BSBMGT401 Show leadership in the workplace

Release 1

Learner guide

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Aspire Version 1.1

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All websites referred to in this unit were accessed and deemed appropriate at time of publication.

BSBMGT401 Show leadership in the workplace Release 1

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Contents

Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBMGT401 Show leadership in the workplace*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples and case studies	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. You can use these examples as models to help you complete practice tasks and learning checkpoints. Case studies highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	Where QR codes appear, learners can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help
Summary	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table outlines specific foundation skills noted for your learning in this learner guide.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	• Gathers, interprets and analyses text relating to organisational goals, standards and values to aid planning and decision making
Writing	• Records and reports key information related to the organisational goals, standards and objectives • Researches, plans and prepares documentation for relevant stakeholders
Oral communication	• Uses appropriate structure and language when developing performance plans, or when seeking and providing information about organisational goals and objectives
Numeracy	• Identifies and comprehends mathematical information in familiar texts to establish key performance indicators
Navigate the world of work	• Understands how own role meshes with others and contributes to broader work goals • Monitors adherence to organisational policies and procedures and considers own role in terms of its contribution to broader goals of the work environment
Interact with others	• Collaborates with others to achieve joint outcomes, playing an active role in facilitating effective outcomes • Recognises the importance of taking audience, purpose and contextual factors into account when making decisions about what to communicate with whom, why and how
Get the work done	• Develops plans to manage relatively complex, non-routine tasks with an awareness of how they contribute to longer term operational and strategic goals • Uses systematic, analytical processes in complex, non-routine situations, setting goals, gathering relevant information and identifying and evaluating options against agreed criteria • Evaluates effectiveness of decisions in terms of how well they meet stated goals

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome		Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1 Model high standards of management performance and behaviour	1A	Meet requirements for management performance and behaviour	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1B	Be a positive role model for others	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1C	Develop and implement performance plans	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1D	Establish and use key performance indicators	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 2 Enhance the organisation's image	2A	Use the organisation's standards and values when conducting business	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2B	Question damaging standards and values	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2C	Contribute to organisational integrity and credibility	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

continued ...

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Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 3 Make informed decisions	3A Gather and organise relevant information	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3B Facilitate participation in decision making	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3C Examine options and assess risks	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3D Make and communicate decisions	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3E Prepare plans to implement decisions	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3F Use feedback to monitor decisions	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

Topic 1
Model high standards of management performance and behaviour

The frontline is where an organisation interacts with its clients and potential clients. It's where goods or services are provided and the point at which an individual decides whether or not to do business with your organisation. Members of staff at the frontline represent the public face of the organisation.

In this topic you will learn how to:

1A Meet requirements for management performance and behaviour

1B Be a positive role model for others

1C Develop and implement performance plans

1D Establish and use key performance indicators

1A Meet requirements for management performance and behaviour

Organisations seek to build and enhance their image and reputation across the market in which they operate. Image is enhanced by having the same look and feel at every contact point, at each store or branch, on all correspondence and forms, on the internet and even on company vehicles. A key part of building reputation is providing a consistent quality of service. In other words, people dealing with your team will have an expectation of the quality and style of service even before they interact with any team member.

To ensure consistency, the organisation will impose standards that your team will need to meet. You need to be seen to understand and support the organisation's requirements, clearly communicate these to your team members and support them in their application and delivery of the set standards.

The role of a frontline manager

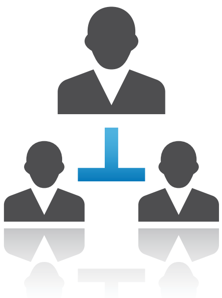
Frontline managers need a combination of interpersonal, conceptual and practical or technical skills. The key to effectively performing this role is communication.

In your role as a frontline manager, you will be expected to lead a work group or team to achieve their goals. Your job description will usually include information related to your organisation's expectations of you in regard to your performance and behaviour.

As you perform these responsibilities, you are representing the organisation's values and standards. You are a role model and your behaviour is constantly being scrutinised by the team. Staff will look to you for guidance, support and training, and may adopt some of your habits.

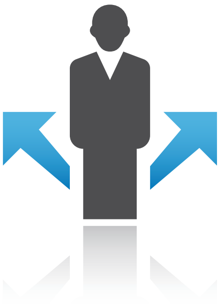
Regardless of the title and whether the role is permanent or for the length of a project, a frontline management role will include leadership functions.

The information here lists and describes the various titles given to frontline managers in an organisation.



Manager

In a traditional workplace structure, the term 'manager' refers to senior managers or to the middle managers who report to them. The terms manager and team leader are often used interchangeably.



Supervisor

In a traditional workplace structure, the term ‘supervisor’ refers to the frontline manager who has day-to-day responsibility for implementing the manager’s instructions and ensuring productivity.

Team leader

The term ‘team leader’ refers to the person responsible for providing direction and guidance to a work team. According to the traditional view of management, leading is only one management function, the others being planning, organising, staffing and controlling, coaching and mentoring. A team leader needs to have the practical skills to carry out these functions.

Project coordinator

The term ‘project coordinator’ refers to the person responsible for the planning and implementation of a particular project.

Understand the organisation’s vision

Every organisation has a purpose for its existence and a vision of where it wants to head and how it will get there. Vision and mission statements are usually found in the organisation’s annual report and on its website. These statements serve the purpose of ensuring the organisation is clear about what it is doing.

Following are explanations of organisational vision and mission statements.

Vision statement

A vision statement sets out the very broad and long-term future aim of the organisation.

Consider the vision statement of a large retail company: ‘Inspiring you to live your passion’.

By referring to this vision statement, a frontline manager at this organisation can clearly identify the importance of ensuring valuable, long-term team member engagement and customer satisfaction.

Mission statement

A mission statement describes, briefly and broadly, what the organisation plans to do to reach its vision. Often, an organisation will display its mission statement prominently to remind employees of the overarching principles and objectives of the organisation.

Consider the mission statement of a large retail company: 'To provide solutions and engaging experiences that enable our customers to make the most of their leisure time'.

By referring to this mission statement, a frontline manager at this organisation can clearly identify the importance of providing efficient day to day running of the business, ensuring the customers' experience is of paramount importance.

Be familiar with the organisation's business plan

Typically, each organisation will have a business plan. Supporting that plan will be a series of operational plans covering each component (for example, division, unit, department and team) of the organisation.

A frontline manager should have a clear understanding of how the team's operational plan contributes to the organisation as a whole. By effectively communicating the operational plan to the team, team members can see the broader importance of their work and the components that have the greatest priority. Team members will be more focused, have a heightened sense of achievement when successful and, with an understanding of the consequences should key measures be allowed to slip, be keener to address any problems that arise.

There is considerably more motivation for team members that feel like they belong and are valued because they are making a meaningful contribution to the overall success of the organisation.

The differences between a business plan and an operational plan are explained here.

Business plan

The business plan will typically outline the formal goals of the organisation.

Operational plan

The operational plans will outline the activities the organisation will undertake to achieve its goals. Collectively, the operational plans should match the objectives of the business plan.

Know organisational policies and procedures

Policies and procedures are implemented across organisations to enhance efficiency and fairness, promote a consistent image, and reduce the costs and trauma of injury or damage in the workplace. A frontline manager who knows the rules and openly supports them demonstrates to team members that they are a competent member of the organisation.

While traditionally made available as a printed document, policies and procedures are increasingly posted and updated on an organisation's intranet.

Consistent application of organisation standards (for example, stationery, correspondence, presentations and reports, dress and personal presentation, sales and call-centre scripts) is part of the role-modelling behaviour required of a frontline manager to help with organisation-wide efficiency and consistency of image.

Following are some examples of organisational policies and procedures.

Human resources
Examples from a human resources perspective include providing inductions for new staff, performance reviews for ongoing staff, application of anti-discrimination principles in employment and promotion of staff, and knowing policy on leave entitlements, pay and conditions.

Work health and safety
From a work health and safety (WHS) perspective, knowing the procedures (for example, providing a safe workplace, handling equipment correctly, safe storage of dangerous chemicals and working ergonomically) and insisting on their adherence, demonstrates a concern for the wellbeing of individuals and confirms their importance to the organisation. This applies to clients and suppliers on the premises, as well as staff.

Privacy
Consistent application of privacy requirements to client and employee records affirms the value of these people to the organisation.

Compliance
Policies and procedures are also an important component of promoting compliance with legal guidelines and regulations.

Follow legal guidelines

Compliance with legal guidelines is of paramount importance. Every frontline manager must be aware of their obligation to prevent the costs of legal consequences and damages to the organisation's reputation, resulting from an incident in their area of influence.

Consequences can be greater than simply the fines or other legal repercussions that may result. No frontline manager wants to come to the attention of senior management because of a costly compliance mistake. The media may become involved. An injury to one staff member can have a psychological impact on others.

Many legal guidelines are incorporated into policy and procedures manuals. Frontline managers must comply with a range of legislated requirements.

Relevant legislation and regulations
Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2014C00471
Anti-discrimination legislation www.humanrights.gov.au/guide-australias-anti-discrimination-laws • *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) • *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Cth)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2015C00089
State and federal employment awards or contracts www.fairwork.gov.au
Taxation laws administered by the Australian Taxation Office www.ato.gov.au
Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2015C00228
Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2015C00019
Legislation specific to certain industries such as: • *Legal Practitioners Act 1981* (SA) www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/LEGAL%20PRACTITIONERS%20ACT%201981.aspx • *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993* (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2015C00230 • *Customs Act 1901* (Cth) www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2015C00153

Maintain the organisation's reputation

Organisations spend many years and a substantial portion of their budget building their reputation, their key brands and their image. They will also spend substantially to defend these key assets.

At the frontline, these impressions need to be validated. Each team member is representing the organisation, further developing the organisation's reputation among clients, suppliers and the public. This goes beyond the workplace – even at social occasions what you say about your workplace will leave an impression on friends, acquaintances and family.

Increasingly, organisations are developing values statements, which communicate in a short written form the fundamental values and/or philosophy of the organisation. The values statement and policies and procedures manual will provide your team's formal instructions. The standards set by yourself and other management staff will provide your team's informal instructions.

You need to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the organisation's reputation by your team, including:

- dress and grooming standards for staff
- layout, maintenance and cleanliness of workplace (particularly client areas)
- how clients are treated
- use of preferred terminology and authorised sales/service scripts
- work practices
- communication channels.

Meet time lines

Time management is a key element both in meeting client expectations in service delivery and in implementing operational plans. In performing your own duties, set the example to team members by always making diary entries to meet all promises and deadlines. This should include all commitments, whether they are made to clients, management or your team.

Monitoring team performance and ensuring free information flow can be efficiently handled in part by having regular team progress meetings that start and finish on time, and adhere to an agenda. Always be punctual and be prepared for the next meeting by allowing time to review any actions you need to take immediately after each meeting and making diary entries for each of those actions. Make sure you allow time before each meeting to collate or review any documents you need to bring with you.

Team members will watch how you spend your time and take your lead. More than just noting when you arrive and when you leave, they will also note how and where you set your priorities in the workplace.

Manage the team

The frontline manager represents the organisation to the team by sharing the organisation's vision, standards, goals and objectives with the team, and planning and organising to help the team meet its own goals within the context of those criteria.

The frontline manager also represents the team to senior management through sharing the team's achievements, initiatives, feedback on market developments and acquired knowledge of client requirements, as well as advising where the team is experiencing difficulties and seeking help as may be required to achieve their objectives. The manager should also give credit to individual performance.

The following lists and describes the functions of leading a team.

Organising	Arranging and coordinating the people, materials, equipment, time and funding to get the job done.
Planning	Analysing, setting goals, establishing time lines, setting targets and performance standards, deciding what skills are needed to get the job done and how the work should be tackled.
Mentoring	Helping individuals gain deeper insights into the complexities and opportunities in the workplace through reflection, adaptation and exploration of new approaches. Mentors provide encouragement, support and constructive feedback.
Coaching	Knowing how to get the best out of another person. For example, sports coaches are not necessarily former superstars, although they are knowledgeable about their sport. A coach's expertise lies in understanding people and introducing processes that help to work through problems and encourage progress.
Staffing	Selecting the right people for the team, that is, individuals with the skills, knowledge and personal attributes necessary to get the job done. The team leader must also manage any staff absences to ensure their impact on the team's work is minimised.
Monitoring	Checking the team is meeting deadlines and targets, individual team members are performing well, budgets are adhered to, whether extra resources or help are needed, the relevant policies and procedural guidelines are being followed and health and safety standards are being met.
Leading	Providing support and guidance, and influencing and inspiring team members to get the job done. By providing a motivated environment, leaders make a difference to a team's performance.

Example: job description for a frontline manager

Often the wide range of responsibilities of a frontline manager will be outlined, in varying levels of detail, in their job description.

