

# Improving Organisational Performance by Building Emotional Resilience

## Closing the Loop Conference 2011

**Rachel Clements - Director Psychological Services**



# Agenda

## 1. Understanding Emotional Resilience

- What is emotional resilience?
- Key components of emotional resilience
- The benefits of emotional resilience

## 2. Emotional Resilience in the Workplace

- The costs associated with poor emotional resilience at work
- Psychological injury data from Australian organisations
- Key drivers of poor emotional resilience
- The impact of poor emotional resilience at work

## 3. Strategies for Building Emotional Resilience

- Holistic approach to building a resilient workplace
- Individual and organisational intervention for increasing emotional resilience

# Understanding Emotional Resilience

## *Part 1*



# Emotional Resilience refers to:

- The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy or significant sources of stress.
- A person's capacity to 'bounce back'.
- Coping with stressors by maintaining a level of self control.
- Not a trait that people do or don't have but thoughts, actions & behaviours that can be learnt & developed in anyone.



# Research on Emotional Resilience

- Indicates that people are less emotionally resilient nowadays.
- Suggests that being resilient is ORDINARY, not extraordinary, in that the majority of people can develop this.
- Resilient people are less likely to develop mental health and physical health problems.
- Those who can engage and impact the environment around them are seen as most resilient.
- People engaged in good social support are more resilient.



# Qualities of the Resilient Person

- Problem solving skills
- Self Worth
- Social Competence
- Optimism
- Well-developed support network
- Planning Skills
- Openness to change
- Task centred vs emotion centred
- Internal locus of control
- Purposefulness
- Sense of humour
- Looks after themselves



# Benefits of High Resilience

- Increased job satisfaction and motivation.
- Increased productivity and performance.
- Reduction in time off work and sick leave.
- Increased staff retention.
- Improved well-being and a reduction in psychological injury claims.

# Emotional Resilience in the Workplace

## *Part 2: How Resilient Are We?*



# Statistics & Prevalence: Depression

- The World Health Organisation estimates that by 2020, depression will become the second leading health burden worldwide (heart disease being the first).
- One in five people will experience mental illness.
- Onset of depression for women is 18 – 24 years and 35 – 44 years in men.
- Depression statistics reveal a rising trend.



# Cost of Depression

- It has been estimated that one person with depression will cost their organisation around \$10,000 a year.
- 62% of people with depression don't get treatment, therefore the impact on productivity and absenteeism is substantial.
- Failure to recognise common depression symptoms and not knowing how to respond are also highlighted as limitations.



# The Big Picture on Stress - SA

- Costs (2008/09)
  - Total cost of mental disorder claims = \$14 M
  - Average \$28, 747 per claim.
- Costs (2006/07)
  - Total cost of mental disorder claims = \$36.8 M
  - Average \$66, 242 per claim.
- Time off work
  - 82.3% more than 20 days
  - 51.1% more than 65 days

Adapted from WorkCover SA Statistical Review, 2008/09



# Number of Mental Disorder Claims by Industry 2008/09 - SA

Industry	Number of Mental Disorder Claims
Community services	90
Wholesale & retail trade	73
Recreational, personal & other services	44
Finance, property and business services	39
Manufacturing	31
Transport and storage	21
Construction	9
Other industries	6
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	4

Adapted from WorkCover SA Statistical Review, 2008/09



# Link to Employment

## **Most depressed professional occupations:**

1. Law
2. Patent Attorney
3. Insurance Underwriting
4. Accounting
5. IT Services
6. Architectural
7. Actuarial
8. Engineering
9. Consulting
10. Insurance Brokering

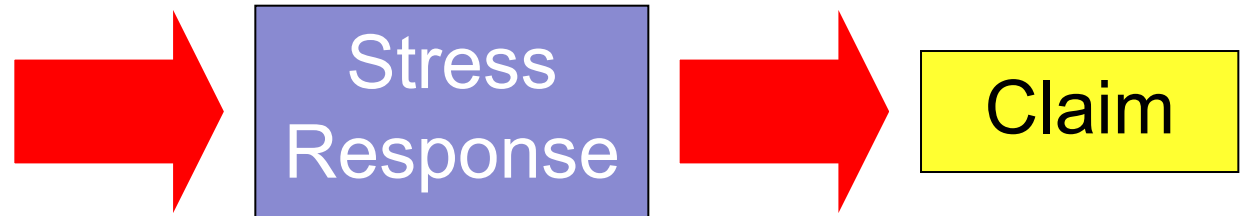
(Source: Beyond Blue 2006)



# The Impact of Operational Stressors

## Operational Stressors:

- Customer Aggression
- Work Pressure
- Organisational Change
- Conflict
- Stressful Incidents
- Workload
- Performance Management



The correlation between exposure to specific operational stressors and  
(a) individual employee stress responses and  
(b) submission of workers compensation claims  
is negligible.

