

# Strengthening links between health and performance

**Presentation by Graham Lowe, PhD**

**President, The Graham Lowe Group Inc.**

**“Healthy workers = productive workers” session**

**CPBI Forum 2008, Toronto, 13 May 2008**

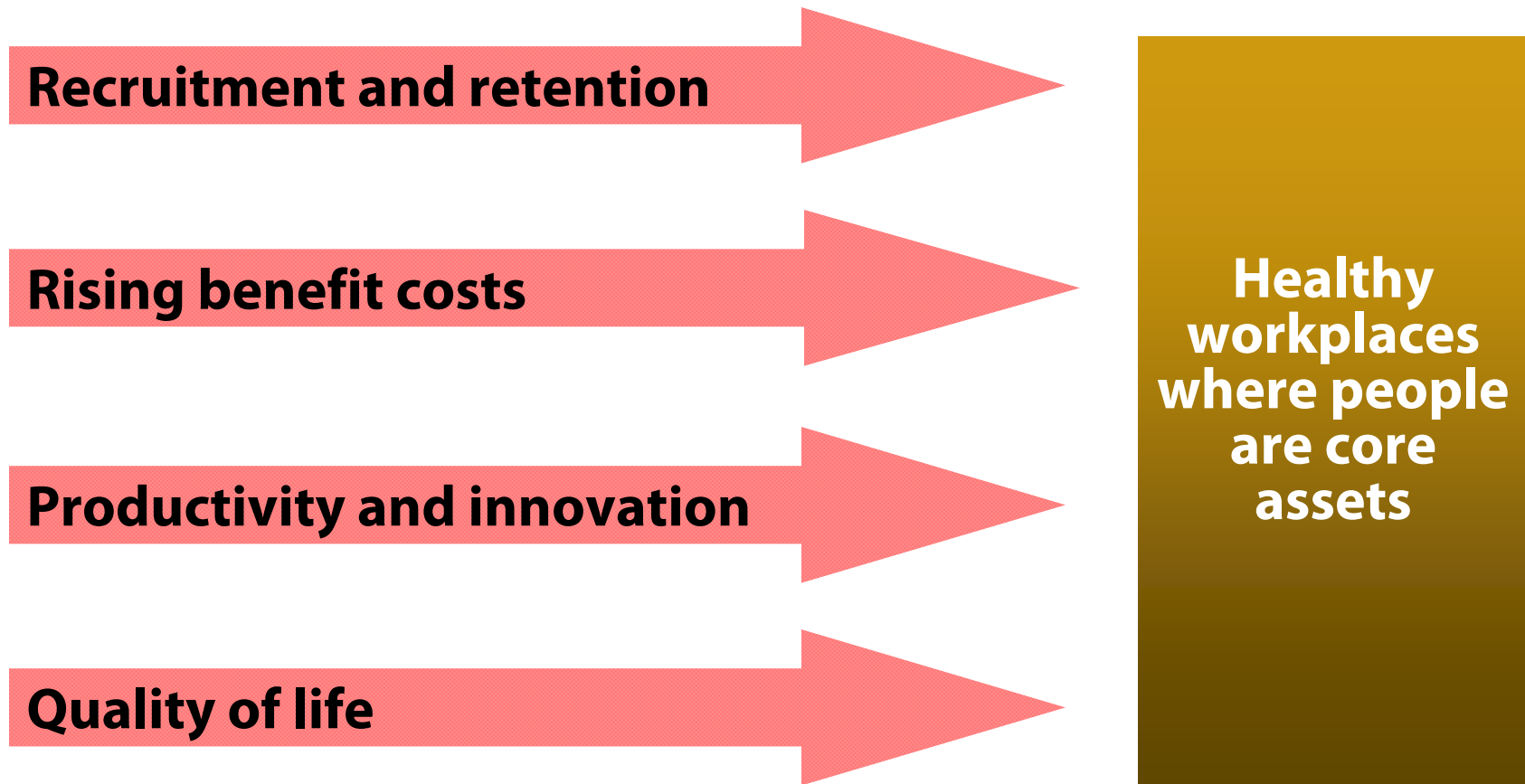


CANADIAN PENSION & BENEFITS INSTITUTE  
INSTITUT CANADIEN DE LA RETRAITE ET DES AVANTAGES SOCIAUX