A sample job description for a team leader at a retail call centre has been provided here.

Alpha Funds Management
Job description

Job title: Team leader – retail call centre

Designation: Grade 3

Work unit: Retail call centre

Responsible to: Manager – client delivery

Primary objective

The team leader – retail call centre ensures the provision of high-quality telephone and ancillary support services to the satisfaction of retail clients through effective leadership of a team in client delivery.

Key responsibilities

- Ensure the team provides timely, accurate information to clients and efficiently updates records in line with service standards and to the satisfaction of clients.
- Manage staffing (in conjunction with the human resources department) and other resources to the agreed budget in line with human resource policies and procedures.
- Provide management reports as determined by the manager – client delivery.
- Ensure all team members are appropriately trained to meet client needs.
- Maintain a safe working environment and compliance with regulations.

Selection criteria

Essential criteria:

- Sound knowledge of investment management industry and managed investment vehicles
- Demonstrated leadership potential through understanding and practical application of human resource principles and practices in the workplace at individual and group level
- Demonstrated appropriate interpersonal, communication and organisational skills, which have resulted in effective team membership
- Proven ability to support and coach colleagues to achieve expected outcomes
- Demonstrated ability to work with clients and provide the services they require
- Proven skills in the effective use of information technology, records and systems maintenance for the effective delivery of client services

Desirable:

- A tertiary qualification (degree or diploma) in business administration, commerce or financial services

Approved:

Manager – client delivery ____ (Date) ___________

Practice task 1

Find workplace information, such as policies and procedures, and use this table to record the organisation's requirements and expectations of frontline managers.

To complete this practice task, you will need to access a range of workplace information that may be available to you in printed or electronic form. If you are not currently in the workforce, research an organisation known to you, or use resources gathered from the internet.

Responsibility	Information source	Organisation's requirements
Workplace diversity		
Work health and safety		
Personal presentation		
Customer service		
Attendance		
Confidentiality		
Mission statement		
Values		
Legal guidelines		

1B Be a positive role model for others

Management refers to the supervision of employees and controlled coordination of organisational activities. Leadership refers to a process by which a leader influences and motivates individuals and teams to achieve an objective and directs the organisation to be innovative, cohesive and coherent. Being a good leader means being an organiser, a representative, a decision maker, an information sharer, a conduit to the outside world and a good listener. It means being a positive role model and leading by example.

Others in your workplace will be taking note of your behaviour and will quickly identify any inconsistency between what you say and what you do. The popular catchphrase 'walk the talk, don't just talk the talk' means lead by example. If you want an involved team, get involved. If you want team members to trust each other, get them to understand and work co-operatively together.

An effective leader can facilitate an inclusive organisational culture that forms positive workplace relationships.

Group behaviour

Group behaviour occurs when two or more individuals are required to interact within a cluster to achieve common objectives. If group interaction is within a social group, it is called intragroup dynamics. When the interaction is among many social groups that are interacting with each other, it is called intergroup dynamics. Both types are important in the workplace.

Group dynamics are responsible for setting the tone and behaviour of groups and can be responsible for both positive and negative attitudes. They also dictate the way people within the group will react to change. Group dynamics can work against group members; for example where individuals find themselves wanting to behave differently to the accepted norm, but are challenged by the group to conform instead.

As a group leader, you need to be aware of how your group or team behaves and be a good role model for the type of behaviour you wish promote. You also need to understand the intragroup dynamics of your team.

Intragroup dynamics can dictate:

- common group goals
- general attitudes and opinions
- personal relationships
- accepted norms
- roles within the team
- group and personal behaviours.

Characteristics of an effective leader

Supporting team members is a vital aspect of any team leader's role. In a study that lasted seven years (cited in 'Establishing the credibility factor' in *Best Practice Magazine*, January 1994), executives were asked at regular intervals, 'What do you look for and admire in your leaders?' Their answers were consistent over the period of the study.

The study identified honesty as the most important quality, a major supportive behaviour. If a team member feels their manager is not being honest, they will question why their manager isn't more open with them or why the manager hides information. The team member doesn't feel supported because the manager appears to be focused on other, hidden agendas.

Similarly, demonstrating imagination may not seem to be a supportive behaviour but could be critical depending on the situation. For example, a team member may have devised an improved process, or have an idea for a new product. The manager will need to envisage how the idea might work in a practical sense. Only then can the manager give their full support to the team member's contributions.

Team members expect their leaders to be:

- honest
- competent
- forward-looking
- inspiring
- intelligent
- fair-minded
- broad-minded
- courageous
- straightforward
- imaginative
- dependable.

Support team members

Supporting team members is a vitally important aspect of any team leader's role. Team members will expect their leader to provide them with direction, motivate and inspire them, and lead by example. A good leader will recognise and nurture the talents of their team members, empower them and celebrate their success. A good leader will have confidence, commitment and ambition, and the ability to build teams committed to achieving common goals.

According to the Small Business Tool Kit, funded by the NSW Government, effective leaders exhibit the following characteristics.

Team members expect their leaders to have the following qualities:

- Integrity
- Self-confidence
- Commitment
- Enthusiasm
- Self-awareness and adaptability
- Future vision
- Creativity
- Ability to understand people
- Ability to inspire and motivate
- Openness
- Communication skills
- Business understanding
- Decisiveness
- Ability to build effective teams

Actions of an effective leader

It is vitally important that in all dealings in the workplace, whether it be with clients, suppliers, team members or management, you act with integrity, show respect, and are open, honest and fair.

Some of the attributes of a positive role model are listed here.

Being a positive role model
• Consistently promote the organisation's vision, values, goals, standards and image. • Dress appropriately and be well groomed. • Make effective decisions consistent with the team's objectives and be inclusive in that decision making. • Give due recognition to team and individual performance. • Support, encourage and motivate team members. • Share information. • Listen to and learn from other people. • Apply the same standards to yourself as you request of team members.

What not to do

Consistent criticisms of managers include:

- nit-picking
- concentrating on someone's negative aspects
- being petty
- not delegating
- not providing useful feedback
- not making time for the team
- not demonstrating consistent behaviour.

Consider the following exchange between a manager and an employee. In this example, the manager is not being supportive of their team member's needs.

Manager: 'Haven't you finished that yet?'

Employee: 'Sorry, I'm having trouble understanding the work.'

Manager: 'I've already shown you how to do it, you should understand by now.'

Example: be an effective leader

Kyle has recently been promoted to a frontline management position. Kyle has very strong beliefs about the behaviour that is expected of a leader. When Kyle was a customer service officer his manager regularly behaved in a way that contradicted the expectations he had of team members. He did not walk the talk!

Kyle is determined that he will comply with workplace policies and procedures by:

- being well presented
- being punctual
- not using his mobile telephone while at work
- being honest and ethical
- using the internet and email appropriately
- providing excellent customer service
- maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of customers, team members and the organisation.

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What kind of leader are you?

Psychologists and business researchers have identified four major leadership styles which describe the ways leaders perform. The styles can be useful to review your own leadership style.

A manager can choose a style to suit the situation, the team, or the individuals within the team and the issue at hand. Learn to use elements of different leadership styles that are most appropriate. While one particular style may be dominant, a mixture of other styles should be used as well.

Much research has been conducted on how managers can provide the right kind of leadership, support and assistance to their staff. Developed by management researchers Hersey and Blanchard in 1982, the situational leadership theory suggests that managers must be able to adapt the way they perform to meet the different needs of their staff members.

The situational leadership model

The situational leadership model lists four styles a manager could use to deal with different staff members working on different tasks, that are relevant to the staff member's work-related skills and technical knowledge.

The four styles of situational leadership are described briefly here.

Delegating
Delegating to team members who are more experienced and able to perform various work functions effectively and with confidence.

Participating
Participating with team members who are able to perform a job but are unwilling or unmotivated.

Selling
Selling ideas to team members who want to meet new challenges but lack the skills or confidence to do so.

Telling
Telling team members what to do if they lack confidence or ability and are working on complex or unfamiliar tasks. This involves giving specific directions and supporting and encouraging team members as they learn and develop.

Example: what kind of leader are you?

The following example describes the qualities of each leadership style.

Meet Johanna, a delegating leader

Johanna gives her team of five nurses a lot of space. They're all very experienced and have worked together for a long time. She finds they are best left to their own devices and she is most effective as a team leader if she merely makes sure they have what they need to do their jobs well. She takes time to talk with each nurse on the team on a one-to-one basis as well as holding brief team meetings at the start of each day, usually over a cup of coffee. If particular tasks arise that Johanna's team are asked to work on, she delegates responsibility for the task to one or more of the team members, checking from time to time on progress and to see if she can help them with anything.

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Example: what kind of leader are you?

Meet Antonio, a participating leader

Antonio's team of four sales staff work for a freight company that is going through a large restructuring program. He and his team have been together for two years and although some members of the team are more experienced than others, they have developed a strong sense of who they are as a team and have in place a fairly informal yet effective method of working. Antonio doesn't tell his team what to do – everyone knows what their responsibilities are. Antonio's team members discuss things and make decisions together on what needs to get done and how they'll do it. Antonio facilitates this process and, by actively participating in the team, ensures everyone contributes, and time and resources are spent well.

Meet Jasreen, a selling leader

Jasreen is the manager of a team of 10 customer service staff who work in a large call centre for their employer, an insurance company. They handle queries from existing customers about changes to their policies. Jasreen's team members are all quite young and fairly inexperienced. She gives them plenty of direction and support. She directs them to do certain activities or tasks and spends a lot of time out of her office, talking to the team members individually and in groups. She improves their confidence levels and contribution to the team by asking for their opinions and feedback. The team also has strict performance goals to meet and Jasreen often feels she needs to convince her staff to contribute and work at their best, explaining why this is necessary for the team and beneficial to them. She builds a lot of reward and recognition activities into her operational plan to reinforce these issues.

Meet Stuart, a telling leader

Stuart runs a team of casual staff who help pack conference materials into bags for exhibitors at a major conference centre in the city. He has a pool of around 100 people he can call on to work and a large space where materials and bags are laid out. The main function of his job is getting enough people in at short notice to get materials packed on time and on budget. There may be different people working each day so he spends 15 minutes at the start of each day running through the jobs for the day, when they have to be finished and how they should be done. He also highlights any tricky items that need packing, such as pens or notebooks. Stuart has a system worked out that is explained to staff each day. They are assigned a section and start work. If major problems arise, or they have questions, they are encouraged to talk to him about it.

Help people achieve goals

A frontline manager needs to help people achieve their own and the team's goals. The following strategies have been successful.

Provide clear expectations
Set high standards and make your expectations clear. Set challenging goals and make sure everyone knows what they are. Explain how success will be measured and what time frame they need to work to.

Offer variety
Work with the team to make the work interesting and worthwhile. Help ensure variety, interest and challenge by: • rotating jobs • reducing the number of tasks by enlarging the scope (and variety) of each one • giving individuals responsibility for a job from start to finish, or at least making sure people know what the complete job is • making sure everyone knows the relevance of their contribution and its value to the team and the organisation.

Give responsibility
Most people will respond well to being given responsibility. They like to feel in control of their own work and of monitoring their own progress.

Remove barriers to good performance
Very often, poor performance is out of the control of the team members. It can be a lack of or late arrival of resources, faulty tools (or the wrong ones in the case of software), unreasonable deadlines or wrongly defined objectives. Provide practical and emotional support. Find out what is blocking good performance and remove it.

Keep promises and build trust
It takes time and effort to develop trust and seconds to destroy it. Team leaders need to set an example for the team members to follow. Don't make promises you can't keep. If you do make a promise that you are unable to keep, let team members know and explain why. Team members won't trust you if they believe you don't trust them. Give them responsibility and trust them to get on with it.

Empower your team
Involving the team in planning and decision making is not enough. Give them responsibility and make them accountable. This helps build commitment. Both you and your team members must have the confidence that they have the requisite skills and knowledge.

Set a good example
Set the same standard for yourself as you expect of your team members. If you want them to develop the habit of punctuality, don't be late yourself. If you want them to adhere to rules and procedures, you must adhere to them yourself. If you want them to complete a job even when it means working late, don't leave precisely on time every day yourself.

Provide opportunities for success
Give every team member the opportunity to be successful or at least to feel they are achieving success. Don't set them up for failure by setting unachievable goals and targets. And, although success is a reward in itself, it is always good to be noticed. Say thank you and offer praise.

Develop skills
Develop people's skills. Provide opportunities for team members to build on existing skills; develop new ones and broaden their knowledge. Opportunities to grow and learn in the job provide interest, a sense of achievement and motivation. Apart from structured on- and off-the-job training programs, leaders can ensure skills development by establishing opportunities for both coaching and mentoring within the team.

