

Be the Manager You Would Love to Have

Managing a Healthy Workplace

Self-Assessment Checklist



Government's Commitment:

In Nova Scotia's Corporate Human Resource Plan 2005-2010 and the Government Business Plan for 2006-2007, the Government of Nova Scotia has identified as a priority providing a safe and supportive work environment for its employees. The corporate policy on Healthy Workplace formally establishes the government's long-term commitment to a healthy workplace. The policy also provides the framework that guides all healthy workplace-related activity and program development.

A Healthy Workplace is ... :

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to providing a healthy workplace. Developing and sustaining a healthy workplace is the joint responsibility of both the organization and its employees. A healthy workplace fosters a supportive workplace culture, good physical & mental health and a safe & healthy physical environment. The elements of a healthy workplace are grouped under the following three headings in this checklist:

- Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment
- Health and Lifestyle Practices
- Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety.

Benefits to Managers:

Developing a healthy workplace in your team and in your department can contribute to a positive culture change. You have an important role to play in helping to make that happen. This self-assessment tool can assist you:

- assess your own practices and get some specific ideas about what you can do to create a healthy workplace,
- generate ideas through discussions with your team members, with your peers or with your leadership as part of your annual performance review and
- track your progress and continue to grow.

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This self-assessment tool has been piloted with managers like you. Here's what they had to say after using it:

- "It's a really useful tool that will assist managers in gauging where they are with respect to creating a healthy workplace."
- "We should revisit it every 6 months. It could be used as a to-do list."
- "I kind of went 'ouch' when I read it. There is so much more that can be done at little cost."

Purpose:

This self-assessment provides you, as a manager in the Government of Nova Scotia, with an opportunity to assess how well you support a healthy workplace. The questionnaire is designed to help you identify your strengths and to generate ideas for improvement related to each of the three elements of a healthy workplace. You will find it useful in modeling the guiding principles and healthy workplace practices in your work unit congruent with the Government of Nova Scotia Healthy Workplace Policy.

Instructions:

For the **work unit that you are currently managing**, think about how fully you support and integrate Healthy Workplace considerations into your decision-making and day-to-day operations. Complete the following table by placing a check (✓) in the column that best reflects your current level of support and implementation using the following scale:

FULL - fully supported and implemented. Your words and actions support this **consistently** in **most** of your decisions and day-to-day operations.

PARTIAL - partially supported and implemented. You are **inconsistent** in supporting this; your words and actions support this in **some, but not most**, of your decisions and day-to-day operations.

LOW - not supported and implemented. Your words and actions **rarely support** this in your decisions and day-to-day operations.

N/A - not applicable. This **does not apply** to your role or your work unit.

There are 20 questions per section and each section takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

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Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment

