



## Organisational change

### Are you ready for change?

Workplace environments can contribute to risky alcohol and drug use.

An alcohol and drug policy will not be successful if your organisation is not ready to change behaviours and beliefs about:

- risky alcohol and drug use
- its impact on workplace health and safety
- the workplace's role in reducing these negative impacts.

Organisational readiness examines:

1. beliefs and attitudes about organisational problems and goals
2. perceptions about organisational and individual capacity to address problems and goals
3. willingness to comply with workplace changes to address problems and goals.

Cultural change will not occur if a top-down approach is taken.

Consulting your workforce is essential to:

1. reduce alcohol- and drug-related workplace risk
2. increase worker health, safety, and wellbeing
3. establish and communicate shared workplace goals
4. enable staff to lead, embed, and review alcohol- and drug-related policies, processes, and practices.

### Preparing for cultural change

Establish a Working Group that includes management, supervisors, and a broad range of workers to develop a comprehensive, inclusive and engaging communication strategy. Key components of successful change management communication strategies are detailed below.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These steps have been adapted from Kotter's Eight Steps to Organisational Change. To see the steps in full visit: <https://www.kotterinc.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>



**INFORM** your workforce about why change is needed

To do this:

Inform ALL workers about:

1. work health and safety risks associated with alcohol and drug use
2. workplace and individual factors that contribute to alcohol- and drug-related risk
3. help and services available if they are concerned about their own or others' alcohol and drug use.

Conduct a worker awareness session to inform workers about general alcohol and drug risks as well as your specific organisational risk.

Handout Worklife [Getting Help](#) posters to inform workers who they can talk to if they are concerned about alcohol and drug matters.

**ASK** your workforce to contribute to the change process design and implementation

To do this:

Ask ALL workers:

1. about the workplace factors which contribute to their alcohol and drug use
2. how your organisation may reduce work-related alcohol and drug risk and risky workforce use.

Conduct an alcohol and drug workplace risk assessment to identify your organisation's specific risks. See [How-to-Guide: Assessing Workplace Alcohol and Drug Risk](#). You could develop an anonymous survey to:

- identify workplace pressures (environmental, social, and performance expectations) that contribute to alcohol and drug use
- provide feedback (problems and potential solutions) on your needs assessment findings
- suggest other ways of responding to alcohol- and drug-related workplace risk.

Use the [Toolbox Talk: Our Alcohol and Drug Policy: Consultation](#) to ascertain workers' viewpoints.

Develop and distribute materials and provide feedback loops that are appropriate for your workforce. Consider whether:

- to collect information online, in hard copy, or verbally
- workers from non-English speaking or low literacy backgrounds have adequate information and support.

**ENCOURAGE** and **SUPPORT** workers to contribute to a safe workplace culture.

To do this:

Encourage and support ALL workers to:

1. participate in the change process and provide feedback about your alcohol and drug policy and procedures during its development, implementation, and review
2. seek help if they are concerned about their own or others' alcohol and drug use
3. build support networks which champion responsible alcohol and drug use.

Workers are more likely to engage in organisational change processes when they can see that their input and concerns are managed sensitively and given genuine consideration.

- Provide feedback about workers' input. Inform them about common concerns and how these have been addressed
- Distribute written responses to Frequently Asked Questions
- Discuss your decisions and decision-making processes.

Reinforce your commitment to worker health, safety, and wellbeing by:

1. Organising alcohol- and drug-free social events
2. Distributing [Getting Help](#) posters
3. Discussing alcohol and drug matters sensitively.



## How to know if your organisation is ready to change

Implementing successful cultural change takes time and commitment. Acknowledge and celebrate small wins on the way to achieving your goal.

Complete the Organisational Readiness Assessment below.

If your organisation is ready for change, implement your alcohol and drug policy and processes.

If your organisation is not ready for change, ask your Working Group to review their communication and engagement approaches, assumptions and expectations, and timeline.

Common issues to consider as part of this review process are listed below.