Management styles that support your team

In addition to ensuring your team has the resources they need to do their jobs well, there are other ways managers can support team members. Mentoring and coaching are two methods that translate well into the workplace, making it possible for individuals and teams to achieve their goals.

The following explains these methods in more detail.

Mentoring

A mentoring relationship involves two people. The mentor is usually a more senior staff member or someone who has considerable skills and experience. The person being mentored is usually someone in a more junior role who is keen to learn, and capable of achieving more than they currently are. Anyone can benefit from being mentored by people with more experience in certain areas than themselves. A manager isn't meant to be the mentor to all of their team members. More senior or experienced team members could mentor their less experienced counterparts, or people external to the team within your organisation or industry could mentor you or members of your team.

A mentoring relationship is one that should last some time for it to be of most benefit. Ideally, the two people involved should have some common ground. Mentors train, counsel and advise simultaneously and need to have ongoing contact with the person being mentored. Some companies have formal mentoring programs, but mentoring can work well on an informal basis. You may need to explain why some team members have been assigned mentors and some haven't, as mentoring can be considered a method of advancement. It can really assist people at all levels within an organisation to realise their potential.

Coaching

Some tactics used by coaches of sporting teams are useful in the workplace. Assuming a coaching role can be effective at an individual and a team level. The sports arena is similar to the workplace in that a team needs to be selected and trained well, there is always a goal and a plan of attack, and there is also a lot that can be learnt along the way. Helping individuals perform at their best and motivating them to succeed and achieve their goals is what sporting coaches do every day. Managers can learn from their techniques, which include:

- helping and encouraging team members to be an expert or pro at what they do
- setting goals for individuals that are unique to that person and reflect their abilities and personal aspirations
- using collaborative techniques that give team members some control over the way things are done and a sense of ownership in the process
- coming up with new, different and better ways of doing things and having an open mind when suggestions are made (and encouraging team members to do the same).

Practice task 2

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Rhiannon enjoys her role as a frontline manager at Macintosh City Council. She is responsible for managing a group of eight administration officers who provide a range of services to local residents. Jakob has recently joined her team after completing his Higher School Certificate.

On Friday afternoon she invites Natiq, one of the more experienced members of the team, into her office for a chat. Rhiannon enjoys the opportunity each week to 'catch up on the gossip' with team members. She is keen to talk to Natiq about some rumoured changes that are likely to be introduced to the employee flexitime arrangements. She knows the team is going to be unhappy about the changes.

During their afternoon chat Natiq confides in Rhiannon that he will need to leave early on Friday to see a relationship counsellor. He and his partner, Thomas, have been having some problems lately. Rhiannon makes the appropriate diary entry and then proceeds to tell Natiq about the rumoured changes to the flexitime. She agrees with him that if the changes are implemented, team members are going to have to give more notice of their intention to take a flexiday. They are not going to be happy!

Later in the afternoon, Jakob asks to speak to Rhiannon. He would like to leave early on Friday. She explains to Jakob that Natiq has already booked the day as he has to see the counsellor. While Jakob is in the office Rhiannon takes the opportunity to show him a funny email that she received from her friend. Rhiannon assumed that Jakob would be pretty broad-minded as he was so young.

As he was leaving her office, Jakob asked Rhiannon if it would be okay if he used a CD from the office stationery to copy an assignment that he needs to work on over the weekend. Rhiannon told him to take a box of CDs from the cupboard – they wouldn't be missed.

1. Reflect on the actions that Rhiannon took that were not appropriate in her role as a frontline manager. Record the specific actions.

2. What advice would you give Rhiannon to help her to be more of a positive role model for her team?

1C Develop and implement performance plans

Most frontline managers find that their day-to-day activities revolve around implementing their organisation's operational plan. You should be working towards achieving the goals set for you and your team in that plan. Just as importantly, each member of your team should be working toward his or her allocated part of the overall team objective.

Performance plans and reviews

An integral part of being a team leader is to develop, implement and monitor performance plans for each team member.

The following describes performance plans and reviews.

Performance plans

1. **Performance plans are personal to each team member.**
   They provide the team member with an interactive formal outline of what is expected of them; that is, how their performance in the workplace will be measured and how they have performed against those measures.

2. **Performance plans set the benchmark for individual performance.**
   Properly written, they ensure alignment of individual, team and organisation objectives. They provide a valuable, formal feedback mechanism for each team member and a monitoring tool for you.

3. **Performance plans are prospective.**
   A performance plan covers the next review period. The performance review covers how the team member has performed relative to the plan. The effective use of performance plans requires that you regularly conduct performance reviews with each staff member - with the performance plan being the key document under discussion.

4. **Performance reviews identify opportunities for further development.**
   The performance review is an important opportunity to make sure you have identified and documented each team member's individual development needs and aspirations. Any such development actions identified during the review should be documented in the performance plan for the next period.

   Performance reviews identify whether there is a gap in skills or knowledge, whether training or professional development is necessary, whether there is opportunity for promotion or transfer, or whether a mentor could assist the individual.

Characteristics of an effective performance plan

To be effective, the performance plan for each individual should have the commitment of both the manager and the team member and be consistent with the requirements of the organisation.

A performance plan should:

- be established through consultation
- be consistent with, or otherwise supportive of, the goals and objectives of the team and the organisation
- be consistent with the individual's roles and responsibilities
- include specific training actions to be undertaken to address performance gaps
- include other personal development initiatives that may be identified
- promote regular formal and informal feedback
- provide meaningful incentives and rewards for achievement of goals
- be realistic, achievable and adequately resourced.

Develop performance plans

A performance plan will cover a set period, usually one year. It will include general information such as the name of the person, their job role, their time in that job role; the team, department or division to which they belong; and the name and/or position of the manager who is developing and reviewing the plan with them.

The main body of the plan will list each of the key performance indicators (KPIs) applicable to the team member and the relative importance of that KPI, usually indicated by a percentage.

Personal development actions (such as addressing skills gaps and training) may also be included. These actions may be identified in advance for the current period or may be brought forward for inclusion in the current performance plan following a performance review from the previous period.

Performance plans will usually be developed by the manager and refined and finalised after discussion with the team member.

Example: performance plan

A sample performance plan might look like the following example.

Performance plan – Lucinda Brown

Position: Administration officer

Assessment period: January–July

Prepared by: Karlene Jones

Primary objective: Provide excellent customer service

Key responsibilities from job description	Specific tasks and competencies required	How measured	Comments (manager's and employee's response as appropriate)
Customer service	• Reception • Telephone contact • Handle customer complaints	• Observation • Customer feedback • Telephone system reports; for example, call wait times	

I have read the above and agree with the assessment, comments and action arising.

I agree with the review date of ____ / ____ /20

Employee's name (participating in performance plan) and employee's signature

____ _____ / _____ /20

Manager's name and signature

____ _____ / _____ /20

Give feedback

Providing team members with regular, constructive, well-placed feedback can be extremely beneficial. Feedback promotes the flow of communication within a team and encourages team members to seek the advice, assistance and ideas of their colleagues. If the feedback is related to poor performance or behaviour it can still have a positive outcome all round. As long as negative feedback is given in a constructive manner, it can help team members improve their own working styles for an even better result in future.

Create an atmosphere where the giving and receiving of constructive feedback is welcomed, appreciated and acted upon. Managers who ensure feedback is used to good effect in their team will reap the rewards of a more involved and informed team.

- Feedback can be given verbally and in writing.
- Feedback can be given immediately.
- Feedback can be made public or kept private.
- Feedback can be informal or formal.
- Feedback can be positive or constructive.

Formal mechanisms for feedback

Give feedback when it is most needed, such as immediately after the team member has achieved a goal, when they handle a difficulty well, or if they fail to meet a deadline. Timely feedback ensures that what you say will be more relevant because it is still fresh in the person's mind. Thanking someone or explaining how they should have done something better is ineffective if it is delivered long after the event.

Consider the following ways feedback can be provided.

360-degree feedback

This is a highly structured method of giving feedback to an employee. A range of people who have frequent interaction with the person give them a rating or qualitative feedback on their performance. For example, Tom is in a team with five other people and also deals with the accounts payable clerk and two warehouse staff on a daily basis. He and his team leader agree that the team leader, two others from the team, the accounts clerk and one of the warehouse staff will provide his 360-degree feedback. Each of his five colleagues rate him using a score out of 10 on a variety of points such as teamwork, work ethic, contribution and preparedness at meetings. Sometimes this sort of feedback is done anonymously, and the team members receive a report showing the scores they received on each point. As 360-degree feedback can be very confronting, it needs to be managed carefully. However, it can be a useful tool, especially when plans are put in place to correct poor results.

Performance reviews

Any kind of performance feedback needs to be given carefully, especially if it is negative. Feedback that constitutes part of a performance review can have an impact on an individual's career and advancement prospects and, in many cases, their earnings (if performance reviews are linked to bonuses or salary). Positive and negative feedback needs to be given constructively. Try to give examples and be balanced in what you say. Link the feedback to key result areas, performance indicators or team goals and state the effect the positive or negative performance has on team outcomes. If feedback is negative, don't dwell on it; move on to ways you can work together to remedy the situation.

A recognition tool

For many people, acknowledgment of a job well done, especially in a public setting, is reward enough, without the need for monetary or physical rewards. Taking the time to acknowledge the efforts of groups, individuals or the whole team during meetings where colleagues or more senior staff are present, is an excellent way of showing people that their contribution is important and valued. Feedback involves explaining to the people or person involved just what their hard work means and how they have made a difference.

Example: feedback as a recognition tool

A manager gives feedback on a job well done at the end of a team meeting.

'I want to take the time now to talk about the work that Margie and Harif have been doing on the new customer-service questionnaire.

'They have worked very hard on this project and last week the new questionnaire replaced the old one. Initial reports they have provided me have shown that the new questionnaire gives us 60 per cent more data on each client than we had before. This is already having a major impact on our product design department.

'The completion of the new questionnaire is one of the key performance indicators for our team, so that task can now be crossed off our list. On behalf of the team, I'd like to thank Margie and Harif for their hard work and congratulations on a job well done.'

The manager also met privately with Margie and Harif and talked to them about their project. He discussed how the project went, asked for feedback on their work and what they'd do differently next time. He also mentioned a couple of areas that he thought were particularly well done and reinforced the major contribution they had made to the team.

Practice task 3

1. Develop a detailed performance plan for a member of your work team or, if necessary, a fictional or composite employee. If you are not currently employed, you may wish to develop a performance plan for yourself based on the job description for a frontline manager provided at the end of Section 1A of this unit.

   You may use this template or source one from your workplace, a book or the internet.

Performance plan – (Name)

Position:

Assessment period:

Prepared by:

Primary objective:

Key responsibilities from job description	Specific tasks and competencies required	How measured	Comments (manager's and employee's response as appropriate)

I have read the above and agree with the assessment, comments and action arising.

I agree with the review date of ____ / ____ /20

Employee's name (participating in performance plan) and employee's signature

____ _____ / _____ /20

Manager's name and signature

____ _____ / _____ /20

continued ...

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2. Record the methods that you would use to provide feedback to this team member.

1D Establish and use key performance indicators

The activities or tasks detailed in operational plans are linked to outcomes, responsibilities, time lines and regular review processes that enable managers to decide whether the activity is being implemented successfully.

The feedback you receive from monitoring your activities helps you track how the implementation is going and assists you to identify any areas of concern. To do this effectively, you need to have a system of measurement in place. In most cases, this will involve setting, measuring and recording progress against a preset goal.

Key performance indicators

Organisations typically use a combination of indicators to monitor how well they are implementing all aspects of their operational plan. The most common way of tracking progress is to identify the key goals or targets in the plan and express these in a simple, measurable and reportable way. These are called key performance indicators (KPIs). Some organisations use the term key result areas (KRAs).

KPIs
• Measures of profitability, productivity or output, or quality of goods and services produced • Allow concise and readily understood measures of performance • An excellent communication tool to your management advising on team achievement, as well as to your team • Measure a group or individual's performance against identified goals or targets • Should be easily measured or counted and should not be dependent on guesses or assumptions • Expressed in numerical terms as they can be difficult to measure otherwise

Measurable criteria

Quantitative KPIs you could set for projects include:

- 95 per cent of all tasks completed on time – this specifies the goal (tasks completed on time) and the measure of the goal (95 per cent)
- zero dollars over budget
- zero errors in all material.

These KPIs can be easily measured and reported on at each stage of the project. This enables you to track the progress of the plan and address problems as they occur.

In many cases, less specific KPIs need to be set. This may be because the activity a person or team is working on is hard to measure, or because the activity itself is more qualitative in nature.

'Working well as a team' or 'producing high-quality work', may be measured through team reflection and discussion on how well the group worked together, or by using a set of criteria to measure high-quality work. In such situations, managers should not avoid using KPIs, but think of creative ways they can be evaluated and assessed. Tracking complaints, rework and warranty claims are examples that may help indicate quality.

