
The WellBeing and Performance Group
The role of leaders in preventing stress in the workplace
Making the workplace a fabulous place to work
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Derek Mowbray

PhD (in the psychology of leaders and leadership)
FBPsS (Fellow of the British Psychological Society)
FIHSCM (Fellow of the Institute of Health and Social Care Management)
FISMA (Fellow of the International Stress Management Association)
CPsychol (Chartered Psychologist)
CSci (Chartered Scientist)

The WellBeing and Performance Group



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Current

Consultant, Organisation Health Psychologist.
Director, MAS (The Management Advisory Service)

Past

Visiting Professor of Psychology at 2 UK Universities.
Chief Executive of 3 National Health Service organisations; a Charitable trust; several small businesses.
Independent Technical Expert in health services, European Commission.

Independent Technical Expert in Psychological Wellbeing, European Commission.

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Programme for today

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The problem

The role of leader

How leaders can prevent stress in the workplace

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Societal challenges

Covid

Energy

Lack of trust

Cost of living

AI

Diversity

Scams

War

Personal safety

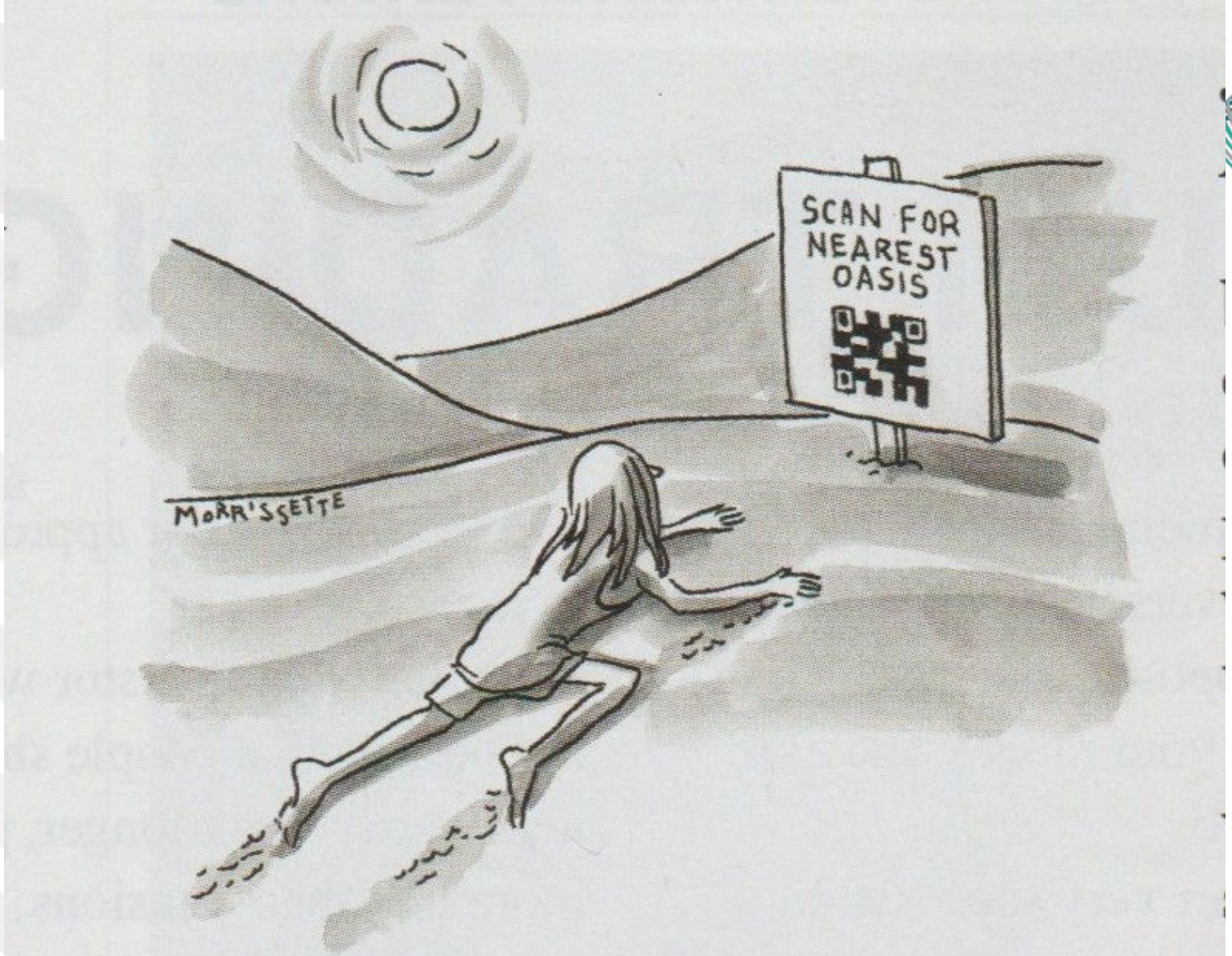
Global warming

Digital age

Institutional corruption

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Soft power

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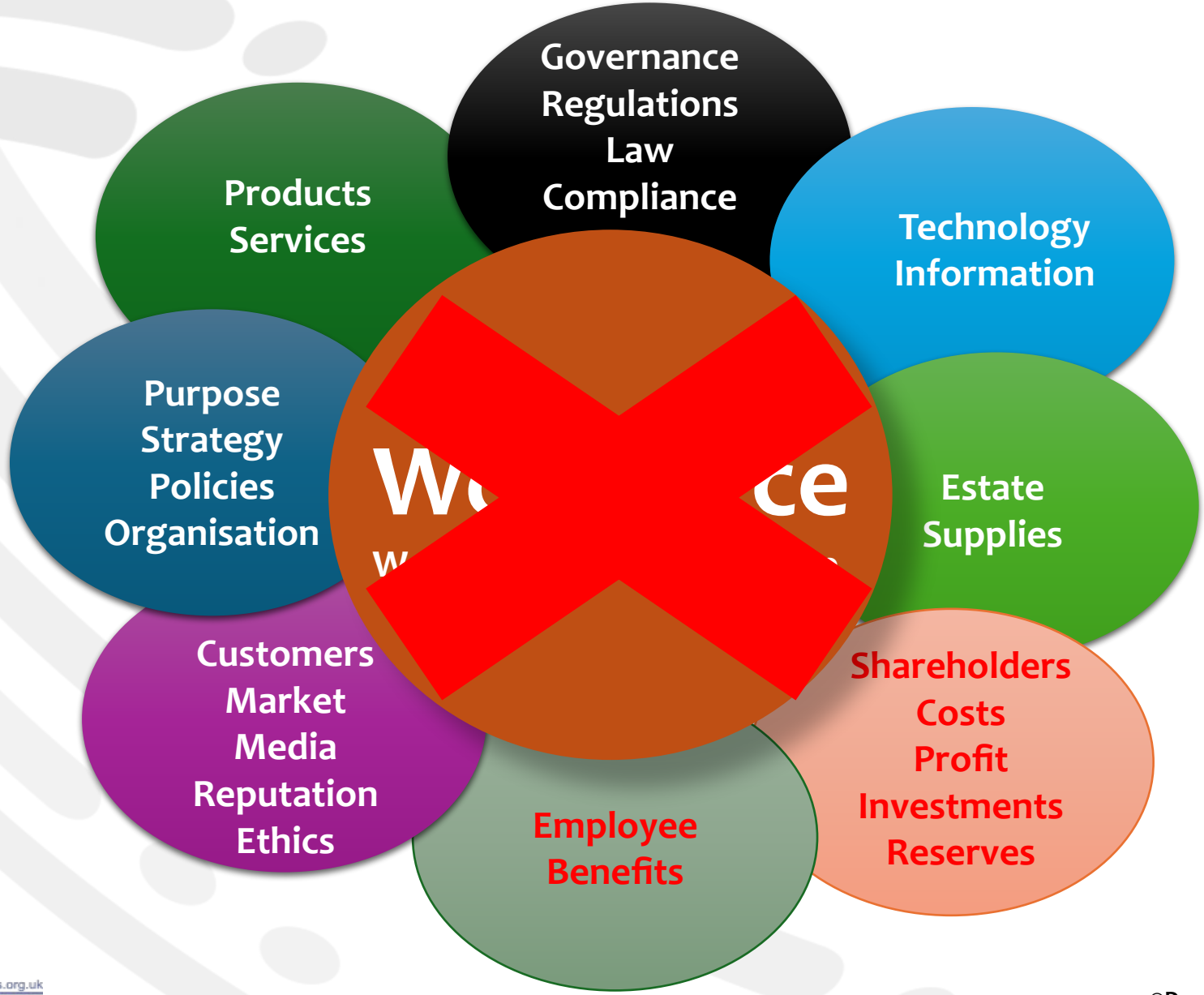
Workplace challenges

