closely to the interests of the individual.
<b>Optimism</b>	Being hopeful about the future	Providing an authentic vision of the future which shows how the individual will contribute to that vision.
<b>Attachment</b>	Having a deep and enduring instinctive emotional bond to someone or something	Providing all the ingredients for the person to feel psychologically fulfilled and well. When this happens the workplace becomes the single place that individuals feel fulfils all that is needed (in work) to have a fulfilled working life. This provokes attachment.
<b>Control</b>	Being in mental control; having a clear mind; being on top of oneself; having clarity of thought and action.	Providing the conditions that encourages individuals to feel in control of their own work, and able to contribute to the success of their team and organisation. Eliminating the events and behaviours that cause degrees of stress.
<b>Gratitude</b>	Being thankful and appreciative of events in life, whether caused by oneself or others.	Providing the conditions that provoke individuals to be appreciative of others and their contributions, as well as appreciating the experiences of everyday working life.



<b>Empowerment</b>	Someone 'in authority' encourages another to do something out of the ordinary.	Providing the conditions in which each employee feels they are empowered by themselves to do things out of the ordinary. Providing the leadership and management that 'empowers employees to do things out of the ordinary,
<b>Pleasure</b>	The feeling of enjoyment and satisfaction.	Providing the conditions that enable individuals to enjoy the interaction with colleagues and feel satisfaction at performing at their peak.
<b>Meaning</b>	Making sense of the world around you.	Providing the conditions that enables everyone at work to understand what is going on around them, as well as what plans there may be for the immediate future.
<b>Resilience</b>	Active resilience is having flexible strength of mind to rise up to and overcome challenges without experiencing stress.	Providing the conditions that provoke a positive attitude to leaders, managers and the organisation so that any challenges that arise are met with a positive approach
<b>Hope</b>	Having an optimistic and positive attitude to events	Providing the conditions that provoke positive feelings towards events and behaviours at work
<b>Success</b>	The completion of something or the accomplishment of a goal or purpose	Providing the conditions that provoke in individuals the opportunity to complete tasks, goals and purposes without having their mind diverted by unnecessary events and behaviours, especially those that may cause degrees of stress.
<b>Happiness</b>	A state of contentment and joy	Providing the conditions where individuals can feel a sense of achievement, contentment, and praise for their work. These will influence how happy the person is.

It is the purpose of leaders and managers to create the conditions that enable individuals feel psychologically well. They should put in place the necessary triggers that when pulled help individuals feel well. At the same time leaders and managers are expected to eliminate the events and behaviours that may cause a stressful reaction in individuals. In the main, if the triggers for psychological wellbeing are in place, they will squeeze out the adverse events and difficult behaviours without leaders and managers needing to take overt action to eliminate them.

## The WP Agenda in outline

The WP Agenda has seven elements as shown in the image below.



The Agenda is focused on creating the conditions that enhance psychological wellbeing and concentration, enabling individuals to attain peak performance.

## Creating the conditions for peak performance

### WP Agenda Item 1 – Adaptive Leadership

Why is this the first item on the Agenda?

Leadership is about taking a lead, and no change in attitude or practice is going to happen unless someone or several people take a lead in bringing about change.

This item, therefore, has to be first on the Agenda. It is about introducing the process of leadership that will provoke the workforce to feel enhanced psychological wellbeing so it will perform at its peak consistently.

Question: what is Adaptive Leadership, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

<b>Description of Adaptive Leadership</b>	Adaptive Leadership is a process of leadership that is adopted by everyone in the workforce. In effect, everyone takes a lead to ensure the organisation attains greater success in the future.
<b>What benefits accrue from Adaptive Leadership?</b>	Adaptive Leadership strongly provokes individuals in the workforce to feel they 'own' the organisation, and are responsible for its future success. It, therefore, provokes the motivation to produce high performance. The effect is that the combined intelligence of the workforce is used to address the issues affecting the future success of the organisation.