Set and use KPIs

Setting, measuring and reporting on KPIs is a way of controlling the implementation of the operational plan so it remains within the parameters you have established. KPIs allow you to identify issues or problems, identify areas for improvement and introduce corrections when your progress is not what you expected.

Here are four key points to consider when setting KPIs.

Setting KPIs

1. **Make sure KPIs are easily understood.**
   Don't establish KPIs that require you to give detailed explanations of their meaning. KPIs should offer a readily understood snapshot against the plan.

2. **Communicate KPIs to staff and management.**
   Both the people who report to you and the people you report to should be aware of what your KPIs are. This helps staff understand the importance of their tasks, inspires and motivates them to achieve and builds a strong sense of team – everyone is working toward a common goal.

3. **Make sure KPIs are appropriate.**
   Don't set a KPI that requires a complex activity to be completed within a week. KPIs must be relevant, appropriate to the task and achievable.

4. **Make sure KPIs can be measured accurately.**
   For each KPI you put in place, note how it will be measured. Wherever possible, try to implement KPIs that are quantifiable (that is, they can be measured and reported on numerically).

Meet the organisation's goals and objectives

You will be measured on your team's contribution to the broader operational plan. Developing KPIs for your team and the individual team members represents a key opportunity to ensure alignment of the goals of the organisation, your team and the individuals in the team.

When setting the KPIs for each individual, you need to ensure the objectives of the individuals collectively support the team's objectives.

The process of reviewing objectives with each team member should:

- provide certainty and clarity about what is expected of them
- give them a sense of ownership of their allocated functions
- provide recognition of their contribution to the broader organisation
- motivate them to feel they are a valued member of both the team and the organisation at large.

Monitor performance

How one team performs not only affects its own chances of success, but also impacts on the other teams with which it interacts, and the flow-on effect impacts on the performance of the entire organisation. It is therefore vital to be able to track how well a team is performing and make any necessary adjustments to plans, processes, work methods or the skill mix.

While planning establishes what to do, monitoring helps determine if and how well it is being done. It is the process of measuring and comparing actual results or work in progress with planned performance. Monitoring helps to ensure that performance meets established goals and KPIs. It may reveal the need to modify plans or change the way work is done, or even the way it is monitored.

For example, when used in a call centre context, monitoring performance may involve answering questions that measure results after the process is complete. They can be described as lag or historical indicators, because you have to take retrospective corrective action, if the results are unsatisfactory.

The following provides some examples.

Questions answered in a call centre context
• How long is spent on each customer call? • How does this compare with the standard set for customer calls? • How many customers were served today? • How does this compare with the standard set for the number of customers served? • How many complaints have been received in the last month? • What is the average time spent on processing complaints? • How many complaints have been processed in the last month? • Who has attracted most complaints in the past six months?

Establish specifics

Timely and effective monitoring can provide an early warning so any necessary corrective action can be taken before serious problems arise. Lead indicators are measures designed to track things as they happen.

Whether you are using lag or lead indicators, there are practical steps you should take, as outlined here.

Practical steps for monitoring performance
Establish precisely what you need to monitor. What is most important to your project or operation? What could cause the most damage if it went wrong?
Establish specific measures. Once you have established what is really important, monitor it. These are KPIs.
Compare what is happening with what should be happening. Your task is to decide what variations are significant enough to warrant taking corrective actions.
Take action as necessary. If actual performance does not match planned performance, you need to take some kind of action to make good the discrepancy.

Effective monitoring

Effective monitoring should be:

- accurate and easily understood – you need measurements and information by which to judge the need to act
- timely – information needs to be available in ample time to take corrective measures
- worthwhile – there is no point in allocating time and resources to measuring and gathering the information, unless the benefits are greater than the costs of obtaining it.

The action taken needs to be appropriate. Sometimes some interim action will buy time to establish the precise cause of substandard performance. Monitoring may reveal that initial plans and goals were too ambitious or that circumstances have changed to such a degree that they are no longer realistic and achievable. In this case, adapt the plans to suit the changed circumstances. However, the most effective action is preventive – using continuous monitoring to give early enough warning to take steps to head off the problem. Good contingency planning in the first place will allow changes and corrective measures to be put in place quickly.

Example: implement contingency planning

A computer help-desk unit within a large organisation measures the success of its ability to implement its part of the operational plan by setting goals that indicate how well the plan is being implemented. For example, the help-desk unit's operational plan states that its role is 'to provide excellent assistance to the organisation's employees when they experience computer problems'. This is so the rest of the company can continue its work with a minimum of downtime in the event of a computer-system failure.

The help-desk unit set a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure whether the team was doing this well. Staff made sure that the KPIs were simple to understand and report on.

To measure whether its help was effective, the help-desk manager counted the number of complaints made against the unit each quarter and then compared that number with a predetermined target. If the target was exceeded then the unit did not meet its target and did not implement its plan well. However, if the number of complaints was below the level staff set for themselves, then they knew their performance to date was on target – or better.

Practice task 4

Complete this table by identifying three KPIs for each of the work areas listed.

Work Area	KPI
Customer service	
Telephone call centre	
Warehouse	
Production	
Retail store	

Summary

1. You need to be seen to understand and support the organisation's requirements, clearly communicate these to your team members and support them in their application and delivery of the set standards.
2. Team members will look to you for guidance as to how they should behave in the workplace. They will be constantly taking note of your behaviour and will quickly identify any inconsistency between what you say and what you do.
3. Properly written performance plans ensure alignment of individual, team and organisation objectives. They provide a valuable, formal feedback mechanism for each team member and a monitoring tool for you.
4. KPIs are usually a measure of profitability, productivity, output, or quality of services or goods produced.

Learning checkpoint 1
Model high standards of management performance and behaviour

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge required to model high standards of management performance and behaviour.

Part A

1. What are organisational values and why are they important in maintaining an organisation's reputation?

2. Explain the basic theory of group behaviour.

3. Explain the concept of organisational leadership and describe the difference(s) between leadership and management.

4. Explain what it means to be a role model and list two examples of how a leader can positively and negatively influence the behaviour of others.

Part B

For this task you are required to demonstrate how you have applied the attributes covered in Topic 1 to your own job role by gathering a range of evidence from your workplace.

If you are not currently employed, you may gather similar forms of evidence based on the type of position you would like to secure in the future.

The case studies and examples covered in Topic 1 may be helpful to you in gathering evidence for this task.

Alternatively, research an organisation that is relevant to you.

Collect the following documents and answer the questions below:

- A job description highlighting requirements for management performance and behaviour
- An employment contract
- A code of conduct
- A code of ethics
- An organisation's vision, mission and values statement
- Service standards that apply to this role (for example, customer service standards)
- A performance plan developed by you for a team member
- A report prepared by your supervisor or senior manager that comments on your performance as a positive role model
- Your performance review
- A performance review prepared by you for a team member (remember to delete any information that would breach privacy or confidentiality)
- Key performance indicators developed by you
- Reports, emails, minutes of team meetings in which you have reported on kpis (remember to delete any information that would breach privacy or confidentiality)

1. Explain how you identify and articulate your organisation's vision, mission, standards and values, both stated and implied. Describe how you ensure your workplace behaviour meets the organisation's requirements.

2. Describe, using examples, how you perform and behave in the workplace to model a positive example for others. Are there any areas or behaviours you could improve?

3. Explain how you develop and implement performance plans for team members and the process and outcomes of conducting a performance review.

4. Describe how you establish and use key performance indicators to meet organisational goals and objectives.

Topic 2
Enhance the organisation's image

Each organisation has a look and feel that is known to its clients and the community or market in which it operates. This image is a vital part of any person's decision about whether to use its goods or services. 'Do I know them?' 'Can I trust them?' 'Are they reliable?' Your team needs to positively affirm these questions for clients and the wider community – not only for the immediate benefit of getting a sale or providing a service, but also as part of the overall development of the organisation's image.

Being on the frontline, your team members interact with the organisation's clients and potential clients. The way each member of your team looks, behaves and treats clients will form an integral part of the impression clients have of the organisation. The frontline manager has a crucial role in ensuring that the organisation's image, standards and values are maintained or enhanced by the team.

In this topic you will learn how to:

2A Use the organisation's standards and values when conducting business

2B Question damaging standards and values

2C Contribute to organisational integrity and credibility

2A Use the organisation's standards and values when conducting business

It is the frontline manager's role to effectively communicate the organisation's ideals to team members. The manager needs to be seen to consistently uphold the organisation's standards and values through their own behaviour and to monitor and coach team members to make sure they do the same.

If the team is to perform well, team members need to know clearly and specifically what is expected of them and why. Application of the organisation's standards and values will set the benchmarks for undertaking day-to-day activities in the workplace.

An organisation's standards

Organisations will set standards that cover a range of issues. Examples may include productivity, procedures, customer service, use of corporate logos, legal compliance, dress codes, health and safety, employee training.

Standards are introduced to:

- enhance and build the organisation's image and reputation
- improve quality of goods and services
- provide consistency of service delivery across the organisation
- improve productivity
- provide employees with direction and certainty in their day-to-day functions
- reduce or prevent the cost and trauma of accidents
- reduce or prevent the cost and disruption of litigation
- reduce costs through consistency and time lines for reporting.

Example: applying the organisation's standards

Team members at Big Time Music receive induction training when they first join the store, which includes an introduction to the customer service standards. They are given a copy of the standards and are told to clarify with their team leader any aspect they do not understand.

Team members receive ongoing coaching during their employment. Team leaders will ensure that they regularly observe and monitor performance – particularly during the initial stages of their employment.

Team leaders will develop a performance plan for each team member to identify performance requirements, including implementing the customer service standards. Team members will receive regular informal feedback about their performance.

Big Time Music is committed to ensuring that each customer interaction meets the customer's expectation in terms of excellence.

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Example: applying the organisation's standards

The following provides more information about how Big Time Music plan to meet the customers' expectations.

To meet this commitment, we will do the following:

- Help you as quickly as possible
- Greet you politely
- Identify ourselves
- Speak plainly
- Listen carefully to your needs
- Provide you with up-to-date information
- Provide clear product information
- Maintain your privacy
- Provide you with a contact name or reference number
- Be reliable and professional at all times.
- Treat you with respect and dignity
- Record information accurately and store it securely
- Ask you how we can improve our customer service
- Act on the feedback you give us
- Undertake ongoing training
- Behave ethically and honestly
- Not discriminate against you

An organisation's values

Organisations may formalise their values through a short values statement. These provide a high-level principles statement for the organisation and broad guidance for employees. Value statements describe the philosophy, attitude and behaviours the organisation has towards individuals and groups in the wider community.

Of more immediate practical guidance for staff is a code of ethics or code of conduct, which is far more specific in addressing day-to-day issues in the workplace. Organisations develop codes of conduct for employees so they can promote ethical practices in the workplace. Often, employees are given a copy when they first start their job, and are required to sign off on the terms. This way, management may use the code of conduct to enforce appropriate behaviour.

The following provides more information about a code of conduct and code of ethics.

Code of conduct

Terms that are typical of a code of conduct include requiring employees to:

- act openly, honestly and fairly and with integrity in all dealings in the workplace
- treat clients, supplies and fellow employees with respect
- comply with uniform or dress codes
- comply with relevant legislation and professional codes of practice
- observe anti-discrimination and work health and safety legislation and procedures
- comply with organisational policies and procedures
- apply ethical considerations when making decisions.

Code of ethics

The code of ethics for the organisation will cover many of the same issues and will also often include provisions that management need to comply with. These may include:

- promoting open dialogue between team leaders and their team members about applying ethical standards in the workplace
- creating a learning-based environment
- promoting a culture of accountability on ethical matters
- encouraging environmentally-friendly work practices
- requiring participation in community programs or support for chosen foundations or charities.

Example: expectations of frontline managers

Peter is employed as an office manager for a major insurance company. This weekend he will be joining his colleagues in a semi-rural location doing grounds maintenance as a volunteer at an organisation that trains guide dogs for people with vision impairment. All managers in the organisation are expected to undertake community service on two occasions during the year.

His employer's mission statement identifies their commitment to contributing to the wellbeing of the local community. The performance plan for individual frontline managers identifies their participation in community service as a key performance indicator.

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Practice task 5

Prepare a short report that outlines the expectations of your organisation in regard to the implementation of service standards. Address the following points:

- the purpose of service standards
- the process for developing service standards
- a description of the standards
- training for team members on service standards
- monitoring
- feedback.

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2B Question damaging standards and values

Team members will regularly receive feedback from stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, shareholders and the wider community about how the organisation's behaviour and practices are being received and interpreted. For example, organisations that are not investing resources in developing sustainable operations or reducing their ecological footprint may be damaging their brand name or reputation.