Source: Dr Peter Cotton (Sept 2006)



# Key Drivers of Psychological Injury Claims

1. Individual morale
2. Supportive leadership
3. Work team climate
4. Individual psychological susceptibility

Source: Dr Peter Cotton (Sept 2006)



# Occupational Stress.... ....A Much Larger Issue

- Occupational stress and reduced emotional resilience are directly related.
- Psychological injury is only a symptom of a much larger systemic issue.
- Occupational stress is a result of broader organisational dysfunction.
- Therefore in building resilience, we need to tackle the real causes not just the symptoms.

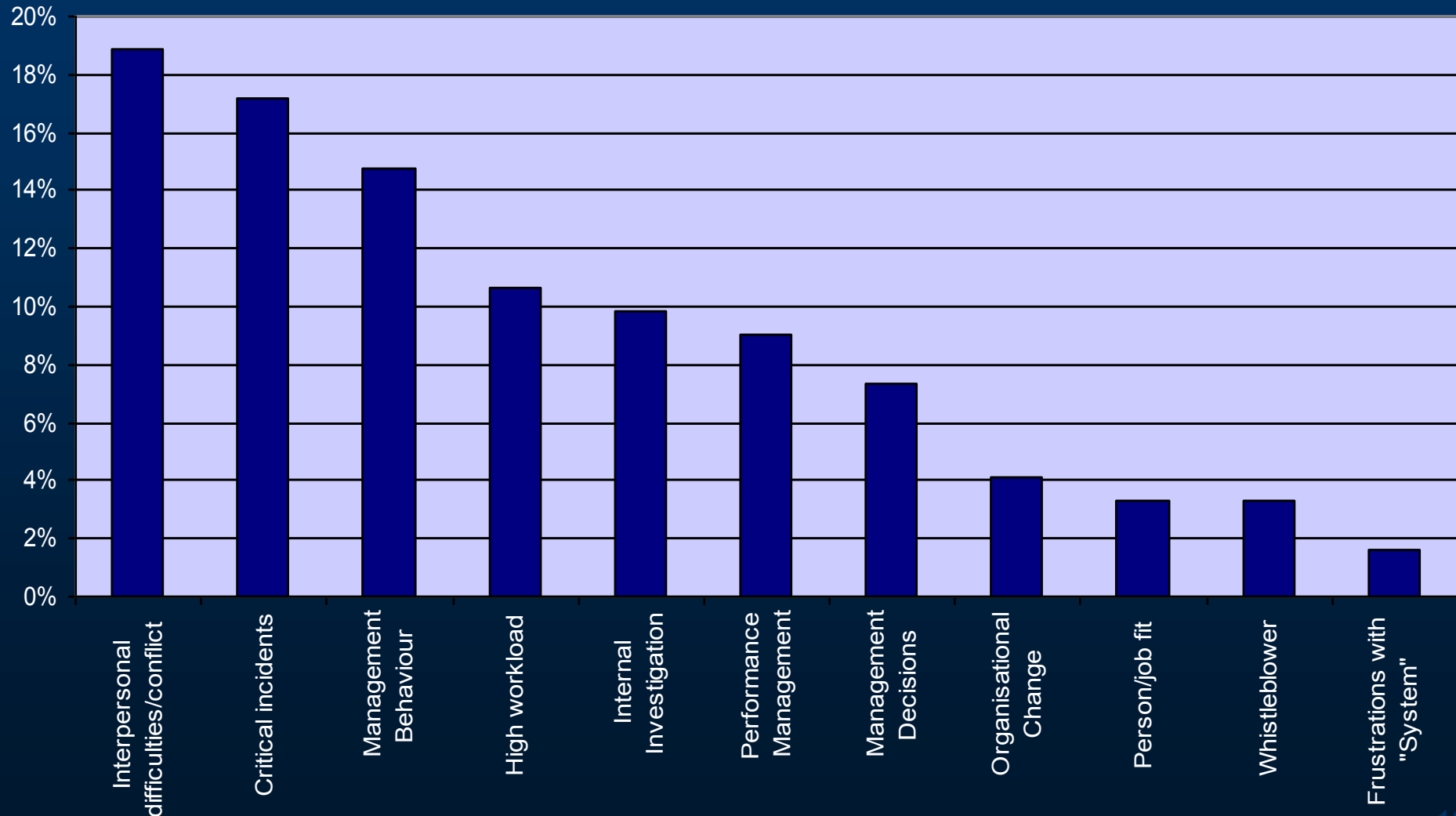
# Causes of Psychological Injury

*Latest Research*



# Work Related Factors

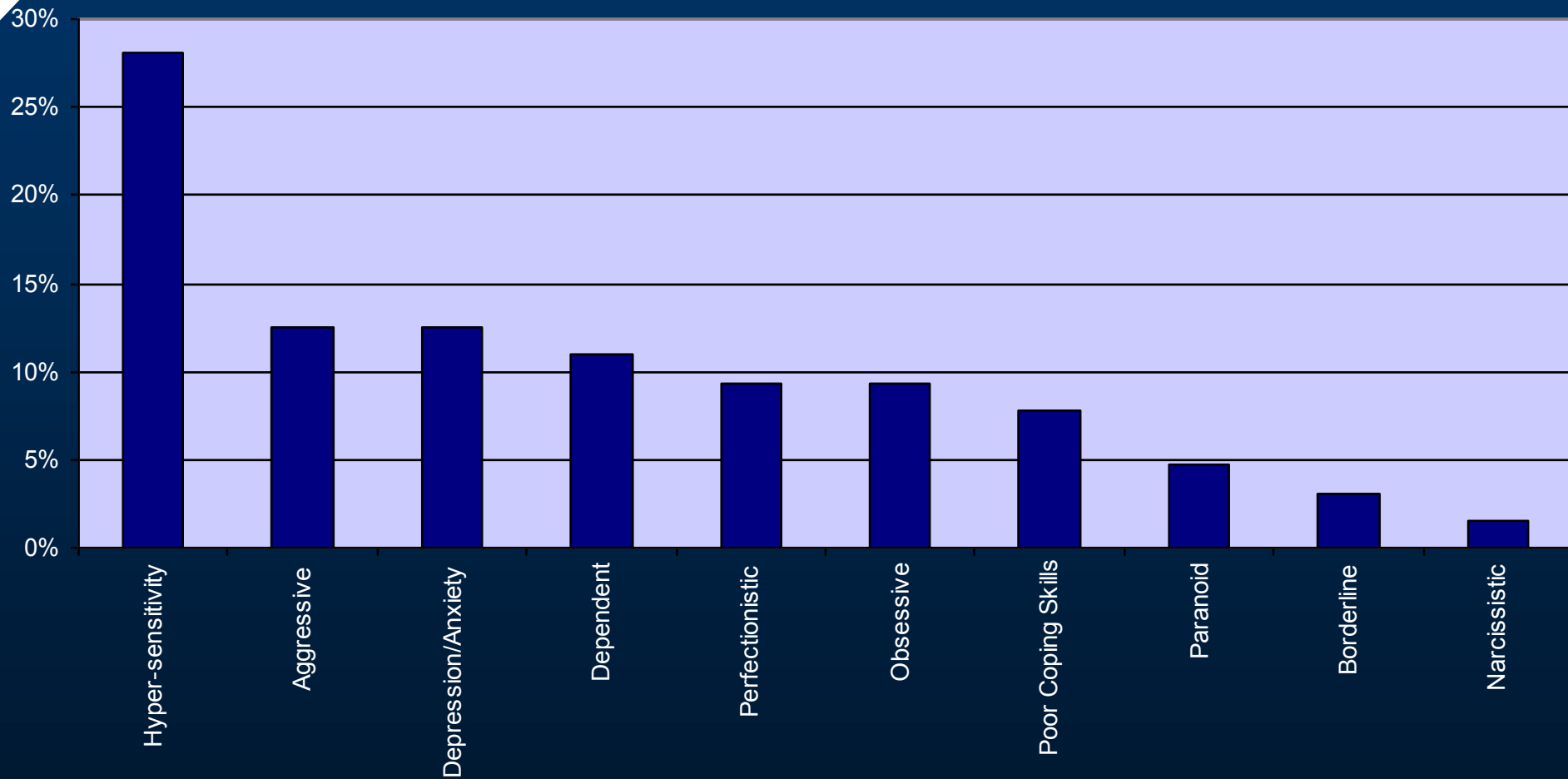
Source: Centre for Corporate Health, Analysis of Psychological Injury Claims 1999-2009





# Personality Factors

Source: Centre for Corporate Health, Analysis of Psychological Injury Claims 1999-2009





# Hypersensitivity

- Prevalent in 15-20% of the population
- Strong sense of entitlement
- Mood swings
- Correlated with creativity
- Can cost organisations \$22,000 per year

Source: Dr Peter Cotton (2011)



# Withdrawal Behaviours

- Turnover
- Discretionary absenteeism
- Lateness
- Organisational cynicism
- Psychological injury claims

Source: Dr Peter Cotton (2011)



# Counterproductive Behaviours

- **Property**
  - Theft
  - Destruction
  - Misuse of property or information
- **Work Efficiency**
  - Misuse of time and resources
  - Poor attendance
  - Presenteeism
  - Drug and alcohol use
  - Performance management
- **Interpersonal**
  - Incivility
  - Bullying and harassment
  - Conflict
  - Favouritism
  - Aggression
- **Organisation**
  - Gossip
  - Blaming behaviours
  - Grievances