	<p>The process offers the opportunity for individuals to feel psychologically well as it plays to most of the ingredients of psychological wellbeing. Adopting Adaptive Leadership helps to eliminate the adverse events and behaviours that are impediments to success because everyone is 'in it together' and will iron out the behaviours and events that impede success.</p>
<p><b>How can Adaptive Leadership be implemented?</b></p>	<p>A decision to implement this process should be taken by the Board of Directors. There are a number of exercises that help with implementation, and you can follow Derek Mowbray's Guide to Adaptive Leadership to help implement the process.</p> <p>The Leaders and Manager's Code can be used as the basis for all leaders and manager's behaviour and actions, and be the curriculum for leadership development.</p> <p>Workshops and coaching on Adaptive Leadership are available, as is a workshop of the manager's role in resilience which covers the main points about Adaptive Leadership.</p>

Question: what is the main difference between Adaptive Leadership and other forms of Leadership?

Decisions tend to fall into being either

- a) technical decisions, for which the outcome is characterised by degrees of certainty, and
- b) adaptive decisions, for which the outcome is characterised by speculation and uncertainty.

Decisions that are technical include, for example, budgeting, and project management. Decisions that are adaptive include, for example, performance appraisal, conflict management, motivation, change management, strategic planning, communications.

Question: is Adaptive Leadership a recipe for chaos?

All organisations employ leaders and managers who are 'held to account' by a Board of Directors (or others) for the delivery of aspects of the organisation's purpose. These are normally Directors, heads of divisions, heads of department and supervisors of teams. They most frequently deal with technical decisions, decisions about which there is a degree of certainty, and the use of matrices and measurement in decision making. Such positions are positions 'of authority', and remain when Adaptive Leadership processes are implemented.

Adaptive Leadership processes require everyone to 'feel accountable and responsible' for the success of the organisation, but not 'held to account' for its success.

In effect everyone 'takes a lead' as a consequence of feeling responsible for helping the leaders and managers 'in authority' to be held to account. The workforce is their 'eyes and ears' and agents in making the organisation more successful tomorrow compared with today.

What are the main tasks of Adaptive Leadership?

The main tasks are:

- To create the conditions that provoke psychological wellbeing and performance at work.
- To constantly reinforce the culture and leadership style of the WellBeing and Performance Agenda.

This is achieved by working with the workforce in implementing the remainder of The Wellbeing and Performance Agenda.

**WP Agenda Item 2 – Psychological Responsibility**

Why is this the second item on the Agenda?

This item is about the behaviour of the workforce and their responsibility for remaining psychologically well.

It is, also, about shifting responsibility for psychological wellbeing from being solely the concern of leaders and managers to individuals working in the organisation.

What is Psychological Responsibility, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

<p><b>Description of Psychological Responsibility</b></p>	<p>Psychological Responsibility is a responsibility that organisations place on each individual in the workforce to remain psychologically well and to ensure they do no psychological harm to anyone else.</p> <p>The implications include the expectation that individuals will alert their leaders and managers to any situation of circumstance where they feel their psychological wellbeing is being compromised by the demands made on them or the behaviour of others. It is part of the expectation that once a situation is identified, action is taken by the individual concerned to influence the event or behaviour or remove themselves from being exposed to the event or behaviour or that their leader or manager takes action to prevent the event or behaviour from occurring. The aim is for the individual to remain psychologically well.</p> <p>Each person is expected to adopt Intelligent Behaviour at work, which are the behaviours that, properly applied, do no psychological harm to others.</p>
<p><b>What benefits accrue from Psychological Responsibility?</b></p>	<p>Psychological Responsibility heightens individual awareness of the ways in which people behave and the actions they take. By adopting Psychological Responsibility the organisation is modifying the behaviours of its leaders, managers and employees so they do no psychological harm to other people, thus enable individuals to concentrate and attain peak performance.</p>
<p><b>How can Psychological Responsibility be implemented?</b></p>	<p>Implementation is facilitated by a Code of Conduct that spells out the ingredients of Psychological Responsibility. This needs reinforcing at every manager’s meeting to ensure that everyone builds up confidence to speak openly about their situation. In addition, the logo can be used as screen savers, mouse mats or simply posters on walls to reinforce the basic message.</p> <p>In addition, Derek Mowbray’s Guide to Psychological Responsibility contains exercises for implementation, and which act as a source document for workshops on this topic.</p>



## WP Agenda Item 3 – Sharing Responsibility for the Future Success of the Organisation amongst everyone.

Why is this the third item on the Agenda?