Team members may become aware of this negative perception of the organisation through casual comments made by customers or members of the community they encounter outside work. You should encourage team members to discuss feedback at team meetings and to work together to develop recommendations that could address the issues raised.

Improve organisational values and standards

You should aim to be sensitive to a range of factors that operate in the organisation's external environment and may act as a trigger for changing the organisation's standards or values.

The following table demonstrates the impact these factors could have on an organisation.

Factor	Example	Impact
Changing community values	Environmentally friendly policies	Sustainable work practices
	Multicultural society	Policies promoting workplace diversity
	Eliminating workplace bullying	Policies that address workplace bullying and sexual harassment
	Family-work balance	Flexible work hours, job sharing, working from home
Globalisation	Expanding business to new markets where customers and the community have different values	Cultural sensitivity training for staff
		Policies to promote image as a good corporate citizen in a wide range of global communities

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Factor	Example	Impact
Technological innovation	Security of client information	Investment in software to ensure confidentiality and security of client information
	Online social networking	Policies regarding the sharing of employee and organisational information on social network sites such as Facebook and MySpace
	Email	Workplace policies regarding the appropriate use of email
Regulation	Increased scrutiny of corporate activities	Development of code of conduct, code of ethics, compliance training for employees, and improved information for clients

Address damaging values and standards

Organisations invest resources in developing strategies to address potentially damaging standards or values to safeguard their brand or market position.

The following describes two strategies an organisation may choose to implement.

Sustainability

Organisations are currently experiencing significant pressure to develop and implement values and standards that promote sustainable use of resources, and to reduce the negative impacts of the organisation's operations on the environment. As a result, organisations are developing policies designed to promote sustainable work practices, including:

- increased recycling of resources
- using green energy
- carbon credit schemes.

Employer of choice

Organisations are keen to promote their image as an employer of choice. During periods of high employment, organisations must compete to attract the most suitable candidates. To encourage candidates to choose them as an employer, organisations may develop worker-friendly policies such as working from home, flexitime, parental leave and support for professional development.

Your role as a frontline manager may include recruitment and selection procedures. If you were to become aware that candidates were dissatisfied with your organisation's employment conditions, you would need to advise relevant personnel such as the human resource manager so that the policies can be evaluated.

Organisational communication

Frontline managers act as the conduit between team members, leaders in other teams and work groups, and senior management in the organisation. Team members are well placed in the organisation to gauge the effectiveness of the organisation's values and standards. When your team has identified an opportunity to enhance the organisation's standards and values, you will need to bring your ideas and suggestions to those who are empowered to make decisions about innovation and change.

Formal and informal methods of raising issues or problems with relevant personnel are listed here.

Formal methods	Informal methods
• Write a report explaining the problem faced by the team. • Describe the impact the problem will have and suggested solutions. • Send an email to specialist staff requesting a response or assistance. • Request a meeting with key staff. • Report on the issue using a regular reporting or feedback mechanism. • Complete standard forms or templates that your organisation may have in place.	• Have a phone conversation with a specialist staff member. • Discuss the issue on an informal basis during a meeting or get-together. • Chat informally while at work to people who could help or give advice.

Practice task 6

For this practice task, you must evaluate the standards and values of a specific organisation. This could be your workplace or another organisation with which you are familiar. You will usually be able to access information about an organisation's values and standards from its workplace policies and procedures (if you are an employee), its website, media reports or its annual report (this is usually available as a link on its website).

Identify the organisation's current values and standards and answer the following questions. In determining your response to these issues, you may wish to compare the values and standards of other organisations in the same industry.

1. What were the organisation's objectives in developing these values and standards?

2. Do you think these objectives are being met?

3. What factors are influencing the success or otherwise of the values and standards?

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4. What changes would you recommend to this organisation to ensure that its objectives continue to be met?

2C Contribute to organisational integrity and credibility

Organisations are increasingly seeking to develop a perception among stakeholders, including their clients, employees and the broader community, that they are responsible, ethical corporate citizens. Organisations that seek to promote this positive image are mindful that their actions and behaviour may be reported in the media. Medium, large and public-sector organisations develop advertising campaigns and take advantage of other media opportunities to share good news stories about the contribution they are making to the community.

In some cases, the specific work performed in an organisation relies heavily on the public's perception that the organisation and its employees can be trusted. Health care, finance, law and charity organisations, for example, must have the trust of their clients and patients if they are to function effectively. Codes of conduct, codes of ethics and rules of professional associations apply to organisations in these types of industries to help engender public trust.

Frontline managers and other workplace leaders are well positioned in the organisation to develop and promote a desirable image for the organisation. You will need to demonstrate these standards of behaviour on occasions when you are dealing with people outside of your organisation, such as clients, suppliers and representatives of government departments.

Behave with integrity

Behaving with integrity means you perform your role and responsibilities morally and ethically according to both your organisation's values and those of the community. Remember that you are a role model for your team. Team members will look to you and follow your lead when confronted with situations that challenge their own integrity. Your workplace policies and procedures and codes of conduct will be your main references in the workplace to determine what your organisation expects of you in terms of your personal integrity.

The following outlines some points to consider.

Behaviours that help build your reputation as a person of integrity

- Adopt workplace policies and procedures.
- Be fair, equitable and courteous.
- Communicate factually and objectively.
- Comply with the organisation's code of ethics and code of conduct.
- Do not accept gifts or benefits.
- Do not criticise the organisation publicly.
- Do not engage in gossip or rumours.
- Use the organisation's resources for their intended purpose only.
- Do not promote your own career or professional development by undermining the performance of others.
- Do not use distortions of fact, exaggeration or misleading information.
- Handle grievances sensitively.
- Maintain the security and confidentiality of workplace information.
- Promote diversity in all business activities.
- Treat people with respect.

Establish credibility

It is important that employees and clients have faith and trust in you as a representative of the organisation. The word credible is used to describe people who possess the qualities of being believable and trustworthy. You can expect that your role as a frontline manager will require you to promote the interests of your team, introduce innovation and change, implement difficult decisions and resolve difficult situations with clients. You may even be called upon to act as a spokesperson for your organisation.

Techniques to establish your credibility in the workplace include the following:

- Accept responsibility for mistakes and errors made by the team.
- Always keep commitments.
- Be truthful.
- Communicate openly and honestly.
- Comply with legislation, policies and procedures and codes of conduct.
- Demonstrate your loyalty to individuals, the team and the organisation.
- Do not dismiss the concerns and issues of team members.
- Do not engage in gossip or rumours.
- Give credit where it is due.
- Keep stakeholders informed of what is going on.
- Maintain the confidentiality and privacy of workplace information.
- Model high standards of honesty and integrity.
- Promote and facilitate group problem-solving.
- Promote the interests of team members.
- Treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Undertake professional development.
- Use active listening skills.

Example: maintain integrity and credibility

Alex has been appointed to the position of frontline manager during a period when the organisation is going through a restructure. The restructure poses many challenges for Alex and the team. Team members will need to learn new skills, change some of their work practices and implement a new roster. At least one team member will be transferred to a new team.

It is important that during this time of change, Alex demonstrates the kind of leadership qualities that will build trust between herself and the team. The team needs to believe that Alex has each team member's best interests at heart. Team members will rely on Alex to advocate for them with senior management to achieve the best possible outcomes for the team. Open, honest and timely communication will be an important component in building the relationship between Alex and the team members.

Alex has been cautioned by her senior manager not to participate in any gossip or rumours that are circulating in the organisation about the proposed changes. There may be some information that Alex has access to that she will be unable to share with team members. Wherever possible Alex will use team meetings, newsletters and emails to let team members know what is going on. She knows that where there is a vacuum of information, team members will try and guess what is planned. This type of informal communication based on wrong information can be very damaging to team work and morale.

Alex has made a personal commitment to make time available to listen sensitively to the concerns of team members and to allay their fears as best she can.

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Practice task 7

Read the case study, then complete the tasks that follow.

Case study

Ahmed has scheduled a meeting with Sadee, the newest member of staff at Fresh Start Fitness Centre. Ahmed has received several complaints from new members of the centre who feel that the membership package they have purchased does not suit their needs. In each case these members have purchased a premium membership that includes unlimited access to a personal trainer. These new members feel that a different membership package (at a lower price) would have better suited their needs. Mr Patroni is particularly annoyed as he claims that the full terms and conditions of his membership were not made clear to him at the time he signed his membership contract.

Ahmed is concerned that Sadee has not behaved ethically in her dealings with members. The fitness centre does set targets for new memberships; however, team members are not expected to achieve targets by offering members inappropriate membership packages. Ahmed is aware that apart from being unethical, dissatisfied members will cancel their membership at the first opportunity and will tell their friends and family of their poor experience.

1. What should Sadee do differently to ensure she is behaving ethically? How can Ahmed assist her?

2. If you are currently employed, write an explanation of the code of conduct and code of ethics that apply in your workplace. If you are not employed, obtain codes from another organisation that you are familiar with.

Summary

1. Frontline managers need to be seen to consistently uphold the organisation's standards and values through their own behaviour, and to monitor and coach team members to ensure they do the same.
2. Each frontline manager has a responsibility to know the organisation's standards and to incorporate them into their plans and all processes.
3. Organisations develop codes of conduct as a tool for employees to promote ethical practices in the workplace.
4. Organisations invest resources in developing strategies to address potentially damaging standards or values to safeguard their brand or market position.
5. It is important that employees and the people and organisations that do business with your organisation can trust you.

Learning checkpoint 2
Enhance the organisation's image

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge required to enhance your organisation's image.

Part A

1. Explain what is meant by 'behaving with integrity' and 'establishing credibility' in the workplace.

2. How do you raise questions about standards and values in your workplace? Include both formal and informal methods of communication.

3. List five behaviours that could be damaging to your organisation's reputation.

4. Describe how you could ensure your personal performance contributes to building your organisation's integrity and credibility.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Future Communication is a mobile communication retailer with several outlets in major shopping centres. The retail manager develops a performance plan for each team member that includes key performance indicators. Each team member is expected to reach a monthly sales target. Team members' wages include a base component and an additional component for achieving their sales target.

The retail manager is responsible for managing the retail operations of the store including displays, points of sale, security and stock control. They are also responsible for recruiting, training and rostering team members. The retail manager is paid a base component and receives an additional component based on the sales performance of the team.

Future Communication has the documented the following customer service standards and values.

Future Communication – Customer service standards
Future Communication is committed to ensuring that each customer interaction meets the customer's expectations in terms of excellence. To meet this commitment, we will: • help you as quickly as possible • greet you politely • identify ourselves • speak plainly • listen carefully to your needs • provide you with up-to-date information • provide clear product information • maintain your privacy • provide you with a contact name or reference number • be reliable and professional at all time • treat you with respect and dignity • record information accurately and store it securely • ask you how we can improve our customer service • act on the feedback you give us • undertake ongoing training • behave ethically and honestly • never discriminate against you.
Future Communication – Value statement
• Act openly, honestly and fairly and with integrity in all dealings in the workplace. • Treat clients, suppliers and fellow employees with respect. • Behave ethically.

1. How can the retail manager and team members incorporate the organisation's values and standards into their daily work performance?

2. How should the retail manager respond if they were to become aware that team members were only offering customers ongoing contracts, rather than pay-by-the-month plans? Sales targets for ongoing contracts are higher than pay-by-the-month.

3. What factors in the organisation's policies may be influencing the way that employees are performing in their role?

4. How can the retail manager monitor whether team members comply with organisational values and standards?

5. What are the possible consequences to the organisation or employees of not complying with values and standards?

Topic 3
Make informed decisions

All organisations rely on a wide range of information to assist decision making. For example, they need to know how many staff will be needed to complete a particular project, how a new product should be marketed so it stands out from the competition, and which resources are needed to make the team effective. Such decisions will affect the operation of the team and may ultimately determine the team's success or failure.

In this topic you will learn how to:

3A Gather and organise relevant information

3B Facilitate participation in decision making

3C Examine options and assess risks

3D Make and communicate decisions

3E Prepare plans to implement decisions

3F Use feedback to monitor decisions

3A Gather and organise relevant information

To make informed decisions, it is essential that organisations have access to information that is not only relevant, but also accurate and current. Before you start any analysis, it is important to broadly consider the types and sources of data and information that may be available to reach your best possible decision.

Types of information

The key identifying feature of primary data is that it comes from first-hand experience and has not yet been analysed or changed in any way. Secondary sources of information include reflection, review and interpretation of information after the events.

It is important to remember that the value of any information depends on its content, including primary sources of information. For example, minutes from a meeting should contain the facts of what was said and who will action certain items, but even meetings that are minuted can have designated times when attendees agree that minutes of the conversation will not be taken.

The following provides some examples of primary and secondary sources of information.