Source: Dr Peter Cotton (2011)



# In Summary....

- We can look at emotional resilience trends from mental health and psychological injury research.
- Poor emotional resilience is caused by:
  - Management competency
  - Team relationships
  - Individual competency

# Strategies for Building Emotional Resilience

## *Part 3*



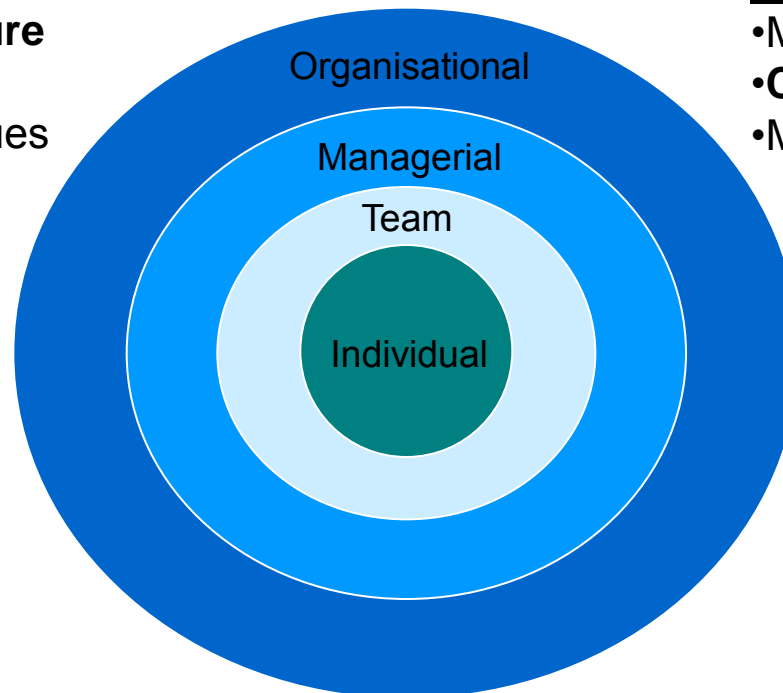
# Holistic Approach to Building Emotional Resilience

## Organisational Factors

- **Organisational Culture**
- Work Team Climate
- Policies/Systemic issues
- Recruitment and Staff Selection
- Work/Life Balance

## Managerial Factors

- Managerial Competence
- **Constructive Leadership**
- Managerial Pressures



## Individual Factors

- Individual Morale
- Individual Resilience
- Individual Skills Coaching
- Person/Job Fit
- Mentoring
- Support for Outside Factors

## Team Factors

- Workplace Relationships
- Interpersonal Conflict
- Teamwork



# Individual Intervention

- Emotional Resilience Training
  - Mindfulness based training
  - Cognitive/positive psychology
  - Practical behavioural skills to manage workplace/personal situations
- Skills Based Coaching
  - Identifying appropriate areas for 1:1 skill development
- Vocational/Career Assessments
  - Can be used for development purposes
  - Can be used for career uncertainty
- Mentoring programs
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)



# Team Intervention

- Develop stronger interpersonal relationships
  - Make time to connect with your immediate team
  - Make regular times for meetings, networking or contact
  - Observe and support each other
- Team development via skills based learning
  - Understanding individual differences
  - Improving communication, decision-making and problem-solving skills
  - Understanding and managing conflict
- Rejuvenation workshops
  - Developing team charter



# Managerial Intervention

- Management Training/Coaching
  - Developing constructive leadership styles
    - The use of 360-degree appraisals
- Skills Based Coaching
  - Managing conflict/grievances
  - Effective performance management
  - Managing mental health issues at work
  - Development of a coaching/supportive management style
  - Holding honest and authentic conversations
  - Managing change



# Organisational Intervention

- Policies and procedures that support emotional resilience
  - Performance management
  - Bullying and harassment
  - Grievance/dispute handling
- Work/life balance initiatives
  - Employee Assistance Programs
  - Fitness programs ie. team sports, gym memberships
  - Healthy eating programs
  - Health/well-being checks



# Organisational Intervention (cont.)

- Recruitment and Staff selection
  - The use of psychological assessments
  - Behavioural interviewing
  - Trial /contract period
- Effective Intervention Initiatives:
  - Mediation/dispute resolution
  - Psychological assessments
- Organisational Assessments:
  - Culture and climate surveys
  - Stress risk assessments



# In Summary

- Emotional resilience is a significant issue affecting individual and organisational functioning in today's fast-paced, complex work environments.
- We need a holistic approach to building emotional resilience.
- Leadership and culture are key to building emotional resilience at work.

Thank You

**For Further Information, please contact:**

**Rachel Clements:** Ph. 02 8243 1500 [rclements@cfch.com.au](mailto:rclements@cfch.com.au)