**F  RUM**

# Pressures to create healthier workplaces



# What Canadians want in a job

## Most important job characteristics, ranked:

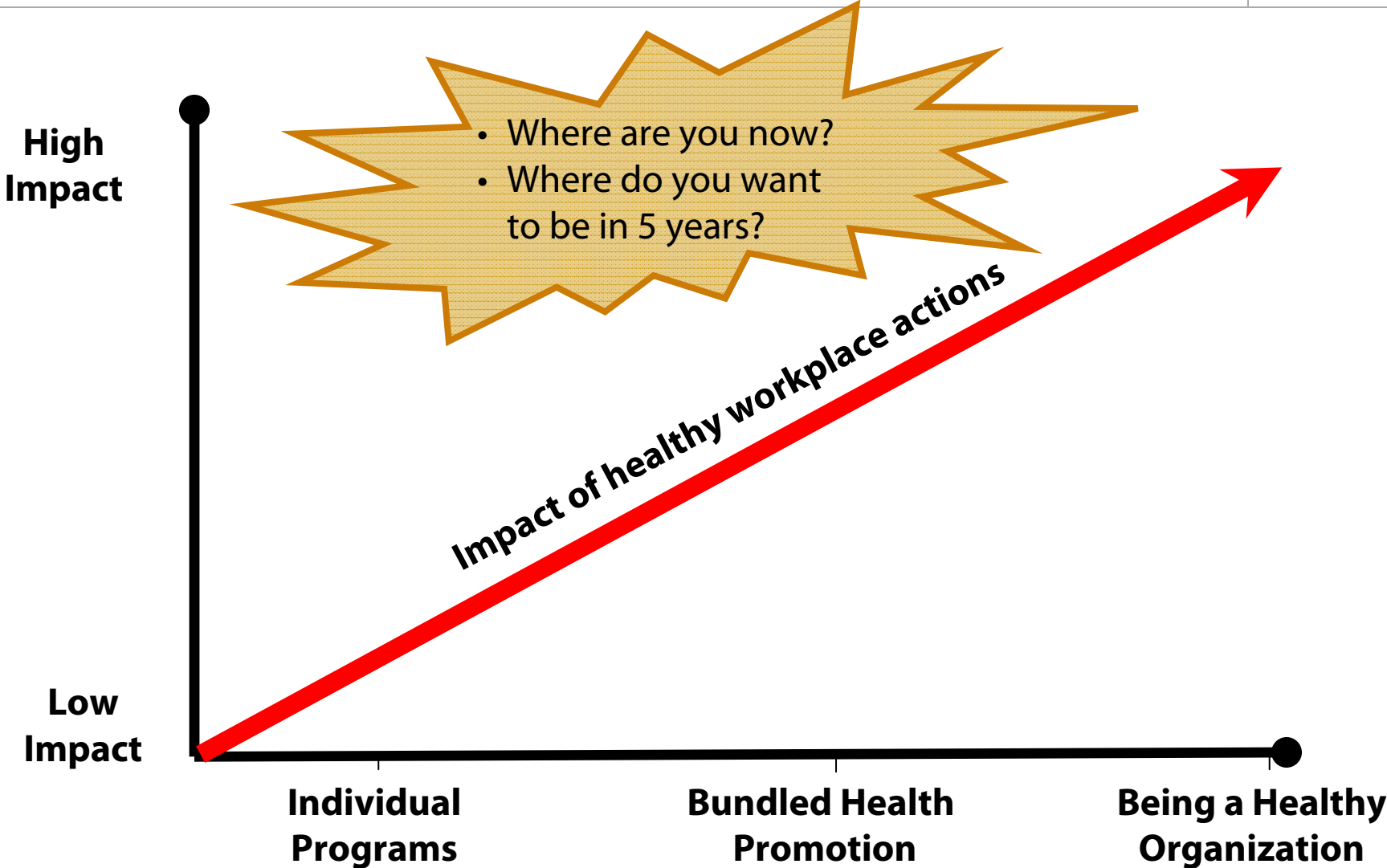
1. Respectful treatment
2. Healthy and safe work environment
3. Trustworthy senior management
4. Work-life balance
5. Sense of pride and accomplishment
6. Training to do job effectively