Primary sources of information	Secondary sources of information
• Records of conversations • Invoices, statements and signed contracts • Census data • Minutes from meetings • Emails, faxes or letters • Diaries or diary notes	• Textbooks and biographies • Personnel records • Computer databases and computer files, such as emails or memos • Sales records, production targets or financial figures • Forms • Information on training needs • Results from focus groups or product trials • Marketing reports, plans and budgets

Qualitative and quantitative data

Qualitative data is any non-numerical information that can be captured. Quantitative data is measurable, and can be expressed in numbers such as sales figures, dollar amounts or numbers of people.

Examples of when you might use these types of data are outlined here.

Qualitative data

Example: If you want to find out why people are buying a new product, you could survey a sample of clients through interviews or questionnaires to find out more about their purchasing decisions. Alternatively, you might review any point-of-sale feedback forms. Rather than counting people's answers, you use their responses to build a picture of what is occurring.

Quantitative data

Example: If you want to find out how well a new product is selling, you could obtain sales figures for that product and research the number of sales compared to other products or sales over time.

Internal sources of information

In most work-related instances, there will be information available or accessible from within your organisation, as outlined here.

Files

Files can be paper based or electronic. They can include data files (such as databases) or reports. Files can also include collections of information on a subject, product, customer, supplier, team or individual. If they are well maintained, files can be a useful means to trace the history of events, people involved, and statistical trends.

Other staff

There are times when approaching people directly may provide you with the best answers to the questions you are asking. Some staff may be able to provide you with anecdotal information; others will have specific expertise relevant to your research. Both managers and staff may be able to tell you about their own experiences or relate what happened in particular circumstances. Preparation is the key to success in this type of investigation. Before you approach individuals for information, be clear about what you are trying to find out. In order to get the full picture, you may need to consult several individuals who may be able to provide you with a different range of perspectives that, when considered together, give you a good idea of what occurred.

Reports or surveys

Sometimes, existing reports and publications may provide the information you need. Examples are annual reports, in-house team reports and project reports. Surveys undertaken by the organisation may also provide insights into the status, opinions or positions of the people or organisations consulted. Surveys can include interviews with customers about their satisfaction levels with products or staff feedback on workplace safety.

The library

Some organisations have their own library of periodicals, journals, newspapers, reports, books and other reference material. It is likely that any library of information kept by an organisation will focus on issues and topics of particular interest to the organisation. Such information may be difficult to compile from other sources or even difficult to locate elsewhere.

The intranet

Many organisations are now developing their own intranet sites. These may include statistical data, summaries of reports, or details on the expertise or technical skills of staff. The intranet may provide you with data or may guide you to where you can find further information. Intranet sites are also a common place to find industry and organisation news, details on forthcoming events, processes, procedures and policies.

Strategic information

Business plans, financials, objectives and mission statements (belonging to an organisation, department or team) provide you with good information on the strategic direction of the organisation, from a senior level.

These could be located on the company intranet or may be available in hard copy.

Specialist material

Specialist material includes sales plans, promotional material, product specifications, drawings, plans or schedules. This type of information could be particularly useful if you are looking for data that will support your investigation into a certain area of the organisation's operation, such as sales or engineering. Understanding this information may require you to work closely with specialists who can explain any technical terms, drawings or give some valuable background information for each item.

Practice task 8

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Mitchell has been asked by his manager to write a report on why last year's sales conference was not a great success among staff, and what could be done to improve it. But Mitchell has a problem – he's only just joined the company and did not attend last year's conference.

1. What information do you think Mitchell needs to gather?

2. What internal sources do you think would be the best places to start this process?

External sources of information

Often it is necessary to go beyond sources within your own organisation in order to gather the information you need.

External organisations and other information sources that may be useful include:

- government departments or agencies (in particular, the Australian Bureau of Statistics)
- representative associations such as employer bodies, institutes, unions and professional associations
- major corporations
- newspapers and magazines (especially industry-specific publications)
- television or radio programs (industry- or subject-specific programs are often the most useful)
- the internet
- libraries.

Example: gather information from external sources

At a company that designs and builds new homes, Clare, who works in the marketing department, has been asked to write a report they can use when planning marketing campaigns for the next year.

Her first step is to identify data that she can then analyse and include in the report. She decides to search for two sets of information:

- data on population growth in specific areas
- information on how other companies are conducting their marketing campaigns.

Some of the sources she consults include:

- the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which can provide up-to-date population-trend data from the last census, and the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute
- local councils and state governments, which can provide localised data on population growth and demographic profiles in their area
- the library at her nearest university, where she can search for articles and books on population trends and housing requirements
- information packs from competitors to gauge their approach.

Using the data she collects from these sources, Clare prepares a comprehensive report and makes some good recommendations that help her organisation develop effective marketing plans for the forthcoming year.

Example: gather information from internal sources

Tahlia is a HR coordinator at a large IT company. Her manager has asked her to provide a report on the impact of a recent change in policy that enables office-based staff to make use of flexitime. She must report on staff morale and attitudes toward the company. Previously, all office staff were required to be at work between the hours of 8.30 am and 5.30 pm with a total of one hour for lunch and other breaks during the day. The new flexitime rule means that all staff must be at the office between 10 am and 3 pm every day, but can start and finish when they like, as long as they work eight hours a day.

Tahlia undertook the following activities:

- She read the policy document carefully as well as the material that was given to staff explaining the new arrangements.
- She reviewed and compared results of staff satisfaction surveys that were conducted prior to the change and after, and spoke to her colleague, Josh, who was responsible for conducting these surveys and analysing their results.
- She conducted a survey with 50 staff members, who represented all levels and divisions within the company, on their attitude towards the policy change.
- She then conducted in-depth discussions with randomly selected staff members and asked them about how the change had affected them; as she discussed the new policy with them she observed their body language and recorded whether she felt they were genuinely positive about the new policy.
- She summarised her findings and selected key pieces of data to include in her report that supported these findings.
- She wrote up a report and included a summary of key findings and a recommendation as to whether to continue with the program.

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Practice task 9

Identify an innovation or change that you believe will enhance service delivery, performance or work practices in either your workplace or another organisation with which you are familiar. Identify the range of information sources you will access and the types of information you will gather to help you and your team evaluate whether the innovation or change should be implemented.

1. Provide a brief description of the background of the organisation and the potential benefits of the suggested change or innovation.

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Practice task 9

2. Describe the primary and secondary sources of information you will access and the types of information that you will gather.

3. Identify the method you will use to verify the accuracy and validity of the information you have gathered.

3B Facilitate participation in decision making

The ability to make decisions that are balanced, perceptive and based on relevant information and advice does not come easily to everyone. Most team leaders or managers are expected to make decisions on a range of issues. Working within a close team doesn't necessarily make this process a difficult one. Team members need to know how decision making works within the team and their role in the decision-making process.

It is the team leader's role to harness the skills and knowledge of the team to make optimal decisions consistent with the team's goals and objectives.

Team consultation

Good leaders recognise that some team members may have a lot to share in the way of experience or skills that other team members, including the team leader, may not have. Managers and team leaders need to work hard to foster a team culture where members are encouraged to participate and have input into the team, and its outcomes and processes.

The benefits of a consultative team culture are not limited to the additional insights and ideas a group of people working together will generate. People's satisfaction levels, as well as their interest in and commitment to their job all improve in a team environment. People in a team feel their opinions are valued and that they are playing an important role in the context of the team and the organisation.

Following are some of the characteristics of a consultative team culture.

Team members are given the opportunity to:

- raise issues and concerns
- contribute knowledge and opinions
- assist in making operational decisions
- plan activities.

Promote a consultative team culture

Frontline managers who consult with others and encourage group decision-making will find that many of these activities come about naturally, as a result of the way they work. Other managers may find that they need to actively build these activities into their management plans, and into team operational and work plans.

Consider the tips outlined here.

Tips for promoting a consultative team culture
• Have meaningful meetings to identify and discuss roles and responsibilities. • Assist in identifying and documenting work goals and tasks for team members in their work plans. • Have regular team meetings or get-togethers where everyone can share information about what they've been working on. • Have brainstorming sessions or workshops where members' input, opinion, suggestions and expertise is expected and provided. • Conduct team building or planning days. • Openly ask for advice from a team member who has particular skills or experience. • Promote and encourage team members to share their thoughts and ideas and to communicate clearly and freely within the team. • Use email, teleconferencing and intranet services to facilitate communication, particularly within remote teams. • Share information through newsletters and noticeboards that encourages team awareness, celebrates successes, identifies issues and focuses on goals. • Provide feedback to team members on the results their ideas have generated and the usefulness of these results.

Decision-making styles

The decision-making process within a team depends on the environment, the culture of the team, the culture of the wider organisation and the personalities and working styles within the team. It also depends on the manager's leadership style.

A team may use different decision-making methods in different circumstances. If this is the case, the team should understand why its advice may not be needed in some situations.

Examples of different decision-making styles are described here.

Option 1

The team leader makes major decisions but relies heavily on information, opinions and advice given by team members. The team leader talks to the team about decisions that concern it and explains why they have chosen a certain path.

Option 2

The team leader facilitates and aids the decision-making process, yet the final decision is reached by consensus within the team.

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Option 3

The team leader asks some team members to provide limited information prior to making a decision. Team members are informed of the decision later.

Option 4

The team leader makes a decision without consulting with team members or asking for information or opinions.

Decision-making process

Decision making typically follows a six-step process, as outlined here.

Decision-making process
1. Identify the problem or opportunity. 2. Gather relevant information. 3. Generate as many alternatives as possible. 4. Evaluate alternatives to decide which is best. 5. Decide on and implement the best solution. 6. Follow up.

Example: gather and act on information

Joshua has been appointed as the project manager for a team formed to develop training resources for the new customer service standards being introduced in both the regional and metropolitan outlets of a medium-sized credit union.

The team will need to meet regularly to discuss their progress. Joshua asked the team at their initial meeting to collaborate to identify the most effective methods for team communication. Each team member assumed responsibility for investigating a specific method for team communication that did not rely on face-to-face communication. They agreed to report back at the next meeting so that a group decision could be made and a communication plan developed for future meetings.

At the next team meeting, the efficiency and effectiveness of a range of communication methods were discussed including blogs, wikis, Skype and Breeze. The team evaluated these options and decided to develop a team blog that would be used for team communication and to share information with other members of the organisation. Breeze software would be used for online meetings on a fortnightly basis.

Practice task 10

Read the scenario, then answer the question that follows.

Scenario

Your team has been given the task of undertaking a review of the health and safety training in your organisation or in a specific department of the organisation. The team will need to develop a plan for undertaking the review during their next team meeting. Your role as leader of the meeting is to encourage all team members to participate in the group discussion and to help the group reach consensus on the implementation plan that will be presented to senior management.

What will you do to ensure all team members participate in the discussion? Explain any benefits that your encouragement will have on the team's overall performance.

3C Examine options and assess risks

There is a range of methods that can be used by work groups and teams to solve problems and assist in making decisions. These methods include:

- brainstorming
- cause and effect diagram
- force field analysis.

Brainstorm

Brainstorming is a technique that may be used with groups to create new ideas, solve problems and develop and motivate teams. Brainstorming is particularly useful when you are looking for creative and innovative solutions to problems.

You will need a facilitator for the brainstorm. You may choose to perform this role or you may wish to involve another party. The role of the facilitator is to encourage participation, to prevent criticism and to manage interruptions. You will need a means of quickly recording the group's ideas, such as a whiteboard or flip chart. It is helpful if you are able to appoint a recorder, rather than have the facilitator recording the ideas.

You should begin the brainstorm session by stating the session's objectives in simple terms. Some examples are provided here.

Examples of brainstorming objectives:

- Develop a reminder system for patient appointments.
- Formulate a promotional activity for the launch of a new product.
- Opportunities for cost-saving using electronic conference facilities.
- Build better relationships between the customer service and warehouse teams.

Rules of brainstorming

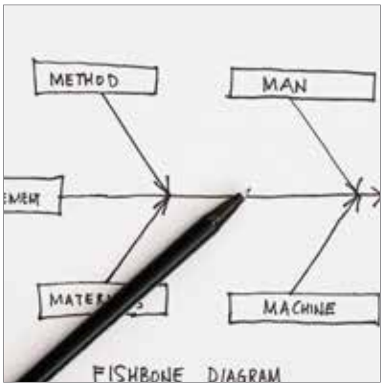
You should agree on a time limit for the brainstorming session. The recorder's job is to make sure all ideas generated by the group are displayed. The facilitator will help assess, evaluate and analyse the effects and validity of the ideas on the list. The group's ideas should be further developed and prioritised at this stage into a more meaningful group of options.

Conclude the session by advising participants what will happen next. Afterwards, keep participants informed about the outcomes of the session. This will encourage them to participate in future sessions.

