



Risk & Insurance | Employee Benefits | Retirement & Private Wealth

Law 27 in Action

What employers are getting right,
6 months in



Lisa DiDomizio

Senior Consultant,
Health & Performance
HUB International



Marie-Claude Ivens

Senior Consultant,
Health & Performance
HUB International

Psychological Health & Safety (PHS) in Canada

What is Psychological Health & Safety?

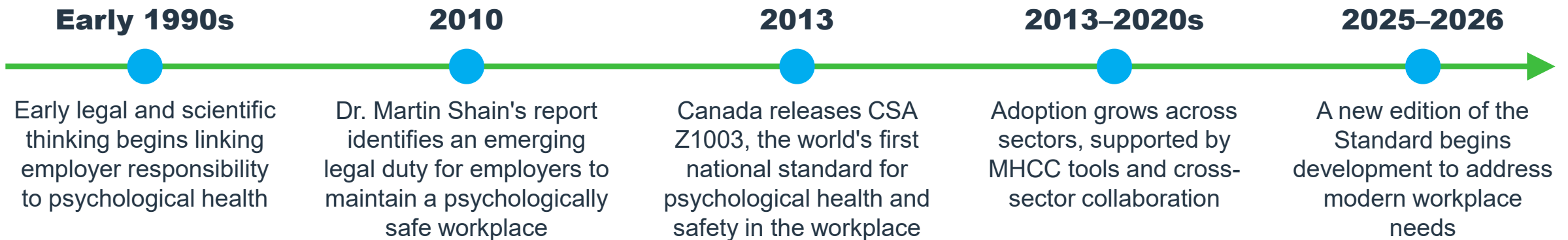
Psychological health & safety pertains to the risk (or absence of risk) of injury to an employee's psychological well-being. Ensuring psychological safety involves efforts to avert injury or danger to individual employee psychological health.

Psychosocial risk factors are factors within the workplace environment that have the potential to impact the psychological (mental) health and safety of one or more employees in an organization.

This means workplaces take precautions to protect the psychological and emotional health of individuals, similar to how occupational health and safety precautions safeguard the physical health of employees.

Evolution in Canada

Legal, scientific, and policy milestones that shaped today's approach



Psychological risk in the workplace

People are the heart and soul of our organizations and communities

When organizations work to *prevent psychological harm* and *promote overall well-being*, they build a strong and positive environment that prioritizes the mental health of their employees

Psychosocial risks that impact **Psychological health and safety** in the workplace:

- Organizational Culture
- Psychological & Social Support
- Clear Leadership & Expectations
- Civility & Respect
- Psychological Competence & Requirements
- Growth & Development
- Recognition & Reward
- Involvement & Influence
- Workload Management
- Engagement
- Balance
- Psychological Protection
- Protection of Physical Safety
- Inclusion*

* Not currently included in the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace framework

What Employees and Organizations Gain:

Employees

- 1 Better Mental Health**
Improved well-being vs. unsafe environments
- 2 Stronger Relationships**
Enhanced team collaboration
- 3 Work-Life Balance**
Flexible arrangements & understanding
- 4 Higher Engagement**
Increased motivation & fulfillment
- 5 Reduced Burnout**
Manageable workloads & clarity

Organizations

- 1 Increased Productivity**
Fewer absences, higher engagement
- 2 Better Retention**
Reduced turnover & recruitment costs
- 3 Attract Top Talent**
Known for mental health support
- 4 Positive Reputation**
Employee, client & stakeholder loyalty
- 5 Financial Performance**
Lower disability claims & legal risks

The Risk of Inaction

Consequences of Delaying Psychological Health & Safety Investment

\$16.6B

**Annual
Productivity
Loss**

from mental health-related
absences across Canadian
workplaces

\$500K

**Canadians
Absent Weekly**

due to mental illness
equivalent to losing a mid-
sized city from the workforce
every week

4x

**Increase Risk of
Physical Injury**

Workers exposed to
psychosocial risk are up
4 times more likely to develop
an MSK related injury and/or
workplace accident*

* INSPQ (2022)

70% of Canadian workers report their workplace impacts their mental health

Psychological Health and Safety Across Canada

Federal
Part III of the
Canadian Labor
Code

Alberta

OHS Act– The
Occupational Health
and Safety Act

Manitoba

Bill 29 – Workplace
Safety and Health
Amendment Act

Prince Edward Island

Occupational Health
and Safety Act

Québec

Projet de loi 59
Loi 27

British Columbia

WCA – Workers
Compensation Act

Saskatchewan

Bill 91 – The
Saskatchewan
Employment Act

Ontario

Occupational Health &
Safety Act

Nova Scotia

Stronger Workplaces
for Nova Scotia Act

WHAT TO AVOID – Common Pitfalls



Don't just tick a box,
create value

Four missteps that undermine even well-intentioned PH&S strategies.

