

WHAT IS A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH?

Trauma Informed approaches recognise that the experience of trauma can impact on individuals neurological, psychological and social development.

Adopting a Trauma informed approach at work raises awareness amongst staff of possible triggers and impact of trauma on individuals and works to prevent re-traumatisation of employees and clients.

Trauma-informed practice in the workplace aims to increase awareness of how trauma can negatively impact on individuals and identify and address barriers that people affected by trauma may experience throughout work and in the course of their role.

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

The five Trauma-Informed Principles—choice, collaboration, empowerment, trustworthiness, and safety should be used as a guide, ensuring a supportive and respectful approach.

Why Follow These Principles? Adhering to these principles creates a safe and empowering environment where employees and volunteers with lived experience of trauma can feel heard, valued, and supported.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ORGANISATIONS TO BE TRAUMA INFORMED?

Recognising and preparing for the impact of trauma enables suitable resources and processes to be put in place to support individuals with lived experience with the aim of:

- reducing the risk of re-traumatising or retriggering individuals and
- considering the emotional impact sensitive subjects may have on the individuals wellbeing.

TRAUMA INFORMED PRINCIPLES IN THE WORKPLACE

The goal of a trauma-informed workplace is not to heal people or get them to talk about their trauma at work. Instead, the goal is to create a safe environment where people can communicate boundaries and seek out support when needed.

To be trauma Informed organisations need to:

- Understand the process and impact of trauma

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- Recognise signs and symptoms of trauma
 - Apply trauma informed principles to reduce the risk of trauma
 - Ensure support mechanisms are in place for maintaining emotional wellbeing
 - Create a culture of safety where staff feel able to discuss the effect of trauma without fear of judgement or being treated unfairly.
 - Put policies, practices and safeguarding arrangements in place

BENEFITS

Workplaces that address trauma in healthy ways often see an increase in commitment, employee wellbeing and retention . This can be achieved through:

Acknowledgement: the person experiencing trauma feels heard

Support: the person experiencing trauma can get the help they need

Trust: the person experiencing trauma knows they'll be treated fairly

TIPS FOR CREATING A TRAUMA-INFORMED WORKPLACE

Creating trauma informed cultures and workplaces require compassionate leadership and a proactive approach. Leaders have a responsibility to create safe and supportive environments for all employees, where they feel supported, safe, and empowered to advocate for themselves and others.

Practical Examples:

- **Training-** Training leaders to help them recognize how co-workers or work activities may trigger distress their team and learn to respond appropriately.
- **Educating staff-** Promoting work life balance and promoting emotional wellbeing can be powerful in supporting staff to develop self care techniques and coping strategies. Raising Awareness of the resources available to them through Employee Assistance Programmes and reminding employees of support available to them at work.
- **Acknowledge traumatic events and their impact.** The topic of trauma can seem overwhelming, and it may feel easier not to address it at all. However, ignoring trauma and its very real impacts can make employees feel alone and unsupported.
- **Be sensitive.** There's no right way for someone to feel after trauma. Be sensitive to your employees' feelings and needs, and learn the basics of trauma-informed communication, or **what to say or not say**, to someone who has experienced trauma.