Source: G. Lowe, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Job Quality: Achieving What Canadians Want*. Canadian Policy Research Networks, September 2007. [www.grahamlowe.ca](http://www.grahamlowe.ca)

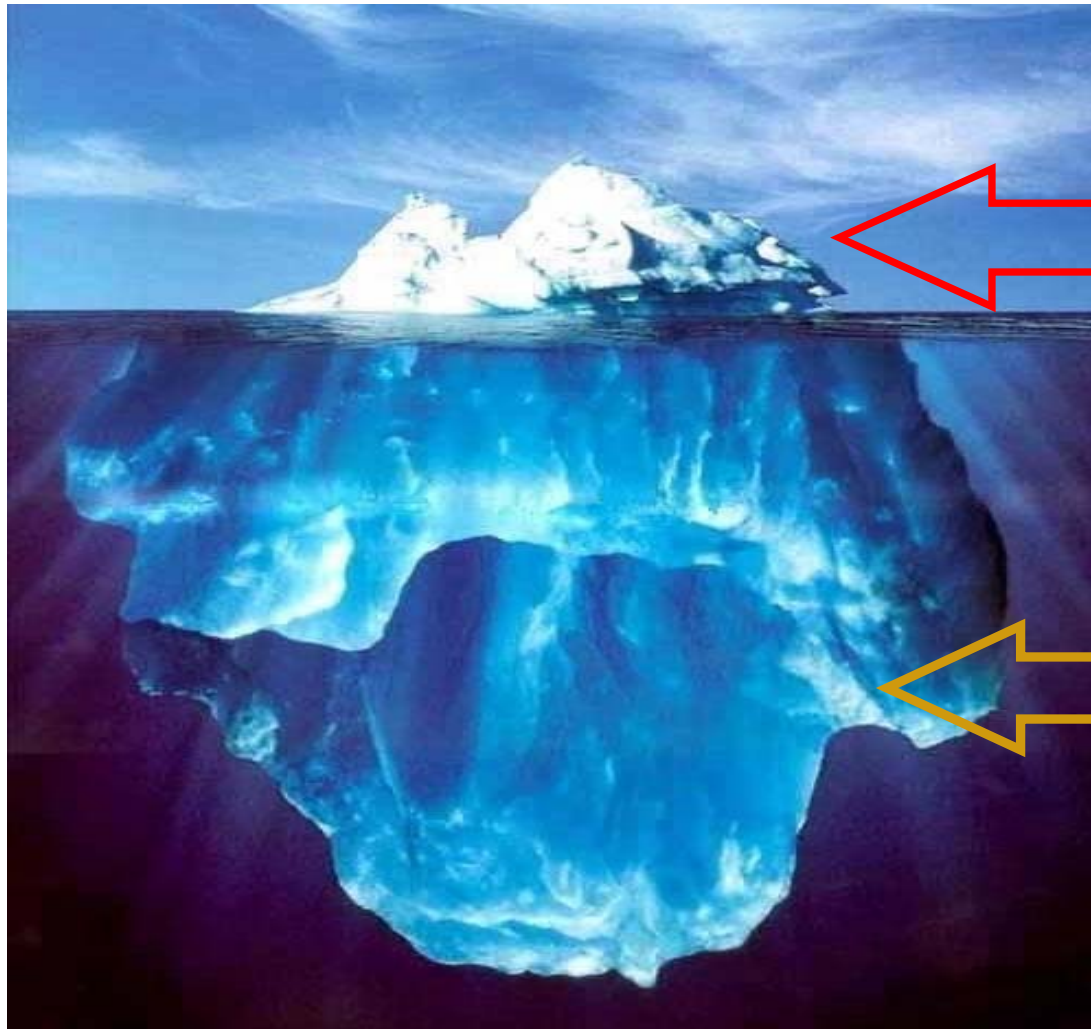
# Health and productivity research

1. Comprehensive work-site health promotion and disease management programs targeted at high-risk groups have clinical and cost pay-offs.
2. Comprehensive interventions reduce health benefit costs and absenteeism.
3. Healthy employees in healthy work environments can improve organizational performance.
4. Health and productivity “drivers” are found in organizational cultures, systems, and processes.