1

Focusing on Risks That Do Not Reflect Your Workplace

Using generic psychosocial risk frameworks without tailoring them leads to investment in the wrong priorities.

2

Leaving Workers Out of the Conversation

A strategy designed without worker input misses the lived experience that matters most. Participation is not only a legal expectation under Law 27, but also the single best source of information.

3

Missing Critical Context by Relying on Standard Risk Assessments

Pre-completed assessments miss the nuances of your culture, structure, and emerging stressors.

4

Exposing the Organization to Critical Liability Risks

Poorly documented processes, inconsistent application of policies, and weak follow-through on incidents create legal and CNESST exposure. Governance gaps become liability fast.

Quebec's Law 27

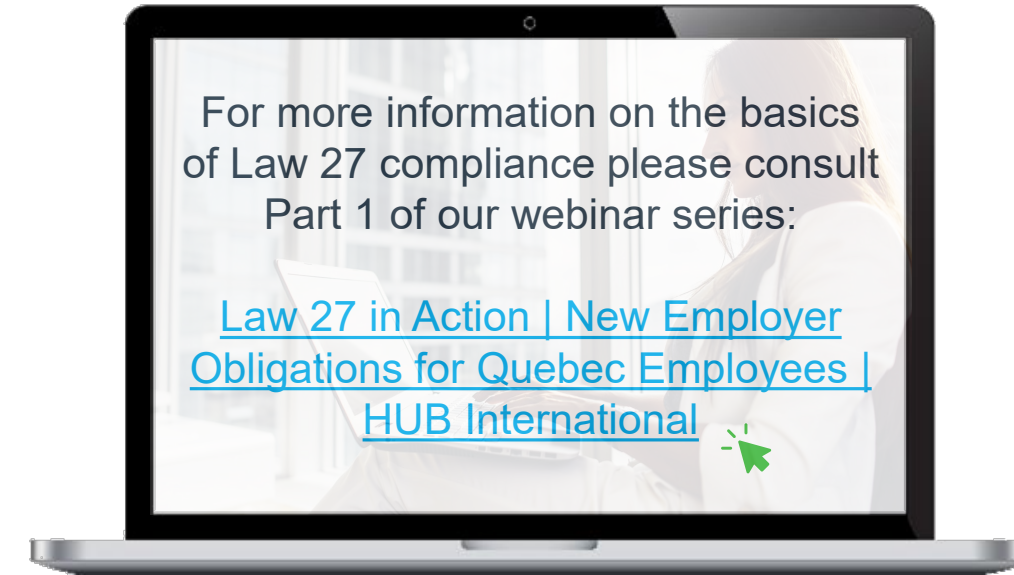
Let's Review



Recap of law 27

Act modernizing the occupational health and safety regime in Quebec

- **Effective date:** October 6, 2025
 - **Objective:** Prevent psychosocial risks in the workplace
 - **Employer obligations:**
 - Create methods of worker health and safety representation
 - Identify chemical, biological, physical, ergonomic, security and **psychosocial risks*** in the workplace
 - Partner with workers to identify methods of preventing and controlling identified risks
 - Implement and continuously improve prevention plan
- (Simplified compliance process for companies with **fewer than 20 employees living in Quebec**)



Non-compliance can incur fines up to **\$300K** from CNEST

Priority Actions for Compliance

Actions Employers with Quebec Employees Must Take Now

1

Establish Employee Representation

20+ employees: Form Health & Safety Committee and Nominate Representative
Fewer than 20: Appoint Health & Safety Liaison Officer

2

Complete Required Training

CNESST-approved training for H&S Liaison Officer or Committee members
Manager & staff training on psychosocial risk detection and management

3

Identify & Assess Psychosocial Risks

Conduct a risk assessment using frameworks such as INSPQ or CNESST
Document findings and prioritize areas for action

4

Develop Written Plan

20+ employees: Prevention Program including psychosocial risks
Fewer than 20: Action Plan with objectives and timelines

5

Establish Confidential Reporting Mechanisms & Document Everything

5

WINNING STRATEGIES

For establishing a psychological health and safety strategy that complies with Quebec's Law 27

01

Executive Support

Earn the trust of your employees. Trust is the foundation of PHS and the avenue to evolve your strategy

Leadership sets the ceiling for psychological safety. Without visible, sustained executive support, every downstream effort is undermined.