This is about the overall style and culture of the organisation.

It is based on the combined intelligence of the workforce being greater than that of its leaders and managers, and that all organisations need as much intelligence as possible to resolve the complex adaptive, non-technical, issues that affect future success.

This item influences the whole approach to leadership, management and the expectation of employees. It is fundamental to an overt Psychological Contract and to achieving great success for the organisation.

What is sharing responsibility, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

<p><b>Description of Sharing Responsibility for the Future Success of the Organisation amongst everyone</b></p>	<p>This is a style of management that places an expectation on each employee that they are responsible for the future success of the organisation. This means that the expectation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete transparency about the organisation and its management;</li> <li>The expectation that individuals will critique any aspect of the organisation and its management;</li> <li>Individuals focus on the success of the organisation and not its leaders and managers;</li> <li>Leaders and managers' actions and behaviours will be judged by employees in the context of what is best for the future success of the organisation;</li> <li>Employees are expected to form independent judgments about how the organisation can improve and be more successful;</li> <li>Employees are expected to provide ideas about how to make the organisation more successful in the future.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What benefits accrue?</b></p>	<p>The approach is reinforced by Adaptive Leadership and plays directly to most of the elements that provoke psychological wellbeing and performance. People feel responsible; they, also, feel they own the organisation and will, therefore, invest their energy into it to ensure its future success. The approach encourages individuals to understand the whole organisation and how it works, and to make unsolicited observations about how any aspect of the organisation can be made to improve the prospects of future success. Sharing responsibility squeezes out the threats that impede concentration and performance. It promotes kinship – the sense of sharing everything amongst the workforce – which helps create the mutual self-interest to succeed.</p>
<p><b>How can sharing responsibility be implemented?</b></p>	<p>The Board of Directors need to agree this approach to leading and managing the organisation. Once that is in place, one way to facilitate change is to create a <b>Manifesto of Freedoms</b> that include the freedom to raise 'Elephants in the Room'; the freedom to critically appraise any aspect of the organisation; the freedom to offer unsolicited ideas for improving success, and to expect the idea to be seriously assessed for validity and implementation; the freedom to identify anyone who is not helping the organisation to become more successful in the future.</p>

## WP Agenda Item 4 – the Adaptive Culture

Why is this the fourth item on the Agenda?

Psychological Responsibility and Sharing Responsibility for the Future Success of the Organisation are two principles that underpin the culture of the organisation. They influence the way people behave towards each other.

This item builds on these principles and adds the elements of culture that heavily influence trust, commitment, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement, the attributes that form psychologically healthy organisations that perform at their peak.

What is an adaptive culture, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

<p><b>Description of an Adaptive Culture</b></p>	<p>A culture is made up of various ingredients all of which help towards the tone, atmosphere and expectations that surround the workforce and influence its attitude and approach to work.</p> <p>An Adaptive Culture is designed deliberately to create the tone, atmosphere and expectations of a psychologically healthy organisation, one that provokes the workforce to feel psychologically well. The culture, also, uses the health of the organisation as the stimulus for peak performance. The cultural expectation is that the organisation achieves peak performance through the enhanced psychological wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>The culture, therefore, must have triggers that provoke individuals to behave in certain ways, and to feel responsible for the future success of the organisation.</p> <p>The main triggers are: purpose, vision, cultural values, corporate values, and architecture. Other triggers are found in the remaining items of the Wellbeing and Performance Agenda – leadership style, Psychological Responsibility, Sharing Responsibility for the future success of the organisation, adaptive working environment, and adaptive and resilient workforce.</p>
<p><b>What benefits accrue?</b></p>	<p>Culture influences everything in an organisation. It is ‘the way things are done around here’.</p> <p>A culture that provokes people to feel psychologically well, combined with the motivation to attain peak performance, stimulates the workforce to be highly successful. The result is an organisation and workforce that are characterised by commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement. These are the attributes and behaviours that make organisations hugely successful</p>
<p><b>How can an Adaptive Culture be implemented?</b></p>	<p>It starts with the Board of Directors who need to agree that this type of culture is one they wish to see implemented. Once agreed, there are specific exercises to be completed that start the ball rolling towards implementation – these can be found in Derek Mowbray’s Guides to the Wellbeing and Performance Agenda and the Manager’s Role in Resilience.</p> <p>The results of the exercises need to be reinforced in managers’ meetings. Someone needs to take charge of implementing the adaptive culture, to ensure all the exercises are completed, and the information obtained from them is turned into cultural triggers. Leaders and managers have to work hard at developing the culture of choice, and this can be helped by having a</p>