Processes need managers;
People need leaders

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Psychosocial threats

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Corporate events

Poor leadership
Purpose ambiguity
Toxic Culture
Complicated structure
Unnecessary change
Financial collapse
Mergers and acquisitions
Downsizing
Growth and expansion
Draconian regulations
Cosmetic values

Personal events

Personality clash
Hybrid working
Work life imbalance
Inadequate IT
Inadequate car parking
Lack of own space
Hot desks
Open plan offices
Irrelevant meetings
Uncontrollable time
Clashing expectations
Excess demands
Inadequate induction
Lack of exercise
Poor nutrition

Peoples' behaviour

Poor manager behaviour
Conflict relationships
Bullying/ harassment
Discrimination
Intimidation
Job insecurity
Poor performance tolerance
Fear
Impersonal interaction
Isolation
Boredom
Loss/bereavement
Accidents/illness

Fear

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Ingredients of under performance and misery at work

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Blame; bullying; dis-engagement; pass the buck; lack of motivation; lethargy; lack of responsibility; loss of identity; lack of ownership; loss of purpose; no mutual expectations established

Psychologically unsafe working environment

An environment where the workforce remains silent because of potential and actual threats made to individuals that harms self-esteem and causes humiliation and distress

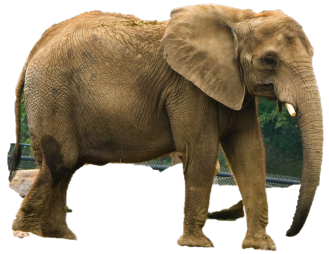
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Ageism

Gr

Circadian rhythm

Conspiracy theorist



False attrib

Psychologically unsafe environment

Confirmation bias

onscio



Passive /ag

communicati

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Stress

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Mental stress is an extreme adverse psychological response to personal perception of uncontrollable pressure, tension and strain

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Degrees of stress

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A stimulant until personal control is lost