# Strategic impact of health and wellness



# You need to get at root causes



Injury, absenteeism,  
disability, turnover,  
benefit costs, employee  
disengagement

**WORK  
ENVIRONMENT**

# Human capital risks and costs

## RISKS

- Stress
- Work-life imbalance
- Low morale
- Low commitment
- Dissatisfaction
- Health problems



## COSTS

- ✓ Turnover
- ✓ Health benefits
- ✓ Absenteeism
- ✓ Presenteeism
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Learning and skills

## What are the costs of inaction?

# Stress, health, and performance

## A national survey of Canadian workers found that:

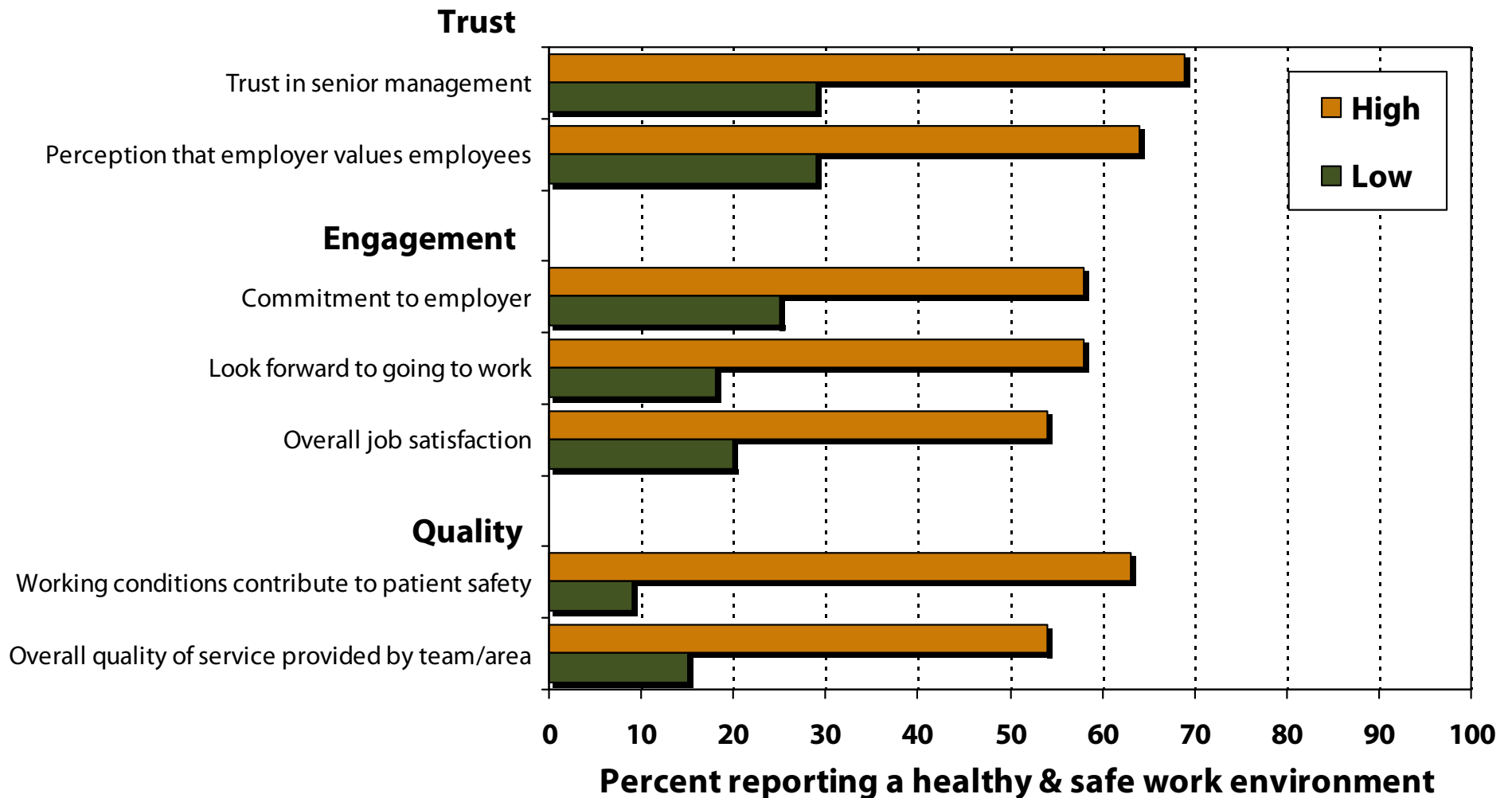
38% are always or very often under stress at work.  
This had significant consequences for...