Key Practices



Demonstrate Corporate Commitment

Make leadership backing visible and sustained. Allocate the budget, time, and attention that signal psychological health is a strategic priority, not a side initiative.



Offer Consistent Messages and Behaviours

Align leadership words and actions across every level of the organization. Mixed signals erode trust faster than silence and stall cultural change.

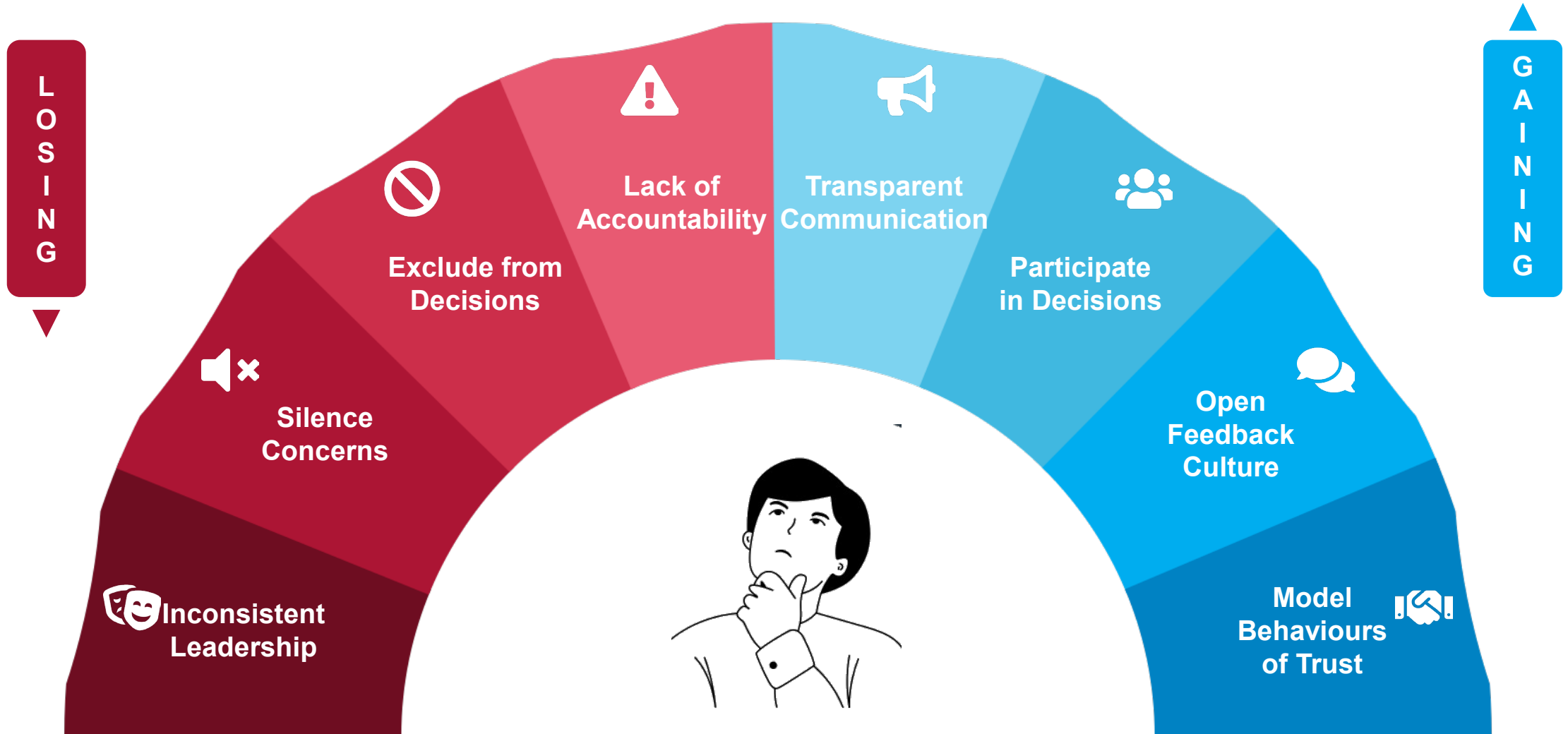


Demonstrate Corporate Commitment

Surface internal advocates who model the strategy in practice and give them a platform to reinforce it across functions.