Pressure

Challenges

Engagement

Tension

A stimulus to get rid of the tension

An impairment to performance

Strain

Threats

Dis-engagement

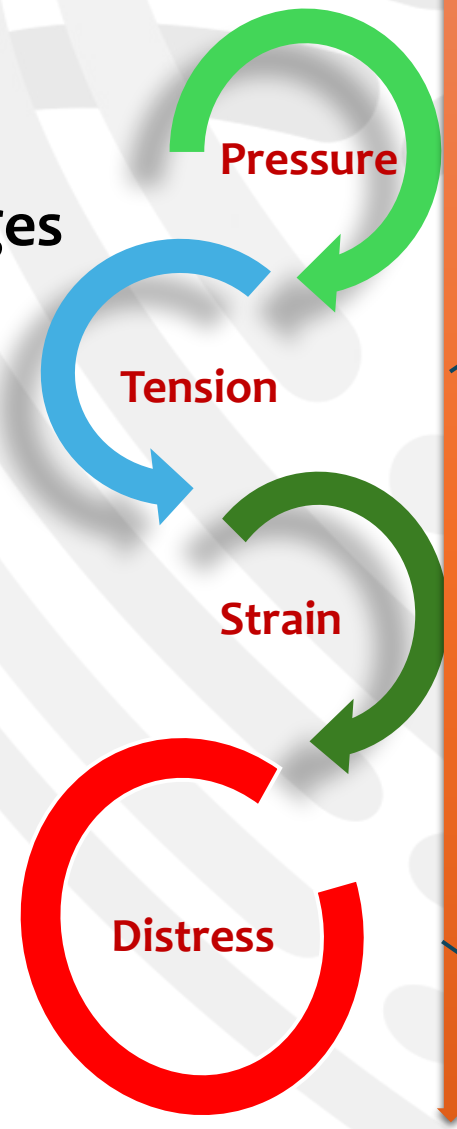
Distress

A catastrophe – can lead to serious ill health

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Degrees of stress



career opportunity
communication
performance appraisal
psychologically safe
openness
involvement
trust
work life balance
job
Challenges
training
development
challenge
team working
encouragement
values
pay
commitment
ambiguity
harassment
poor relationships
boredom
isolation
lack of trust
Threats
psychologically unsafe
bullying
poor leadership
No support
intimidation
conflict
excess demand
insecurity
quick fix
coercion
procedures
occupational health
policies
employee assistance
escape

Psycho-presenteeism

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How can we prevent all the negative factors from having an influence?

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The role of leader

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To create the conditions that guarantee the workforce is in perfect working order; knows where it's going and knows how to get there

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The role of leader

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To be the agent for change

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The role of leader

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Who is the baker?
Decide what you want
Work out the ingredients
Mix the ingredients together
What is the glue?
What gives the cake its shape?
Which oven are you going to use?
How long should the ingredients be in the oven?
What temperature should the oven be?
How do you know the cooking is progressing well?
Is the taste to your satisfaction?
Is the outcome a good cake?

Bake the cake
process of change
Alchemy



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Message

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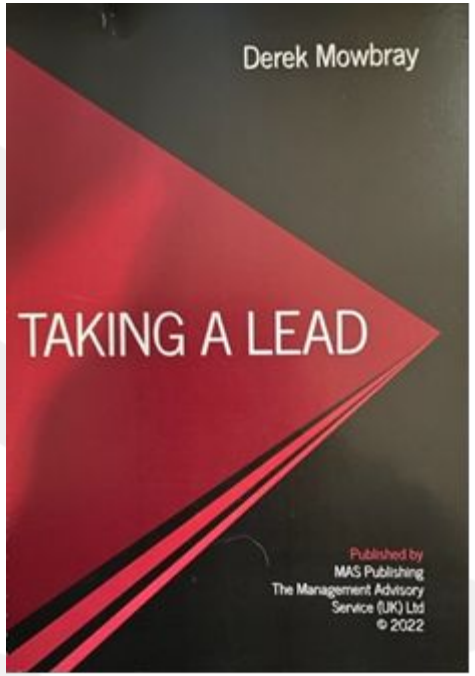
Processes (certainty) need managers; People(uncertainty) need leaders

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Everyone in the workplace should be ‘Taking a Lead’