description of the culture that is being implemented. The following is a description that can be used for this purpose:

### High performing culture



**Purpose** that is clear and unambiguous, expressed as a simple 'big idea', an idea which all staff relate to closely, and are proud to discuss with friends and colleagues

**Atmosphere** of sharing **responsibility** for the future success of the organisation, where all staff are encouraged to think **independently**, are **attentive** to each other, are kindly and supportive of each other, and act with **humanity**.

**Behaviour** that is **respectful** towards each other, value each other's views and opinions, Work in teams which are places of mutual support, where anything is debated without a hint of humiliation, where the critique of individual and team work is welcomed, discussed and where lessons are learnt and implemented

**Staff** who project a **confidence** towards clients and customers, who 'go the extra mile' by providing unsolicited ideas, thoughts, stimulate each other, and where their interest in their customers offers something more than is expected, beyond **courtesy**, and beyond service, offering attentiveness and personal interest.

**Leaders and managers** who **challenge** their staff, who provide opportunities for personal development through new experiences, and who treat everyone with **fairness** and **understanding**.



**An organisation** that is driven by its **values** towards organisational and personal **success**, Intellectually, financially, socially and emotionally.

©Copyright Derek Mowbray

## WP Agenda Item 5 – the Adaptive Working Environment

Why is this the fifth item on the Agenda?

The Adaptive Working Environment relates more closely to the physical conditions of the workplace, combined with added influences on physical health, and management processes. These ingredients are developed within the context of the Adaptive Culture, and therefore, follow from the implementation of cultural influences.

The content of the Adaptive Working Environment has to be focused on supporting the attainment of commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement.

What is Adaptive Working Environment, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

**Description of an Adaptive Working Environment**

An Adaptive Working Environment includes: physical health, ergonomics, technology and management practices.

Physical health is about ensuring the workforce is able to remain physically healthy by taking exercise during the working day and is encouraged to do so. It, also, includes the provision of appropriate nutritious food, food that helps enhance physical health and provides energy to aid concentration. It is, also, about sending people home with infectious illness, so the illness doesn't spread. Ergonomics is the marrying of design with ease of use by people. This helps eliminate interruptions to concentration by providing equipment, furniture and buildings that are 'fit for purpose', and designed to help individuals achieve peak performance. The same is true for technology that is provided to aid concentration and achieve peak performance. In practical terms if IT breaks down, it needs to be fixed immediately, as this form of technology only exists to help achieve peak performance, and if it causes frustration by not operating effectively, then it contributes to under-performance.