- ✓ mental and physical health
- ✓ job satisfaction and engagement
- ✓ job performance
- ✓ quitting and retirement

Source: *Rethinking Work*. Graham Lowe Group – EKOS Research Associates national survey, fall 2004 (n=2002).



# Relationship between a healthy and safe work environment and levels of trust, engagement, and quality service



This graph reports the percentage of respondents with both healthy and safe workplaces in high and low categories on key outcome measures. All relationships between the healthy and safe measures and outcome measures are statistically significant ( $p = .000$ , Chi-square test).

# Unhealthy working conditions

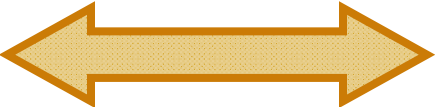
## 2005 National Survey of the Work and Health of Nurses:

- Factors affecting the health, job satisfaction, and retention of nurses :
  - ✓ Job strain, supervisory support, respect, job autonomy

## 2004 National Physician Survey:

- Physician supply and health care access are affected by working conditions:
  - ✓ Hours, workload, work-life imbalance, stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction

# Reducing work stress

**Employee control**  **Job demands**



# Management standards for work stress

**The Health and Safety Executive (UK) takes a preventative approach to reducing stress risks. Standards guide risk assessment and define the organization's future state.**

- **Demands** – workload, work patterns, and the work environment.
- **Control** – how much say employees have in the way they do their work.
- **Support** – support and resources provided by the organization, line management, and colleagues.
- **Relationships** – promoting positive work behaviour to avoid conflict, and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- **Role** – employees understand their role, and the organization ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- **Change** – how organizational change is managed and communicated.

Source: Health and Safety Executive, UK ([www.hse.gov.uk/stress/research.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/research.htm))

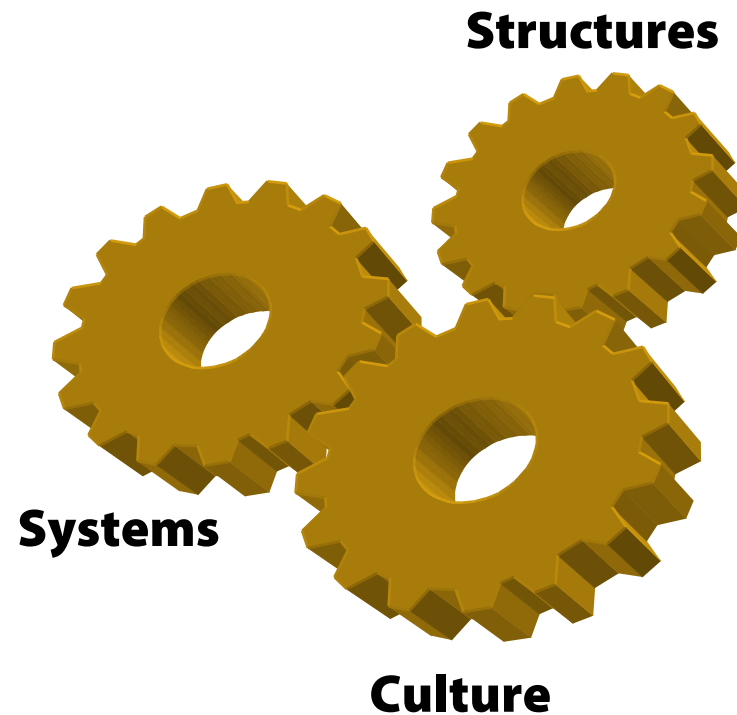
# What supports high performance?