## Review questions

Process	Questions
Communication and engagement	<p>Have you targeted identified gaps or issues that inhibit change?</p> <p>Have you clearly outlined the rationale for a workplace alcohol and drug program?</p> <p>Have you addressed any ambiguities, ambivalence, and uncertainty which may exist in relation to the program's impact, implementation and operation?</p>
Assumptions and expectations	<p>Have you genuinely engaged with your workforce and varied your original assumptions and expectations in response to worker feedback, concern or disagreement?</p> <p>Have you developed policies and practices that reflect shared objectives, incorporate realistic strategies, and address authentic needs?</p>
Timeline	<p>Managers, supervisors, team leaders and workers need time to process new expectations and practices and change their behaviour.</p> <p>A workplace alcohol and drug program may need to be implemented in stages.</p> <p>Have you provided managers, supervisors, team leaders and workers with adequate information, training, and resources to successfully implement, maintain, and enforce your program?</p>



## Organisational Readiness Assessment<sup>2</sup>

Item #	Question	Response	
<b>Defined need</b>			
1	Have you clearly defined the need motivating your workplace to implement an alcohol and drug workplace program?	Yes	No
2	Does building a workplace culture that focuses on safety, health and wellbeing of workers suit your workplace needs?	Yes	No
<b>Readiness for culture change</b>			
3	Is now a good time to implement culture change? Consider the effect of major changes like bargaining agreements or organisational restructures.	Yes	No
4	Is a culture change that focuses on the importance of teamwork and safety, health and wellbeing feasible and acceptable?	Yes	No
5	Do your managers support culture change and the efforts required to implement and sustain an alcohol and drug program?	Yes	No
<b>Resource allocation</b>			
6	Will your workplace provide managers and supervisors with the resources to implement an alcohol and drug program?	Yes	No
7	Will your workplace provide managers and supervisors with the necessary skills to implement an alcohol and drug program?	Yes	No
8	Will your workplace allow time to prepare managers and supervisors for their roles?	Yes	No
9	Will your workplace allow time for managers and supervisors to attend training?	Yes	No
10	Will your workplace allow time for managers and supervisors to deliver information and training to their workers?	Yes	No
<b>Sustainable change</b>			
11	Will your workplace be willing to evaluate the implementation of an alcohol and drug program to support continuous improvement?	Yes	No
12	Will your workplace actively promote positive teamwork and improvement processes to sustain the alcohol and drug program?	Yes	No

Total Score (each 'No' response = 1. Add all No responses to get your score)

<sup>2</sup>Adapted from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality 'Is your organization ready for TeamSTEPPS?' <https://www.ahrq.gov/>.



### Interpreting the Organisational Readiness Assessment scores

If your score is: 0-3	This is a good time to implement an alcohol and drug program within your workplace. As you begin the implementation process, make sure you continue to monitor whether the answers to these questions change and keep a close eye on any items to which you answered 'no.'
If your score is: 4-7	Your workplace may <i>not</i> be ready to fully implement an alcohol and drug program. The number of NO responses reduces the likelihood that the program implementation will be successful. Review the tips and suggestions below to enhance readiness within your workplace before you commence with the program.
If your score is: 8-12	Significant work is needed to raise the readiness level of your workplace. Implementing an alcohol and drug program at this time may not produce desired results. Postpone the implementation process for a few months and review your communication and engagement strategy, assumptions, and timelines rectifying any gaps and clarifying expectations.

### Key points about organisational readiness

1. Organisational readiness can be assessed. Assessing organisational readiness is essential for identifying barriers and overcoming resistance to organisational change.
2. Organisational readiness will vary across organisations, throughout your workforce, and over time
  - Low organisational readiness can transform into high readiness if you consult and engage workers appropriately, address their concerns, and tell them how your actions and policy will benefit their work health and safety and overall wellbeing
  - High organisational readiness can weaken if you fail to actively engage your workforce, maintain consistency, and adequately enforce organisational policies and procedures.
3. The individual's capacity for change is as important as the organisation's capacity for change. Successful change relies on ensuring workers believe:
  - the change proposed is reasonable and proportionate to the risk identified
  - your organisation has appropriate resources, leadership and cultural norms in place to implement, maintain, enforce and evaluate the proposed changes
  - the change/s proposed are achievable and beneficial to their overall work health, safety, and wellbeing.

Resources and handouts are available at <https://worklife.flinders.edu.au/external-site-resources>.

References are available at <https://worklife.flinders.edu.au/references>.