		Level of Support (✓)			
Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	To support a healthy work culture in my work unit:				
1.	I model corporate values like respect, integrity and diversity and expect the same from others.				
2.	I ensure that employees, as a part of their job, can participate on an interdepartmental or departmental Healthy Workplace Committee, Diversity or Recognition Committee or team working to advance a healthy workplace.				
3.	I ensure that employees are able to participate in corporate and departmental surveys and focus groups on work time. This would include 'How's Work Going?'				
4.	I act as a workload coach for employees by assisting them to prioritize their work.				
5.	I give my employees reasonable discretion over the day-to-day means and methods of their work.				
6.	I coach work groups to divide the work equitably, with optimal influence to everyone based on skills, training and abilities and utilizing the capacities of individuals to the maximum advantage of the group.				
7.	I ensure that the demands on employees are reasonable and that there is not too much to do, all at once, all the time; therefore, avoiding a sense of 'eternal urgency'.				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
8.	I engage employees in decisions about changes that affect their work, such as a change in procedure or a new technology/equipment being introduced.				
9.	I ensure that employees have the support and information that is essential to carry out their work. This could be related to, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timelines, completion targets and objectives • resources: tools/technology, equipment, content experts • their role and that of others • safety considerations, procedures, contact people. 				
10.	I make sure that all new employees participate in full job and corporate orientation, when available, before beginning their work.				
11.	I ensure that I have time available for employees to meet with me and that I am approachable so that employees can come to me with ideas or concerns.				
12.	I consider employees' family commitments and I support work/life balance, for example, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discouraging continuously working excessively long hours • encouraging employees to participate in learning sessions and share resources • supporting employees to take time off when they are ill or have a family crisis • supporting employee attendance in the "Family Caregiving and the Workplace" workshops, where applicable 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting employees in their religious observances • being flexible about the time and frequency of meetings and travel to have a minimal impact on personal life • supporting flexible work options where available and appropriate. 				
13.	I value my employees and recognize them for a job well done (e.g., verbal or written thank you/acknowledgement), and also support departmental and corporate recognition programs like the Minister's Award, Long Service Awards and Premiere's Award of Excellence.				
14.	I encourage employees to develop their careers and provide information on available support for career advancement and growth opportunities within the Government.				
15.	I conduct annual performance reviews and provide timely, constructive feedback and I support employees to create a specific development plan.				
16.	I refer employees to Government (or external) resources to ensure employees receive adequate training for their job and upcoming job changes.				
17.	I take time to develop my own management skills, e.g., mentoring, training in conflict resolution, Respectful Workplace for Leaders, Be the Manager You Would Love to Have, communication skills, relationship building, managing				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	mental health, quality training or enrolling in Leadership Development courses/training.				
18.	<p>I reinforce the Government’s Respectful Workplace Policy to ensure ethical behaviour and avoid any form of sexual harassment and workplace discrimination. I take preventative action by, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing the policy with employees and making sure that all employees are aware of what action to take if an incident occurs • modelling healthy behaviour by treating all employees with respect regardless of age, culture, gender, ability (physical or mental), family/marital status, sexual orientation or sexual identity, political orientation, religion or spiritual beliefs. • not ignoring risky behaviour when I see it, even when no one complains. Instead, I use the opportunity to provide feedback to the employee participating in the risky behaviour. • actively maintaining a harassment free workplace e.g., I put a stop to offensive comments/jokes that are circulating, remove unacceptable posted materials, etc. • providing support and respect when an employee approaches me with a complaint. • encouraging a culture of inclusiveness in my work unit. 				
19.	<p>I actively engage employees in reducing stress, for example, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging employees to develop their stress management skills by 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	participating in Government stress recognition and stress reduction programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing awareness of the Government's EAP resources and • facilitating work teams to identify the root cause(s) of stress and resolve work-related issues • encouraging employees to take regular breaks and vacation time. 				
20.	I encourage a sense of community in the work unit through work and play, for example, I 'walk the talk' and encourage employees to join me in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • corporate wellness programs and social events e.g., Take Back the Lunch Break Challenge, walking challenge/club, picnic/barbeque, etc. • corporate sponsored charity fund raisers • celebrating accomplishments in a staff meeting or event • supporting a team member in times of need (e.g., personal loss, a workload crunch, etc.). 				

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Health & Lifestyle Practices