“High performance organizations tap the ideas, skill, and effort of all their people.”

*Jeffrey Pfeffer, Stanford University*

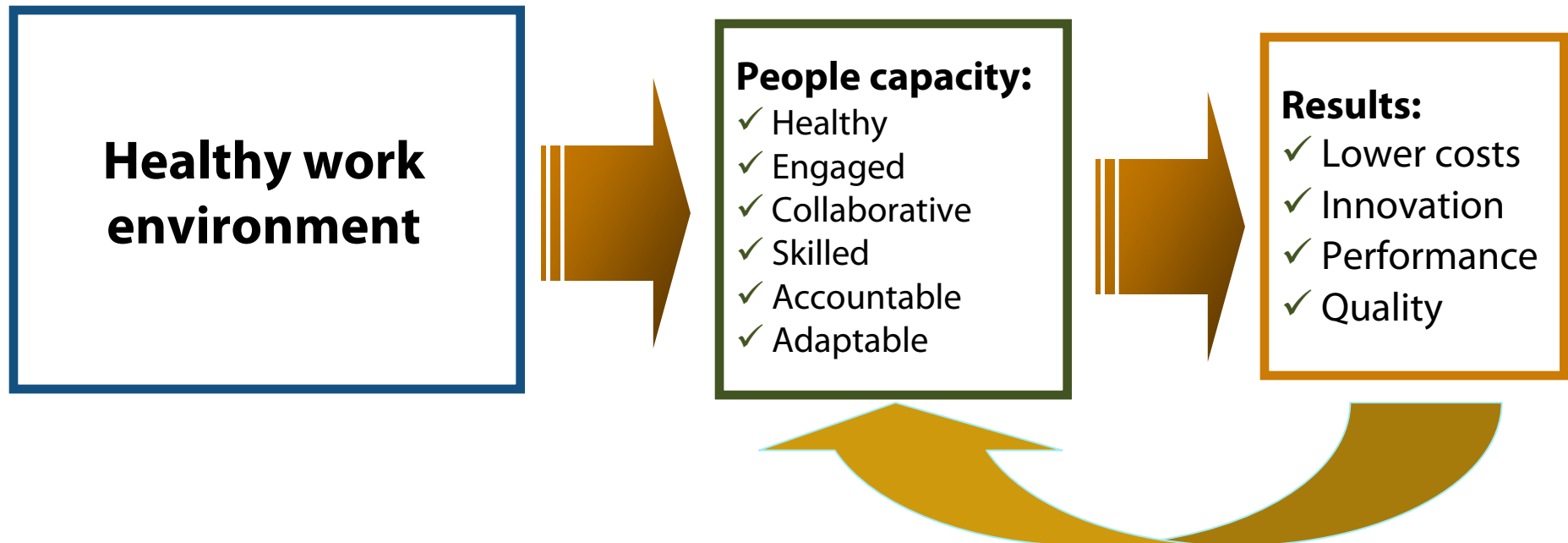
## Healthy work environment drivers

- Strong people values
- Challenging job
- Control over workload
- Trust, respect, and fairness
- Adequate job resources
- Decision input
- Supportive supervision
- Growth and development
- Open communication
- Recognition and rewards



# The logic of a healthy organization

Using health promotion thinking, you can strategically link healthy work environments, people capacity, and results:



# Culture as a strategic advantage



## Comparative Trust Index© Benchmarks

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Canada</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>Europe</b>
Psychologically and emotionally healthy workplace	85%	86%	86%
Work-life balance is encouraged	84%	84%	81%
Employees look forward to coming to work	86%	84%	87%

Source: "Top 10" organizations on "best companies" or "best workplaces" lists published by Great Place to Work Institute® and its media partners in 2005 or 2006.