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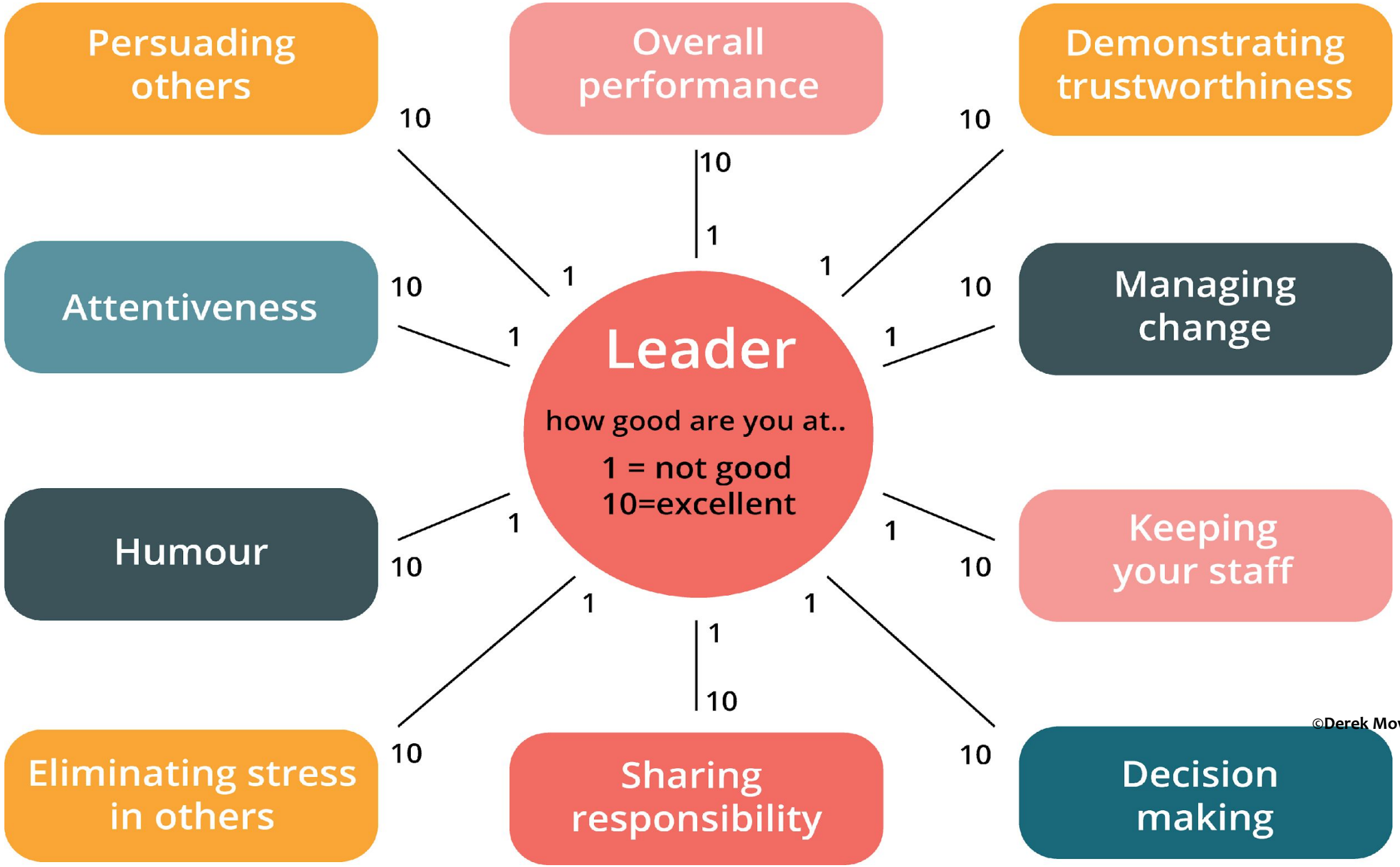
Leader Task: to create the conditions that prevent stress and stimulate people to thrive



Leader Characteristics and Skills

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n't rely on the quick fixes

de football team

ion

The da

Cakes at dawn

They are all coping strategies, NOT prevention strategies

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Dynamic Inertia

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The ingredients for change

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Managing Stress in the workplace