		Level of Support (✓)			
Health & Lifestyle Practices		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	To support the good health and healthy lifestyle choices of employees in my work unit:				
1.	I ensure that we are applying the most effective method(s) of communicating health and lifestyle/wellness information to employees, for example, a visible, well-maintained bulletin board, wellness corners, a resource library and/or technology such as email, intranet.				
2.	I ensure that employees have access to current information on all of the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical and mental health • heart health • stress management • physical activity • healthy eating • weight management • tobacco use, smoking cessation • alcohol/drug use • gambling • shift work/fatigue management • healthy sexual practices 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Health & Lifestyle Practices		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family health matters • financial planning. 				
3.	I dedicate a standing section on each meeting agenda for news/information and issues related to health and lifestyle choices, for example, by highlighting health and lifestyle topics from Newsletter, announcing monthly theme events/information, addressing concerns, etc.				
4.	I promote awareness of corporate resources to support physical and mental health of employees and their families, such as EAP services, on-site nurse (where available) and coverage under the corporate health benefits plan. I refer employees to these resources when needed.				
5.	I ensure that new employees are aware of the organization's support for health and healthy lifestyle practices including, for example, policies, programs, services, activities and facilities.				
6.	<p>I make sure that I cooperate with Human Resources and return to work specialists to accommodate the physical and mental needs of employees who are returning to work from an illness or injury. This may include any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduced work load • alternative job placement • special equipment • workstation modifications • confidentiality • ease back, return to work plans, etc. 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Health & Lifestyle Practices		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
7.	I ensure employees have access to, and the time to attend, opportunities to learn how to manage their health and lead healthy lifestyles. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information sessions on nutrition, weight management, fitness, managing stress etc. a visit by the “Heart Mobile” or a health clinic guest speakers on topics of interest a health fair a newsletter to take home. 				
8.	I actively participate in Government health and wellness activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> health clinics e.g., flu shots or health screening Healthy Workplace Month fitness and/or nutrition programs/activities adopting the healthy meeting guidelines outlined in “Put Health on the Agenda” table toppers. 				
9.	I encourage employees to participate in Government health and wellness activities and assist in removing barriers to participating.				
10.	I support consideration for work realities when scheduling health and wellness activities so that most can attend, for example, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> considering the needs of shift workers, where appropriate identifying the best time and location to offer programs addressing barriers to employees taking time out of their work day to attend 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Health & Lifestyle Practices		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accommodating special needs. 				
11.	I encourage employees to take their full breaks, their full lunch periods and their vacation days and I try to do the same.				
12.	I support providing healthy food choices in the cafeteria and vending machines and an adequate supply of drinking water and/or water coolers.				
13.	I ensure that we offer healthy food and beverage choices at meetings, training sessions and Government sponsored social functions and that we make an effort to accommodate cultural and dietary preferences and specific health needs, such as diabetes, allergies, food sensitivities or vegetarian diet.				
14.	I encourage employee participation in physical activity, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> department sports teams/activities or walking clubs community or worksite fitness or yoga classes worksite stretch breaks physical activity during longer meetings/events campaigns like the Heart and Stroke Ride for Heart or government walking challenges walking meetings. 				
15.	I am in favour of worksite resources that assist physical activity, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on-site bike/in-line skating racks or storage area on-site, or nearby, showers and change rooms indoor, or outdoor, sports areas 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Health & Lifestyle Practices		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> on-site, or nearby, space for fitness classes, weight room, games (ping pong etc.) 				
16.	<p>I ensure that we post the Government Smoke-Free Workplace Policy and that we reinforce it, for example, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that ‘no smoking’ signs are posted and visible in the workplace, in dangerous areas and, if applicable, in Government vehicles as described in the policy informing all employees of the policy taking prompt action to respond to complaints that the policy is not being adhered to or enforced ensuring employee awareness of smoking cessation programs and support available to help them quit 				
17.	<p>I encourage employees to be fit to do their work by addressing alcohol, substance abuse and gambling problems, on-the-job and during Government sponsored social and sporting activities. Without delay, I refer employees who need it to EAP to get help with any of these problems early on.</p>				
18.	<p>I encourage employees to avoid fatigue, for example, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> referring staff to EAP services encouraging effective pacing of work and breaks throughout the day where appropriate, applying shift/schedule arrangements that work with the natural human biorhythms 				
19.	<p>I encourage co-workers support of one another to adopt healthy lifestyle practices,</p>				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
	Health & Lifestyle Practices	Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through friendly team competition • the 'buddy system' • participating in Government incentive programs/challenges 				
20.	I encourage a positive 'can do' attitude with employees where people celebrate reaching healthy lifestyle goals.				

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Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety