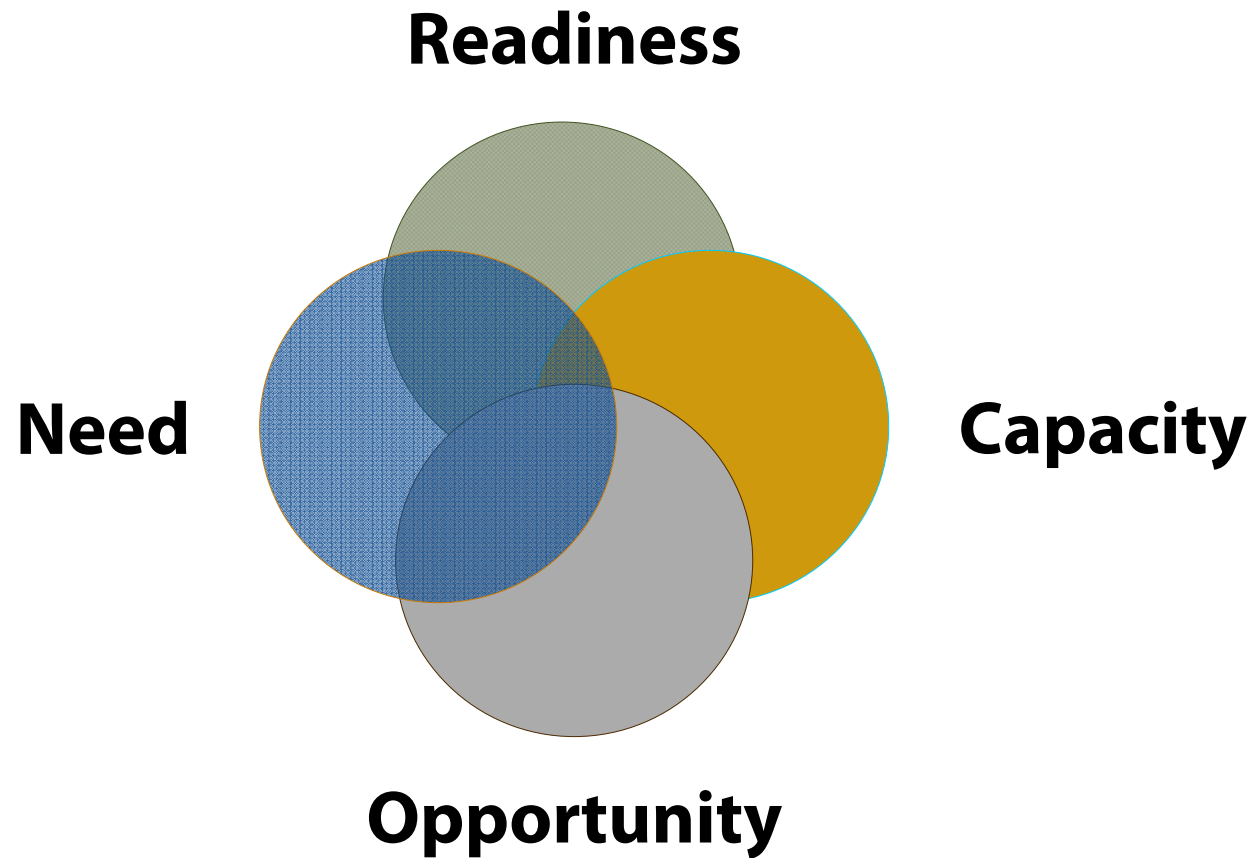


# The “best workplaces” have...



- Strong commitment from CEO and senior management.
- A genuine belief that people are indispensable to the success of the business.
- Active communication forums between employees and management.
- Perception of a special and unique culture.