Similarly, with management practices. These all need to enhance commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement,



	and any practice that doesn't do this is contributing to under-performance and needs to be modified. The management practices that have a particular impact on performance are: recruitment, job purpose, job challenge, performance appraisal, team working, training and development, career development, openness, involvement (including meetings), encouragement, communications and worklife balance.
<b>What benefits accrue?</b>	Most organisations focus on this aspect of the WellBeing and Performance Agenda as it is more obviously aligned to performance, and physical challenges are often perceived as easier to fix than mental challenges. From the description of this element it will be clear that the features highlighted make a significant contribution to performance. They, also, make a significant contribution to psychological wellbeing. The example of IT breaking down, will cause degrees of frustration which, in turn, causes individuals to lose their concentration. There may be a 'ripple effect' onto other tasks not involving IT, so great can the frustration be when IT breaks down. Getting everything right in this element of the WellBeing and Performance Agenda enhances individual psychological wellbeing and, therefore, has a direct impact on attaining peak performance.
<b>How can an Adaptive Culture be implemented?</b>	The processes of implementing the Adaptive Working Environment are closely aligned to blending the role of managers as project managers with their role as people managers. The implementation of this element is best achieved through management development. A template can be found in Derek Mowbray's guide to the WellBeing and Performance Agenda.

## WP Agenda Item 6 – Intelligent Management

Why is this the sixth item on the Agenda?

Intelligent management is the process involved in ensuring the cultural context of the organisation is applied to everyday management activities. There are 12 selected activities to illustrate the manner in which the culture is applied into practice, ranging from recruitment, to everyday routine activities. The selected 12 elements are intended to show how to apply the culture into practice across a broad range without needing to list all the manager activities that occur in all organisations.

What is Intelligent Management, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?





<p><b>Description of Intelligent Management</b></p>	<p>Intelligent management is about using the cultural environment, combined with adaptive leadership style, in everyday manager activities. Recruitment, for example, is about ensuring the organisation sets out to ensure all applicants feel very welcome in the organisation, and are introduced to the cultural environment quickly and easily so every applicant understands and can feel the supportive nature of the organisation. Recruitment is a mutual process, with equal weight being applied to the interests of the individual as to the interests of the organisation. Another is encouragement, which means what it says on the tin – to provide people with the courage to try something just outside their comfort zone. Both illustrations are known to strengthen trust, commitment and engagement which are fundamental to the prevention of distress at work, and the provocation of psychological wellbeing.</p>
<p><b>What benefits accrue?</b></p>	<p>The overall benefits arise from the combination of the cultural environment and manager behaviour towards their workforce. These are the prevention of distress, and the provocation of psychological wellbeing. This leads to the enhanced ability to concentrate, feel psychologically well, and perform at individual peak for long periods without feeling any form of distress, but the opposite, a buzz or psychological flow. Individuals are stimulated, so they will become more engaged in ensuring the future success of their teams and the organisation.</p>
<p><b>How can Intelligent Management be implemented?</b></p>	<p>Intelligent management is about the processes of managing people on a daily basis. The implementation is part of the overall approach to creating and sustaining a positive working environment characterised by strong psychological wellbeing of the whole workforce. The transformation of managers into leaders includes the training and development of managers in adopting Intelligent Management in their everyday activities.</p>

## WP Agenda Item 7 – The Adaptive Workforce

Why is this the seventh item on the Agenda?

All the previous elements of the WellBeing and Performance Agenda are concerned with the ‘envelope’ within which the workforce does its work.

By implementing the WellBeing and Performance Agenda it is expected that the workforce will feel an enhanced sense of psychological wellbeing, and if suitably motivated, will perform at its peak. For this to happen, the workforce will become adaptive to internal and external pressures for change, and be able to adapt without any diminution in performance.

It follows, therefore, that this element should be the last on the Agenda. It focuses on the individual.

What is an Adaptive Workforce, what benefits accrue and how can it be implemented?

<p><b>Description of an Adaptive Workforce</b></p>	<p>The Adaptive Workforce is made up of individuals who are sufficiently resilient, they can overcome challenges successfully and without experience harmful stress.</p>
--	--