		Level of Support (✓)			
	Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety	Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	To support a clean, safe and healthy physical work environment in my work unit:				
1.	I ensure that the Occupational Health and Safety Act Policy and other required information are posted and available in the workplace.				
2.	I co-operate with the department Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee or its representative so we can be effective in promoting a healthy and safe workplace.				
3.	I ensure that young workers and new employees receive a formal orientation to know their rights and responsibilities regarding workplace hazards (biological, chemical, physical, ergonomic, violence and harassment) safety and emergency procedures.				
4.	<p>I participate in manager training to keep my Occupational Health & Safety knowledge and skills up-to-date. I ensure that I have received training and understand all applicable hazard control procedures and recommendations. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chemical/biological/physical hazards • ergonomic hazards • violence and harassment • working with the public • safety while travelling on Government business • safeguarding and security requirements 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first-aid • materials handling including safe lifting techniques • WHMIS • reporting of hazards • communicating changes to procedures • reporting accidents or injuries • dangerous goods and spills. 				
5.	<p>I ensure that we have applied procedures, and engaged employees, to check the impact on health before introducing new technologies and/or work systems of any kind into the workplace, for example, evaluating new :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ergonomically designed equipment and furniture • computer programs or equipment • computer systems • workstation design 				
6.	<p>I ensure that the work site and personal workstations are organized to avoid repetitive strain and injury. I enlist government ergonomics resources, as available, and respond quickly to realistic requests made by employees for improvements to layout, tools or equipment.</p>				
7.	<p>I ensure a good match between employees and the physical demands of the job and the employee's resources and skills to handle the job demands.</p>				
8.	<p>Through training and ongoing reinforcement, I ensure that all employees</p>				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<p>understand the emergency system in place. For example, I make certain that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the emergency plan and procedures are posted • we review emergency procedures and evacuation routes with all employees and all shifts • we conduct regular fire drills • we have a plan to assist anyone who needs accommodation during evacuation • we understand how to communicate during a crisis. 				
9.	<p>I reinforce a safe and respectful workplace and take reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of workplace situations that may result in the use of force or an employee being exposed to violence/threat (verbal or physical). This applies between employees or between employees and the general public we serve. I take preventative action by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that employees are aware of the Government's policy • engaging employees in hazard assessments to identify potential risks and developing strategies to reduce such risks • implementing recommendations to reduce the risks • modelling healthy behaviour by treating all employees with respect, being proactive and, where needed, applying conflict resolution skills • not ignoring risky behaviour when I see it, even when no one complains. Instead, I use the opportunity to get to the root of the issue • providing support and respect when an employee approaches me with a 				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
complaint					
10.	<p>I ensure that employees who are exposed to health and safety risks receive appropriate training and are competent and qualified to perform their duties related to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general vehicle safety • dealing with the public • dealing with unstable clients • visual display terminal operations • while operating materials handling equipment • when handling dangerous goods • while fuelling a Government vehicle, forklift or snowplough • use of appropriate eye, ear protection • proper speed limits while operating a Government vehicle 				
11.	I ensure that employees have access to, and use, appropriate protective equipment such as gloves, steel toed shoes, ear plugs, protective eyewear when necessary.				
12.	<p>I ensure that employees feel comfortable expressing their concerns about the physical environment and occupational health and safety, related to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective and comfortable lighting throughout work areas • indoor air quality (e.g., through appropriate ventilation systems, routine inspection for mould, etc) • a low-scent environment 				

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		Level of Support			
		(✓)			
Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> indoor temperature control noise control/consideration for employees and among employees 				
13.	I ensure that we conduct regular inspections of the work unit for physical hazards and cleanliness.				
14.	I encourage a clean, tidy work unit through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> signs/notices adequate cleaning service individual employee standards 				
15.	I ensure that the work unit physical environment accommodates physical disabilities and is barrier free, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is wheelchair accessible there is wheelchair accommodation in the washrooms workstations meet individual employee needs 				
16.	I ensure that we are environmentally responsible, for example, by providing and encouraging the use of enough, well-placed, easily-identified recycling and composting containers, using double-sided photocopying, purchasing reusable items, and promoting activities of the NS Government Rethink Initiative.				
17.	I encourage the use of a staff lounge/rest area in the workplace and, where none is available, work to secure space for employee use.				

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		Level of Support (✓)			
Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety		Full	Partial	Low	N/A
18.	<p>I ensure that we have adequate lunch/break facilities for the number of employees and that the facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are separate from any place where a hazardous substance may contaminate food, dishes or equipment • have adequate number of tables and chairs to accommodate the number of employees who would use the facility at any one time • have adequate equipment for heating and refrigerating food • have facilities and supplies to wash dishes and clean up • are cleaned regularly (daily) • have non-combustible covered receptacles for disposal of food waste or other waste materials 				
19.	I contribute to evaluating the health and safety performance of the work unit and provide feedback to my supervisor or via the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.				
20.	I encourage a culture of accountability for Occupational Health and Safety where employees take pride in, and responsibility for, a clean, safe and healthy work site.				

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Follow-up:

1. Identify good practices:
 - a. Review the list of items that you have marked as fully supported (FULL).
 - b. Identify one or two good practices that you think are making a difference and contributing to making your work unit a healthier place to work.

2. Identify gaps to fill:
 - a. Review the list of items that you have marked as not fully supported (PARTIAL or LOW).
 - b. Engage a few of your employees and identify two or three priority objectives that you think will make a difference and contribute to making your work unit a healthier place to work. Make sure the objectives are realistic and have measurable outcomes.
 - c. Develop a plan to achieve the selected objectives.

3. Gain peer support:

Discuss with other managers/supervisors how you could support each other to be the “manager you’d love to have”.

Developed by:

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