Building & Eroding Employee Trust

Through Psychological Health & Safety Practices



02

Strategic Prevention Structures

Build the Foundation

Law 27 formalizes the role of prevention structures. How you staff and position them determines whether psychosocial risks are addressed systematically or incidentally.

Key Practices

➤ **Dedicate Strategic Representation on the H&S Committee**

Reserve seats on your health and safety committee for psychological H&S expertise and lived experience, not only physical safety representation.

➤ **Use Risk Assessments to Inform Representation**

Identify high risk populations through formal psychosocial risk assessment and ensure those groups are represented at the table.

➤ **Assess Your Health Services and Their Impact**

Evaluate the reach, uptake, and outcomes of existing services, and their fit within your broader organizational PHS strategy.

03

Worker Participation

Listen to Your Workers

Psychosocial risk cannot be assessed from the top down. Authentic worker participation is both a legal expectation and the single best signal of emerging issues.

Key Practices



Assess Worker Trust

Take an honest pulse on the organization's trust status with workers. It is essential to understand the current state without idealizing to create an impactful participation pathway.



Invite Open Communication and Feedback

Create multiple, safe channels for workers to share concerns and observations while respecting the privacy needs tied to psychological health information.



Adapt Your Methods to Staff Confidence

Start where your workforce is. Calibrate participation mechanisms to current levels of trust and evolve them progressively as confidence builds. Consider confidential methods such as online surveys if trust is eroded. Progress towards working groups and open-door policies.

GATHERING FEEDBACK – A Trust Continuum

Match feedback channels to your organization's current level of trust and evolve as trust grows.

LESS TRUST

MORE TRUST



Anonymous Complaints

External hotline with full identity protection. Essential when fear of retaliation is high.



Anonymous Surveys

Digital surveys with aggregated results. Reveal broad themes without exposing individuals.



Confidential Focus Groups

Small group discussions with external facilitators. Identities stay within the group.



Committee and Working Groups

Worker representatives on formal H&S committees and cross-functional working groups.



Open Door and Town Halls

Direct access to managers and executives. Dialogue happens in person and on the record.

Start where your workers are. Earn the right to the next conversation.

04

Roles and Responsibilities

Clarify the Contribution

Every level of the organization has a distinct role to play. Making those roles explicit, and supporting the people who hold them, determines how the strategy shows up day to day.

Key Practices



Educate Workers on Their Role

Help every worker understand how they can contribute to a psychologically safe environment and the opportunities available to involve themselves further.



Create Exposure for Worker Representatives

Offer visibility and development opportunities through the health and safety committee and other internal forums so representatives can grow into the role.



Support Managers' Specific Needs

Equip managers with proper communication and employee support tools, while giving them resources to manage their own stress and workload pressures.

ROLES IN PREVENTION – A Shared Ecosystem

Every level of the organization plays a distinct role in preventing psychosocial risk.