	<p>A resilient individual is someone who has ‘flexible strength of mind’ to rise up to a challenge and successfully overcome it. Such resilience is active resilience, as it requires the person to have a positive attitude and motivation to tackle the challenge. People who work within the cultural environment, described by the WellBeing and Performance Agenda, will possess both a positive attitude and be motivated to rise up to and overcome challenges.</p> <p>Ideally, of course, the WellBeing and Performance Agenda will eliminate the events and behaviours for which personal resilience is required. However, practical reality suggests there will always be events and behaviours occurring in the workplace for which personal resilience is needed.</p> <p>Flexible strength of mind requires individuals to be in mental control, to feel psychologically healthy and well, so that they can think about the options for tackling a challenging event or difficult behaviour. Resilient people will, also, have a wide range of ideas of how to tackle challenges, and this leads to their flexibility.</p>
<p><b>What benefits accrue?</b></p>	<p>An adaptive workforce will continue to perform at its peak when faced with challenging events. An adaptive workforce will exhibit active resilience because their attitude to challenges will be positive as a consequence of the implementation of the WellBeing and Performance Agenda. All the Agenda items are focused on creating enhanced psychological wellbeing and performance, so that individuals come to feel a strong sense of commitment, trust, motivation, kinship, concentration and social engagement with the organisation and their work.</p> <p>As a consequence, performance is increased, and the costs attributable to psycho-presenteeism (people coming to work in body but not in mind) are largely eliminated.</p> <p>Other benefits include a thriving organisation with a workforce that is energised, innovative, enthusiastic and determined to make the organisation a greater success in the future.</p>
<p><b>How can the Adaptive Workforce be implemented?</b></p>	<p>Implementation is a consequence of implementing the other elements of the Wellbeing and Performance Agenda.</p> <p>It is, also, desirable for individuals to strengthen their personal resilience by undertaking training and development activities.</p> <p>The framework for development is below:</p> <div data-bbox="446 1545 1308 2038" style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>The Resilience Development Framework</b></p> <p>Personal control over responses to people</p> <p>Personal control over responses to events</p> <p>Personal control over oneself</p> <p>MAS MANAGEMENT ADVISORY SERVICE</p> <p>The WellBeing and Performance Group</p> <p>WellBeing and Performance <b>WP Agenda</b> Making the workplace a fabulous and high performing place to work ©Copyright Derek Meebray</p> </div>

	<p>There are several sources of help – Derek Mowbray's Guide to Personal Resilience; workshops on Strengthening Personal Resilience, and the eLearning Programme on Strengthening Personal Resilience, are all designed with exercises to help individuals keep in control of themselves, their responses to events and other people.</p>
--	---

## Conclusion

The WellBeing and Performance Agenda provides a framework for leaders and managers to give the workforce an opportunity to feel psychologically well and, with appropriate motivation, perform at its peak.

The Agenda provides the triggers that help strengthen the Psychological Contract, the contract between employee and employer based on a sense of fairness and implicit obligations.

There is no quick fix to sorting out the challenges facing organisations. This Agenda is an organisation wide approach to solving challenging problems for organisations, but it takes a change of attitude and a determination to succeed for the Agenda to be implemented in its entirety.

The Agenda has been developed in easy steps to be taken.

There are plenty of resources to help leaders and managers with implementing each step.

The processes involved result in a vibrant, enthusiastic and motivated workforce that is determined to make the organisation more successful in the future.



**Derek Mowbray** BA., MSc., MSc(Econ)., PhD., DipPsych.,  
CPsychol., CSci., FBPsS, FIHM., FISMA..

Derek Mowbray is a Chartered Psychologist and Chartered Scientist with a doctorate in the psychology of leadership. With CEO experience in public, private and voluntary sectors, Derek has held various top leadership positions prior to turning his attention to helping organisations understand the link between psychological wellbeing and performance. He has applied all his work into practice in different situations.

With a special interest in organisation health psychology, which aims to harmonise the relationship between organisations and their workforce, Derek specialises in the primary prevention of stress at work (a major inhibitor to performance) by focusing on elevating psychological wellbeing in the workforce. He emphasises the requirement for a positive working environment that provokes the workforce to feel well and perform at its peak, by reducing the challenging events and poor behaviours that may trigger stress in others.

He is the originator of **Psychological Responsibility**, which places on the individual a responsibility for feeling psychologically well, as well as a responsibility to do no psychological harm to others. He is, also, a sponsor of the method of **'sharing responsibility for the future success of the organisation'** as a principle underpinning organisational success and high achievement. His work approaches and interventions are well recognised and adopted throughout the UK and internationally.