# Positioning change in your context



# Healthy change process

- Model the goals
- Vision-driven
- Values-based
- Continuous learning
- Capacity building

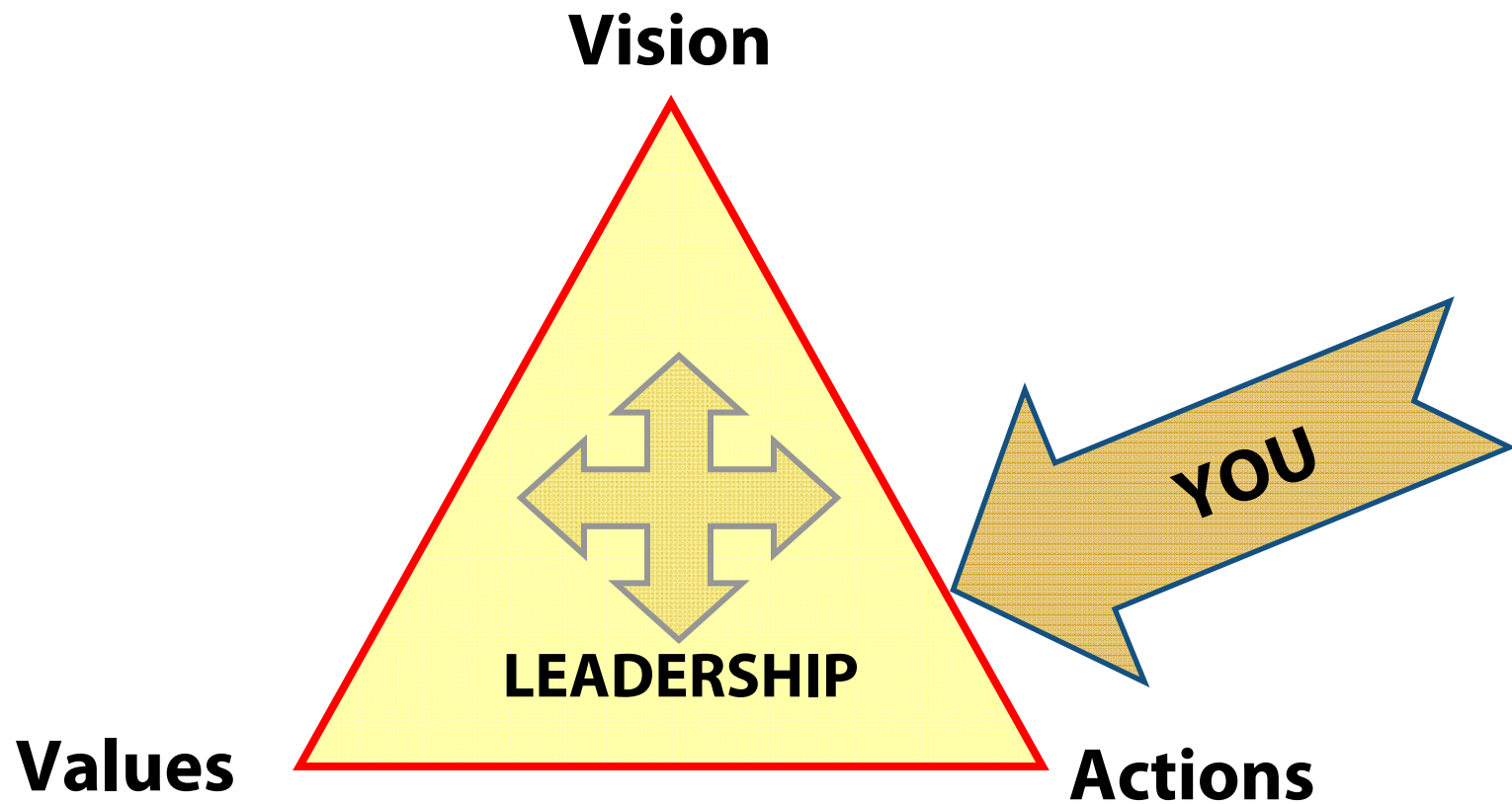


**Aligned to  
strategy**



**This  
becomes  
how you  
operate**

# Progress is a shared responsibility



# How you can take action

1. Champion healthy workplaces.
2. Identify improvement opportunities.
3. Focus on drivers.
4. Strengthen culture.
5. Link to strategic goals.
6. Use your own evidence.
7. Communicate and educate.

## **For more information and resources:**

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