05

Ongoing Performance Assessment

Measure What Matters

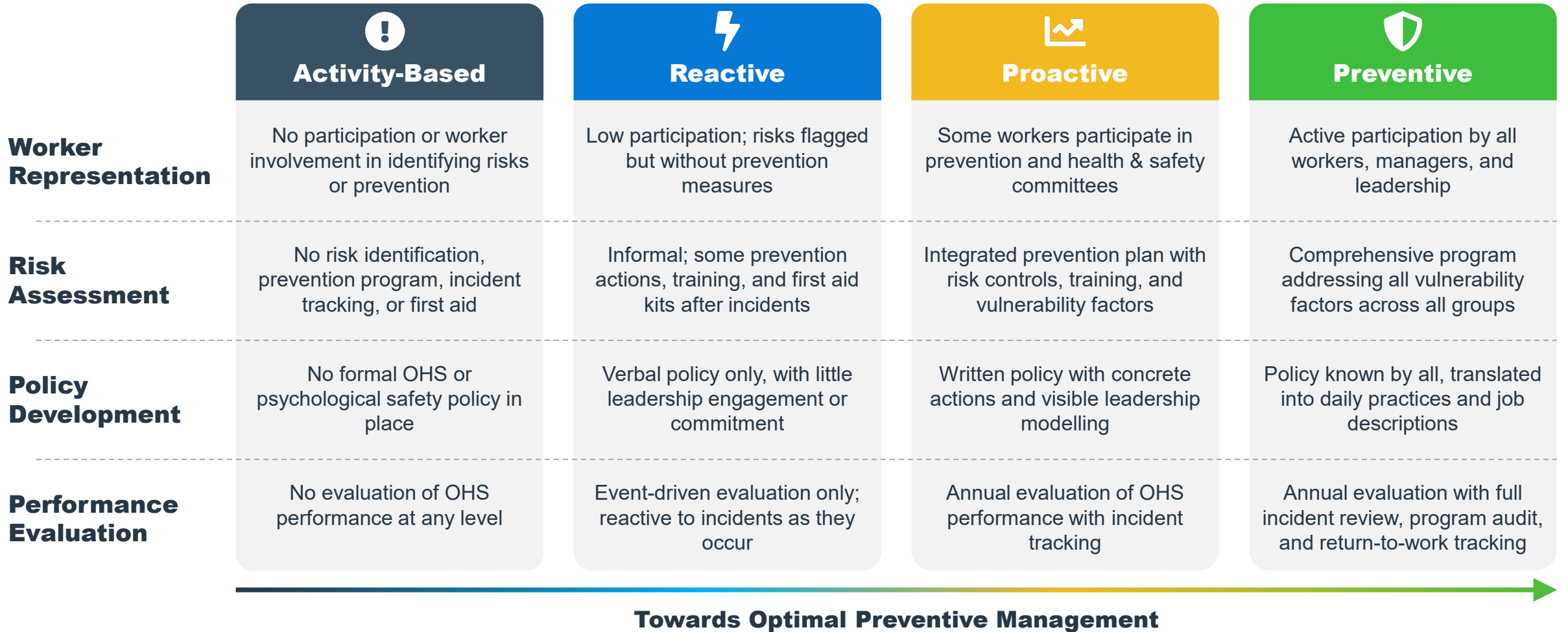
A PH&S strategy without measurement is a policy statement. Build the feedback loops that show where the strategy is working and where it needs adjustment.

Key Practices

- **Use a Structured Risk Assessment**
Apply a repeatable framework to track psychosocial risk changes over time so results can be compared, not just reported.
- **Create Clear Incident Tracking and Reporting**
Establish formal mechanisms to surface, log, and respond to incidents, with defined thresholds for escalation.
- **Use Employee Representatives to Monitor Implementation**
Have representatives track how policies are applied in practice and flag new or emerging concerns before they become systemic.
- **Select Clear Business Targets**
Tie the strategy to tangible indicators: voluntary turnover and retention, claims experience, engagement and psychosocial survey results.

PH&S Maturity Framework

Winning Conditions for Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) and Psychological Safety



CNESST supports (French)

Conseillers et conseillères en
prévention – Volet SST



conseiller.prevention@cnesst.gouv.qc.ca

Conseillers et conseillères en
santé psychologique au travail



conseiller.santepsy@cnesst.gouv.qc.ca

Conseillers en prévention auprès
des travailleurs étrangers
temporaires (TET)



escouade.prevention.tet@cnesst.gouv.qc.ca

Free training



CNESST Labor standards training (9 hours)

[Université TÉLUQ - Formation-Continue](#)

CNESST Webinar series on labor standards

[Les webinaires de la CNESST | Les normes du travail](#)

Free CNESST Posters

VIOLENCE

La violence en milieu de travail peut prendre différentes formes. Il est important de ne pas les banaliser et de les dénoncer.

- Frapper un mur ou un objet
- Faire des avances sexuelles non désirées
- Bousculer une personne
- Crier
- Insulter
- Faire des menaces
- Répandre des rumeurs
- Humilier

Employeurs, travailleuses et travailleurs, soyez des agents de changement. Informez-vous!

Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
cnessst.gouv.qc.ca



↓ Télécharger le fichier (PDF | 5.17 Mo)

[Affiche - Violence | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST](#)

HARCÈLEMENT

Différents comportements pouvant mener au harcèlement ne doivent pas être tolérés dans les milieux de travail :

- Ignorer un collègue
- Ridiculiser un employé devant tout le monde
- Empêcher quelqu'un de parler
- Faire des commentaires déplacés ou à connotation sexuelle à un collègue
- Rire d'un collègue

Qu'il s'agisse de votre collègue, de votre gestionnaire ou de votre employé, chacun a droit au même respect.