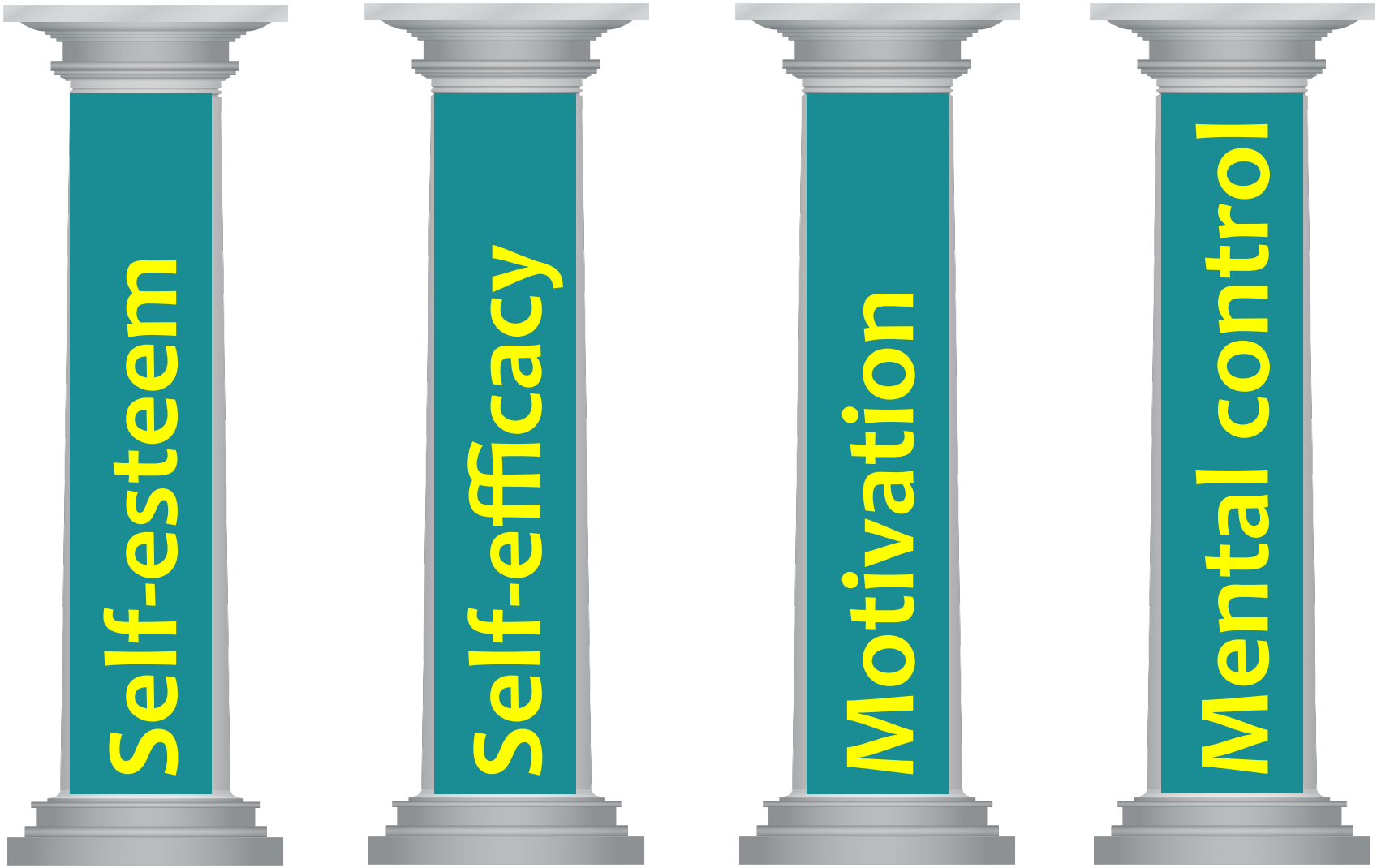
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Four pillars of psychological wellbeing and resilience



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The essence of performance



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The leader's main skill is holding conversations and building rapport with followers to create the conditions that prevent stress and stimulate people to thrive

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Leader Attitude and Approach

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Message

Leaders (and everyone else) must focus on the success of their business and NOT on their personal success

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Message

Leaders create the conditions for others to perform

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Never waste a mistake

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Leaders are role models

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Everyone is of equal value to each other in achieving success for themselves, team and organisation

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The combined intelligence of the workforce is far greater than that of its leaders