He has recently given up his tenure as visiting Professor of Psychology at 2 UK Universities and he continues to work as a Technical Expert to the European Commission on psychological wellbeing and performance.

Derek's mission is to create and sustain **'the workplace as a fabulous, high performing place to work'**.

## About MAS

Our work focuses on the prevention of stress at work. Why? Stress costs and inhibits performance! There are three interlocking features that prevent stress at work:

- Creating and sustaining a culture and environment where managers and workforce are fully engaged with the organisation and are *provoked into peak performance*.
- Leaders and managers exhibiting the behaviours that encourage commitment, trust and engagement which will *provoke peak performance in others*.
- Building and sustaining personal resilience against challenging situations which will *provoke peak performance in individuals*.

**Our purpose** is to help organisations achieve peak performance and productivity; to strengthen corporate and personal resilience and to prevent stress from occurring in the first place.

**Our approach** is to help organisations establish psychologically healthy workplaces by facilitating the implementation of our WellBeing and Performance Agenda framework.

**We provide a range of help and services for organisations:**

- We undertake **organisational health and cultural assessments** that include an assessment of leadership and management styles and approaches.
- We provide **facilitated implementation of The Wellbeing and Performance Agenda** framework, with a focus on leadership, management and culture.
- We provide a **range of programmes** introducing a broad range of topics within the WellBeing and Performance Agenda, all **designed to help leaders, managers and the workforce bring about change**.
- We act as a **'critical friend' to internal champions or ambassadors for wellbeing and performance**, providing individual support as needed.

## Our programmes for Psychological Wellbeing and Performance - to help your organisation become a fabulous, high performing place to work

- Understanding and applying the Wellbeing and Performance Agenda
- Establishing and applying a strategy for wellbeing and performance
- Psychological Responsibility at Work
- Sharing Responsibility for Future Success amongst everyone in the workplace
- Developing Managers into Leaders (modular programme)
- The BOLD leadership development programme (modular programme)
- The leader and manager's role in the resilience of their teams
- Team resilience
- Personal resilience
- Brief Mindfulness
- Resilience train-the-trainer programmes – Personal Resilience and The Manager's Role in Resilience

**Call 01242 241882 or email [barbara.leigh@mas.org.uk](mailto:barbara.leigh@mas.org.uk) to discuss running these programme in your organisation.**

## Our Products:

### 2 Personal Resilience Elearning Programmes

**In-depth Personal Resilience e-learning programme** (3 hours)

**Short introductory Personal Resilience e-learning programme** (45 mins)

Email [Barbara](mailto:Barbara) for details



### Derek Mowbray's Guides – innovative, practical resources

The Guide to the WellBeing and Performance Agenda

The Guide to Corporate Resilience

The Guide to Adaptive Leadership

The Guide to Psychological Responsibility

The Guide to The Manager's Role in Resilience

The Guide to Personal Resilience

The Guide to the Manager's Role in Stress Prevention

The Guide to Team Resilience

The Guide to Transforming Managers

Purchase from our website - <http://www.mas.org.uk/publications.html>



### Our Questionnaires – available for use under licence

#### Leadership and management

'Just how fabulous a manager are you?'

Quick Leadership Assessment Q (a mini 360° instrument)

The Adaptive Leadership Questionnaire

Emotional Intelligence

Behaviour Assessment Questionnaire

The Ethical Questionnaire

#### Culture

Organisational Cultural Assessment

Cultural Values Questionnaire

Corporate Values Questionnaire

Intelligent Behaviour@Work Questionnaire

#### Individuals

The Wellbeing and Performance @ Work Questionnaire

Psychological Responsibility@Work Questionnaire

The Personal Values Questionnaire

The Values and Beliefs Questionnaire

The Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (RAQ 40)

For details about our products and services, email [barbara.leigh@mas.org.uk](mailto:barbara.leigh@mas.org.uk) or call 01242 241882