You should remind participants of the rules of brainstorming:

- Ideas are not to be criticised – judgement is suspended until after the idea-generating part of the session.
- The wilder the ideas the better.
- Quantity rather than quality of ideas is most important at this stage.
- Use each other's ideas as a starting point for new ideas.

Cause and effect diagram



Cause and effect diagrams are also known as fishbone diagrams because the completed diagram resembles a fishbone. The recorder in the group should position the problem or issue at the head of the fish. The possible causes of the problem should be recorded on the bones that are growing out of the spine of the fish. The benefit of the cause and effect diagram is that it graphically separates the problem or issue from the symptoms of the problem.

Force field analysis

A technique that is particularly useful for group problem-solving is force field analysis, developed by psychologist Kurt Lewin. To begin the process, you need to define the current situation. Discuss it in detail, answering the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- When does it occur?
- Where does it occur?
- How does it occur?

Don't ask why yet

When you have answered these questions, combine them into a problem statement; for example, 'It takes on average 10 minutes to deal with each customer inquiry whereas the performance standard is five minutes per call. This problem is common to all operators'.

Identify the driving and restraining forces

In any problem situation, there will be forces or needs driving you towards a changed situation and other forces restraining you from reaching it. This is the point at which to ask 'Why'? Is it because inquiries are becoming more complex? Is it because operators have insufficient product knowledge to answer queries speedily? Is it because operators have insufficient knowledge of company procedures to deal quickly with inquiries? Is it because the performance standard is too high? Do operators need more training?

Discussion of these questions will provide the forces that will drive you towards the desired situation or restrain you from reaching it.

Decide upon the desired solution

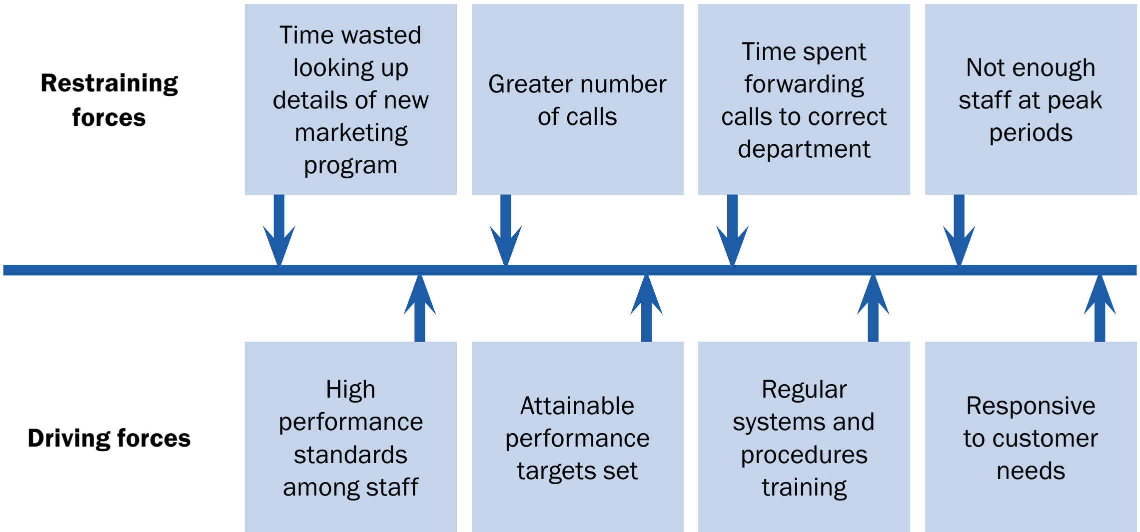
It will very much depend on the answers to the above questions. For example, it could be: 'Operators to meet the performance standard of an average of five minutes per customer inquiry'.

Or it might be: 'Operators to meet the new performance standard of an average of seven minutes per customer inquiry'.

Negative and positive forces

The objective of a force-field analysis is to overcome the restraining forces and push the vertical line towards the desired situation.

As shown in the diagram, restraining forces can also be forces for change. For example, the fact that customer inquiries are becoming more complex is restraining operators from achieving the current targets; however, it is also driving the need for change.



Solve problems

There are a variety of possible solutions to problems that have been identified in a range of workplaces. These possible solutions could have been developed using the various problem-solving techniques described in this unit.

Options for promoting change for the better in identified areas for workplace improvement are described here.

Improve customer service

Options to promote change for the better:

- Provide training sessions for staff.
- Develop a customer service chart.
- Build customer service accountabilities into job descriptions.
- Make exceptional customer service a key performance area for staff.

Reduce office waste

Options to promote change for the better:

- Introduce an environmental policy.
- Allocate different teams quotas of paper.
- Motivate teams by having a competition to see who can use the least paper.
- Ask staff for creative recycling ideas.

Streamline processes	**Options to promote change for the better:** • Review current processes and develop better alternatives. • Train staff. • Purchase new technology.
Improve sales	**Options to promote change for the better:** • Ask customers about their ideal products/services. • Develop new product/services or amend existing ones. • Develop new marketing strategies. • Access new markets.

Risk analysis

Once you have developed your implementation plan, you need to anticipate problems that could arise and impact your ability to meet your goals. This is called contingency planning, which involves identifying risks and how they could impact your ability to successfully implement your plans. Contingency planning also involves considering what you will do to avoid or minimise the impact of risks.

Risk identification

When identifying potential areas of risk in your plan, you should look at each event that is required in its implementation. What are some of the things that could go wrong? This includes both internal and external factors.

After identifying the internal and external risk factors, you can further categorise these potential risks into specific focus areas.

The following provides some specific examples.

Internal factors

- System failures
- Staffing issues, such as illness or lack of appropriate skills
- Budget adjustments
- Deadline changes; for example, deadline is brought forward
- Administration errors; for example, incorrect costs charged
- Security breaches; for example, break-ins

External factors

- The weather; for example, storms, fire, flood
- Electrical blackouts
- Power surges
- Supply failure; for example, not delivering on time or poor quality of work

Risk categories

- Human resources
- Technology, such as computers or equipment
- Building, such as safety or security
- Operations; for example, management issues
- Environmental concerns; for example, natural disasters
- Political and economic conditions

Risk occurrence

Once you have made a list of the potential risks against each task, you should then rate from very high to very low the likelihood of these events occurring, and the potential impact they would have on your ability to implement the plan. This can then be used as a guide for developing your contingency plan.

Develop risk solutions

Once you have identified and prioritised your risk factors, you will need to develop a solution or alternative for each potential risk. The greater the priority, the more comprehensive your contingency plan will need to be.

A contingency plan should state:

- a rationale for the contingency plan; that is, what it sets out to achieve
- a description of the risk
- how the risk can impact on the progress of the activity
- what can be done to prevent or minimise the chance of the event occurring.

Example: perform a risk analysis

Robert has been appointed as project manager of a team asked to improve customer service across several departments in the organisation. He has planned a customer mail-out consisting of a mail-merged letter, a marketing catalogue (printed by an outsourced printer) and a flyer advertising the new customer loyalty program (developed in-house) as part of their program to upgrade customer service delivery.

The potential risks of this activity have been identified and assessed and Robert transfers the results to the likelihood/impact grid here.

Event	Likelihood		Impact	
Information needed for the catalogue is not received.	High	**Low**	**High**	Low
The printer may not deliver on time.	**High**	Low	High	**Low**
Key people are unavailable.	**High**	Low	**High**	Low
The desktop publisher may not be skilled enough to format the new design.	High	**Low**	**High**	Low
There may be no supply of envelopes because the store person was not notified about the mail-out.	**High**	Low	High	**Low**
Not enough time was allocated and the activity is not finished in time for that day's post.	**High**	Low	High	**Low**
The photocopier may break down.	**High**	Low	**High**	Low

Practice task 11

Identify a problem or opportunity in your workplace or another organisation with which you are familiar and develop a potential solution. Following the instructions in this unit, perform a risk assessment of your solution.

You may use this template or the template that is used in your workplace to record your findings.

Event	Likelihood		Impact	
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low
	High	Low	High	Low

3D Make and communicate decisions

Decision-making is an important component of the role of a frontline manager. You will make decisions on a daily business that impact on the performance of the team and the organisation. To be an effective leader, you will need to have the confidence to make decisions in a timely manner.

You should not spend too much time making decisions about a simple or routine matter, that doesn't involve a significant expense, doesn't impact on the performance of other teams or work areas, or doesn't involve a risk to the reputation of the organisation, its image or branding.

Timing

You will also encounter situations where you are required to make decisions that will impact significantly on the organisation's operations. In those cases, you will want to invest more time and effort in reaching a decision. Although you will want to ensure that you have given careful consideration to all possible solutions, you should be mindful that in some decision-making activities, the timing is critical. In some cases, you may find you need to set a limit to the amount of time that is allowed to reach a decision.

You will encounter many situations where you need to make decisions either independently or in collaboration with team members or other colleagues, as outlined here.

Independent or collaborative decisions may include:

- determining project strategy
- determining team or section objectives
- developing estimates and budgets
- facilitating meetings
- handling disagreements and conflict resolution
- making purchases
- recruiting and selecting project team members
- resolving issues that impact on the team's performance
- resolving project issues
- scheduling work and allocating resources to tasks
- selecting external suppliers.

Examine the options

Decision analysis is used to help evaluate possible solutions, generate group problem-solving techniques and to make a decision. Formal decision analysis is designed to ensure that possible solutions are evaluated against a set of specific criteria.

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The decision-analysis process used in your organisation may resemble the following.

Decision-analysis process
• Establish a list of criteria that solutions must satisfy. • Establish a list of criteria that solutions should satisfy, and rank them in order of priority. • Eliminate any solutions that do not satisfy the criteria on the 'must' list. • Compare each of the remaining possible solutions against the preferred list and evaluate how many of the highly desirable criteria are satisfied. • Eliminate solutions that do not satisfy the highest ranked criteria. • Tentatively choose the most suitable solution or solutions. • Assess the final list of possible solutions in terms of their likely benefits and costs. • Make a final choice.

Communicate your decision

Once a decision has been reached, you will need to ensure that any approvals required have been secured and all relevant personnel both inside and outside of the organisation have been advised of the decision.

The information here describes the methods you can use to clearly communicate your decision.

Prepare a report

You should prepare a report using the format recommended in your workplace procedures. You may need to prepare a report that identifies the problem or issue you are trying to address, clearly states your recommendations and provides any supporting evidence that you gathered.

Provide timely advice

It is important – on those occasions when implementation of the decision will impact on clients, other departments or work areas, or other organisations – that you provide timely advice to those concerned. This is particularly important when there is likely to be a negative impact. You should ensure that, in such cases, the information is shared promptly and clearly with all relevant parties. Open and timely communication will help to minimise the likelihood of gossip and rumours. You are also more likely to secure the support and commitment of other people when they feel they have been involved in the early stages of the change process.

Investigate methods

You should investigate the range of methods available to you to facilitate communication across the organisation. Newsletters, reports, email, meetings, online conferences, social-networking software and workshops are methods that you may wish to consider.

Consider information needs

Consider carefully the information needs of other parties before selecting the most appropriate communication channel, and the type and amount of information that you wish to share. That information could include:

- the problem you are trying to solve
- a clear description of recommendations and their objectives
- why the change is needed and the benefits that will be achieved
- the methods you have followed in your investigations
- the time frame for implementing the decision
- related resources and costs
- constraints and how these may be overcome
- potential risks and any contingency plans
- training requirements.

Example: communicate decisions in an organisation

Robert and his project team have decided that the option that offers the most efficient and effective solution to the customer-service problems in their organisation is to enhance the online (internet) service delivery offered by the company. Customers will have the opportunity to make their purchases, pay their account, track their delivery, obtain after-sales service and accrue points as part of an online customer-loyalty program.

Frontline managers in accounts, marketing, customer service, warehouse and information technology will be involved in developing the implementation plan. Robert and his project team have organised a meeting with the various frontline managers across the organisation. Robert knows that other managers are going to more committed and supportive of the new system if they are brought 'into the loop' as quickly as possible.

A newsletter is being prepared to let all employees know about the pending changes. Employees have heard rumours that there are plans to make some changes to customer service delivery. Robert wants to ensure that team members receive accurate, honest and clear information before the rumours cause any damage to staff morale.

The information technology manager is going to establish a blog for the project team so that they can provide regular updates to employees during the implementation stage.

Practice task 12

Decisions get made every day that affect team members and other members of the organisation either directly or indirectly. This table lists a range of decisions that need to be communicated to an organisation's stakeholders. Identify the method you would use to communicate each decision.