Employeurs, travailleuses et travailleurs, soyez des agents de changement. Informez-vous!

Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
cnessst.gouv.qc.ca



↓ Télécharger le fichier (PDF | 5.17 Mo)

[Affiche - Harcèlement | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST](#)

ÉVÉNEMENT POTENTIELLEMENT TRAUMATIQUE

Différentes situations peuvent constituer un événement de ce type, comme :

- Menace de mort
- Blessure grave
- Violence sexuelle
- Décès

Vous pouvez en avoir été témoin directement ou indirectement. Des mesures de prévention doivent être prises pour diminuer ses impacts sur la santé.

Employeurs, travailleuses et travailleurs, soyez des agents de changement. Informez-vous!

Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
cnessst.gouv.qc.ca



↓ Télécharger le fichier (PDF | 5.17 Mo)

[Affiche - Événement potentiellement traumatique | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST](#)

VIOLENCE CONJUGALE

La violence conjugale peut se manifester jusque dans le milieu de travail.

- La prévention
- Peut faire
- toute la différence

Que ce soit votre collègue, votre employé ou votre gestionnaire qui en est victime, vous avez un rôle à jouer.

Employeurs, travailleuses et travailleurs, soyez des agents de changement. Informez-vous!

Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
cnessst.gouv.qc.ca



↓ Télécharger le fichier (PDF | 5.17 Mo)

[Affiche - Violence conjugale | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST](#)

Where Do You Go From Here?



Next Steps

If you are ready to take your psychological health & safety strategy to the next level, you can take the next steps on your own by reviewing the additional resources provided or reach out to the HUB for support. We will be happy to partner with you to establish an impactful plan that will grow with your organization.



- Quebec (provincial) vs National scope
- Is employee consultation required in the process?
- What risks will you focus on addressing?

-
- **Conduct a Gap Analysis** – Compare current practices against legal and best-practice standards
 - **Review Available Data** – Analyze metrics like absenteeism, turnover, and engagement surveys

-
- **Develop Plans to Address Gaps** – targeted solutions based on your gap analysis
 - **Create Clear Policies** comply with the law as well as support a psychologically safe workplace
 - Build a Long-Term Review Process

Why Choose a Broader Approach?

Going Beyond Law 27 Compliance: A broader approach to psychological health and safety delivers measurable ROI: reduced turnover, lower disability claims, increased productivity, and lasting cultural change.

Law 27 Compliance Only

- Quebec employees only - leaves rest of workforce unprotected
- Minimum legal requirement - compliance based
- Limited scope - addresses mandated factors
- Compliance-driven - 'checking the box' mentality
- Missed opportunity - no competitive advantage
- Higher long-term costs - piecemeal solutions

Organization-Wide Approach

- Cost-effective - unified strategy, scalable
- Strategic investment - proactive culture of psychological safety
- Comprehensive framework - tailored to the needs of the organization
- Cultural transformation - embedded in leadership
- Competitive advantage - employer of choice
- All employees protected - consistent standards across Canada

THE JOURNEY – An Ongoing Process

Start with the basics. Evolve as you go.

Psychological health and safety is not a checkbox. It is a commitment that matures alongside your organization and the trust you build with your workers.



Stay Committed

Keep psychological health on the agenda long past the initial rollout. Priority that persists is what turns policy into culture.



Be Genuine

Do not promise more than you can deliver. Honest limits build more trust than ambitious commitments workers cannot see.



Partner With Employees

Co-create the strategy with workers over time. Their experience is the best signal of what is working and what needs to evolve.

Progress over perfection

Thank you



References

- **CNESST Maturity framework (FR only):**
Outil de diagnostic de la prise en charge de la santé et la sécurité du travail pour les établissements
- **CNESST Training (FR only):**
Committee member: Formation de membre d'un comité de santé et de sécurité en établissement | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST
- **Health and safety representative:**
Formation de représentant en santé et en sécurité en établissement | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST
- **Liaison agent:**
Formation pour les agents de liaison en santé et en sécurité | Commission des normes de l'équité de la santé et de la sécurité du travail - CNESST