Decision	Communication method
Employees are required to change their computer password every 40 days (currently 60 days).	
Team members are to undertake training on sustainable work practices.	
The organisation's website is to be upgraded so that customers can pay their accounts online.	
The terms and conditions of the customer loyalty program have changed.	
Team members will be hosting a breakfast at a local shelter for homeless people, rather than having a staff Christmas party this year.	
A mentoring program is being introduced across the organisation.	
A new code of ethics has been developed and is available on the workplace intranet.	
Workplace policies and procedures have been revised to include specific advice about using social networking sites (such as MySpace and Facebook) on workplace computers.	
A software upgrade allows customers to track the delivery of their purchases online.	

3E Prepare plans to implement decisions

Once a decision has been made to proceed with the change or innovation recommended by the team, you may be asked to coordinate the development of an implementation plan (sometimes referred to as an action plan). You should refer to your workplace policies and procedures for the format that is preferred in your organisation. Your organisation may have developed a template that is used for implementation plans.

Implementation plan

An implementation plan should outline:

- the nature of the change or innovation
- outcomes that will be realised in the short to medium term
- a goal that describes what the team will achieve in the longer term
- the resources required
- a budget
- the roles and responsibilities of key people
- communication strategies to inform staff and other parties outside of the team and organisation
- actions that will be undertaken to achieve the goal
- a time line for the completion of each action
- procedures for monitoring implementation.

SMART goal planning

The goals in the action plan should be SMART, as defined here.

Specific	Target and clearly define a specific area that you want to improve.
Measurable	Suggest an indicator of progress; quantify if possible. Determine how you will know the goal has been achieved.
Attainable	Agree what the goals should be and keep them achievable in the time frame.

Realistic	Identify what results can realistically be achieved given the available resources, knowledge and time.
Time framed	Specify when the result can be achieved; make sure there is enough time to achieve the goal, but not too much time.

Agree to the plan

A range of people or work groups may be affected by the implementation plan. The more opportunity these individuals or groups have to participate in the decision-making process and planning stage, the more likely they are to be supportive and positive about the innovation or change. It is important that wherever possible the parties that will be affected by the implementation plan should agree to the plan.

Open, honest and timely communication will meet with a more positive response. Strive to keep the communication channels open. Meetings, newsletters, posters and electronic social-networking software such as wikis and blogs may be used to share information with frontline managers and teams across the organisation. Be open to comments, suggestions and possibly revisions or refinements in order to gain approval for your proposal.

Parties affected by the implementation plan could include:

- team members
- management or other employees or work groups in the organisation
- customers
- suppliers
- the wider community
- shareholders
- distributors or retailers.

Contingency plans

One of the most important aspects of any planning process is contingency planning to address risks; that is, uncontrollable events that could impact on the work of a team. Contingency planning is one way that risks to a team can be anticipated, minimised and, if possible, avoided completely.

A contingency plan should state:

- the objectives of the contingency plan
- a description of the risk
- the likely impact of the risk on the progress of the activity
- actions that can be taken to prevent or minimise the chance of the event occurring
- the action that will be taken if the risk eventuates
- the expected outcome of executing the contingency plan
- resources required to implement the contingency plan
- monitoring processes

- a schedule for review of the plan
- procedures for implementing the contingency plan.

Contingency planning process

The process of contingency planning has real benefits in a team situation, as the process itself encourages teamwork and cooperative problem-solving. One way of managing risks is to allocate major risk areas to individuals within the team, or to smaller subgroups. This also builds team involvement, gives team members new challenges and promotes a sense of ownership within the team. For instance, one member could be responsible for quality, another for resources and another for information sharing. In many teams, though, much of this responsibility will fall upon the team leader or manager.

The following describes five basic steps that make up team-based contingency planning.

Run a brainstorming session
Ask team members to come to a special meeting prepared to develop a list of things that could stand in your way of achieving team goals. Be exhaustive and listen to everyone's concerns. Write down every issue raised and group the issues into logical chunks or major areas. If you identify a lot of risks it might help to categorise them based on how likely they are to happen and their potential impact.

Develop solutions
In either a team or smaller subgroups, work through the major areas you've identified as being a threat to the team's progress. If there are a lot, do it in order of priority. Come up with one or more solutions to the problem should it occur, with a view to minimising your impact on the team.

Develop avoidance strategies
For each of the major risk areas, develop strategies or steps that could help you avoid the problem completely through forward planning.

Incorporate strategies into plans
Incorporate strategies into team plans, procedures and guidelines. Make sure all team members know their roles in planning for and managing risks.

Prepare checklists
Prepare checklists to help you identify and record potential risks. Work systematically through the lists to identify possible risks, determine the likelihood of them happening and the consequences if they did. Document the results in a simpletoaccess, easy-to-follow format. Intranet sites are handy for storing this information but a ring binder, kept in a central location, can be just as useful.

Example: elements of an implementation plan

The following table is an extract of an implementation plan.

Team	Activity	Tasks	Who	When
Marketing	Prepare regular newsletter to increase awareness of the company and inform customers of current activities	Plan time line, personnel, and resources	Frontline manager	3 April
		Check distribution list	Megan	3 April
		Identify contributors	Megan	3 April
		Prepare content	Robert	4–8 April
		Arrange for graphics, photographs, etc.	Katrina	8 April
		Edit and proof	Ailsa	9 April
		Desktop	Toby	9-10 April
		Distribute	Megan	11 April

Practice task 13

Prepare an implementation plan for a change or innovation that could be introduced at your workplace or another organisation with which you are familiar. Your implementation plan may be developed using the template used at your workplace, or you may wish to use the example in the previous section as a template.

Your completed implementation plan should identify the titles (position) of any staff who will need to agree to the plan.

3F Use feedback to monitor decisions

The process of communication within a team is a critical one. Team members are not being effective if:

- they don't communicate well between themselves
- they don't feed information to their manager
- their managers don't provide enough information to their teams.

One of the most important elements in the communication process is feedback. The process of providing constructive feedback within a team is a sign that the team is truly working together. People who don't seek or give feedback are running the risk of working in an information vacuum or isolating their colleagues. This includes managers as well as team members. Getting useful feedback from team members can be invaluable. As well as learning about what you could do to improve next time, you can benefit from the experience and insights others provide. Feedback can be sought and provided in many situations, both formal and informal.

Informal and ongoing feedback

Ask team members for feedback on your own performance as a manager. All team members can give each other feedback and recognition when individuals have worked hard, made an effort, or achieved a goal. The team can give itself feedback in sessions that are structured so that individuals assess the team's performance.

Feedback can be sought several times over the course of a project or activity and can be used to check how well work is progressing. KPIs are a form of impartial feedback that shows a team how progress is tracking against targets. Give your team feedback on what happens at management meetings or other projects you're involved in, as a representative of the team.

When instructions or requests are given, elicit verbal feedback as to whether team members understand the information provided. You may consider asking team members for a demonstration of how they will manage things in future. This feedback could be a mechanism for improvement, as well as reinforcing spheres of responsibility and encouraging team members to work together, perhaps devising alternative methods and work practices.

Monitor implementation

It is essential that you coordinate a regular review of performance during the implementation stage of your plan. You will find that this review is more effective when you actively involve team members in the review and gather their feedback.

You may gather feedback using a range of methods, such as the following:

- Printed and electronic surveys
- Customer feedback forms
- Focus groups
- Interviews (face to face and by telephone)
- Team meetings

Review the information

It is important that you review the information that you gather through feedback and address the questions listed here.

Review questions
Have the goals described in the implementation plan been achieved?
How closely did we follow the implementation plan?
What aspects of the implementation worked well and why?
What aspects of the implementation did not work well and why?
What could we do better in the future?
What was the reaction of stakeholders (such as clients, suppliers, shareholders or the wider community) affected by the change or innovation?
What lessons have we learnt about our planning activities?
Do we need to revise workplace policies, procedures, templates or forms to support continuous improvement of planning activities?

Signs that things aren't going to plan

Reading the signs from a team that things aren't as they should be can be tricky. Little can be done to fix a situation once deadlines are missed or when things are at crisis point. You need to be aware of and address problems as they arise, not after the event. Promoting a strong sense of communication within the team, asking team members for opinions and feedback on how things are going and being involved with the team at an operational level will help avoid problems and will enable you to identify when things are going downhill.

The following describes some of the things to look out for.

Signs that the team is not functioning effectively
• A general lack of enthusiasm. • Non-stop bickering and the inability to agree on issues. • Personal agendas being placed ahead of the team. • Dominant team members pressuring or overshadowing their colleagues. • Not meeting deadlines. • Team members who don't share the work equally.

Complaints

Complaints and feedback from individual team members who come forward with issues should be taken very seriously. If someone has taken the time to share their concerns with you, listen to what they have to say. Ask them what ideas they have that would be helpful and perhaps even what they would like you to do. Remember though, that sometimes issues important to one person may not be serious for the team, even though the problem still needs addressing. Also, people sometimes just need to let off steam. Team members may simply want to talk through a problem with you rather than take action.

Example: methods of gathering feedback

Robert's project team has decided to include in its implementation plan a description of the methods it will use to gather feedback during the implementation and after the implementation. The objective of the implementation plan is to enhance customer service delivery by upgrading a range of services available to customers on the organisation's website.

The following demonstrates the methods the team intends to use.

Internet usage report

The management information system will provide data on the number of customers who create a user name on the website, the number of transactions processed (including purchases and accounts paid), hits on the website from people seeking information, and emails sent to the customer contact centre for further information.

Customer survey

A targeted email will be sent to customers inviting them to complete an online survey.

Team member survey

An email will be sent to team members asking them to complete an electronic survey on the project team blog.

Help-desk report

Team members on the IT help desk will be asked to record the number of requests they receive from staff and customers.

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Example: methods of gathering feedback

Team meetings

The frontline manager in each work area will be asked to gather feedback regarding the implementation at team meetings.

Informal feedback

Frontline managers will be asked to diarise any informal feedback they receive during discussions with team members or customers.

Customer feedback forms

Information will be collated from printed and electronic customer feedback forms (including customer complaints).

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Practice task 14

In section 3E, you developed an implementation plan for the innovation or change that you are recommending to improve a specific organisation's performance. As you have discovered, it is important that during the planning stage you give careful consideration to the methods you will use to gather feedback during the implementation phase. In this practice task, you are going to expand on the implementation plan you developed in section 3E by identifying the feedback methods you would use.

Record your ideas in this table.

Method for gathering feedback	Purpose

continued ...

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Method for gathering feedback	Purpose

Summary

1. To make informed decisions, it is essential that organisations have access to information that is not only relevant, but also accurate and current.
2. The key identifying feature of primary data is that it comes from first-hand experience and has not yet been analysed or changed in any way.
3. Secondary sources of information include reflection, review and interpretation of information after the events.
4. Good team leaders recognise that some team members may have a lot to share in the way of good experience or skills that other team members, including the team leader, may not have.
5. There is a range of methods that can be used by work groups and teams to solve problems and assist in making decisions.
6. To be an effective leader, you will need to have the confidence to make decisions in a timely manner.
7. The more opportunity individuals or groups have to participate in the decision-making process and planning stage, the more likely they are to be supportive and positive about the innovation or change.
8. Consider where the risks are when working out an implementation plan and have a contingency plan for addressing those risks.
9. As you write an implementation plan, ask 'Who is affected?' and consider clients, other parts of the organisation, suppliers and the wider community.
10. The process of providing constructive feedback within a team is a sign that the team is truly working together.

Learning checkpoint 3
Make informed decisions

This learning checkpoint allows you to review your skills and knowledge required to make informed decisions in the workplace.

Part A

1. List the six steps of the decision-making process.

2. Explain what each letter represents in the SMART goal planning tool.

Part B

In this task you will gather evidence that you are competent to lead a work team in the decision-making process.

Write a report that describes how you have applied the knowledge and skills you have examined in this unit to a workplace problem. This could be a problem that you have identified in your workplace or in another organisation to which you have access.

You may wish to base your report on the problem that you identified in Practice task 11. If so, expand on the implementation plan that you developed in Practice task 13 in order to provide sufficient evidence of your competence.

The format for your report should comply with the advice in your workplace policies and procedures.

The report should address the following:

- Identify the problem faced by the team.

- Describe the process that you followed to gather information about the problem. What sources of information did you access? How did you assess the relevance, accuracy and validity?
- How did you encourage team members to participate in problem-solving activities? What benefits were achieved from collaborating with team members?
- Describe the problem-solving techniques that the team used. How did you encourage all team members to participate?
- Discuss the process that the team used to arrive at its decision.
- What risks were identified with the options considered by the team? What strategies were developed to minimise or eliminate these risks?
- Identify the objectives of the solution that the team decided on.
- Describe the actions that will be required to implement the team's decision.
- Describe the methods that you used to communicate with relevant people about the team's plan.
- How did you gain commitment to implement the plan?
- What methods were used to gather feedback from relevant stakeholders about the implementation?