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Use status power

instead of coercive power

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Reciprocity enables positive actions

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Use the Strategy of Conviction

instead of a strategy of Imposition

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All failures are successes waiting to happen

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Message

All ideas are good ideas

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Outcome from a Wellbeing, Resilience and Performance Culture

Does your team and wider organisation have?:

Purpose that is clear and unambiguous, expressed as a simple **'big idea',** an idea which all staff relate to closely, and are proud to discuss with friends and colleagues

Atmosphere that uses the combined intelligence of the workforce by sharing **responsibility** for the future success of the organisation, where all staff are encouraged to think **independently**, are **attentive** to each other, are kindly and supportive of each other, and act with **compassion**.

Behaviour that is **respectful** towards each other, value each other's views and opinions, work in teams which are places of mutual support, where anything is debated without a hint of humiliation, where the critique of individual and team work is welcomed, discussed and where lessons are learnt and implemented

Staff who project a **confidence** towards clients and customers, who '**go the extra mile**' by providing unsolicited ideas, thoughts, stimulate each other, and where their interest in their customers offers something more than is expected, beyond **courtesy**, and beyond service, offering attentiveness and personal interest.

Leaders and managers who extract the best from their workforce by **challenging** their staff, providing opportunities for personal development through new experiences, and who treat everyone with **fairness** and **understanding**.

An organisation that is driven by its **values** towards organisational and personal **success**, Intellectually, financially, socially and emotionally.

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Taking a Lead



Attentiveness
Trust
Intellectual flexibility
Humour
Curiosity
Compassion
Optimism
Integrity
Intelligent kindness
Forgiveness
Encouragement

Purpose

Commitment
Trust
Responsibility
Motivation
Concentration
Social engagement
Enjoyment
Psychological safety

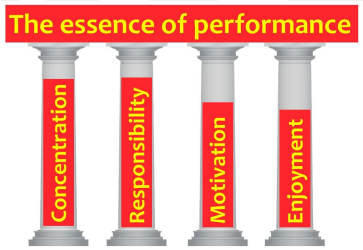
Outcomes led and values driven culture

BOLD leader and Adaptive Leadership

Sharing responsibility for future success

Psychological responsibility

Intelligent management





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Intelligent Behaviour

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Attentiveness

Encouragement

Trust

Forgiveness

Intellectual flexibility

Intelligent kindness*



Humour

Integrity

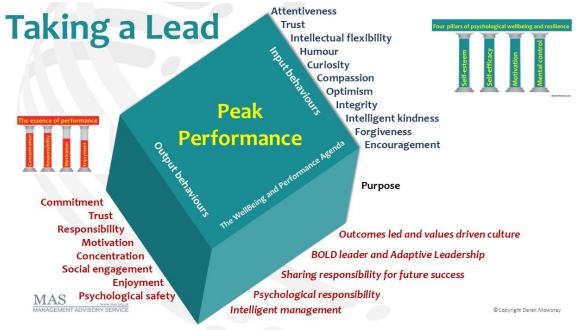
Attitude of curiosity

Optimism

Compassion

P.70 Taking a Lead

*Goodwill in helping to solve problems/overcome challenges

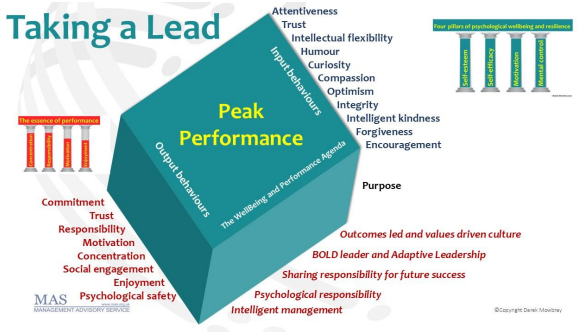


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Purpose of the organisation





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WellBeing, Resilience and Performance Agenda

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SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUCCESS

OUTCOMES FOCUSED AND VALUES DRIVEN CULTURE

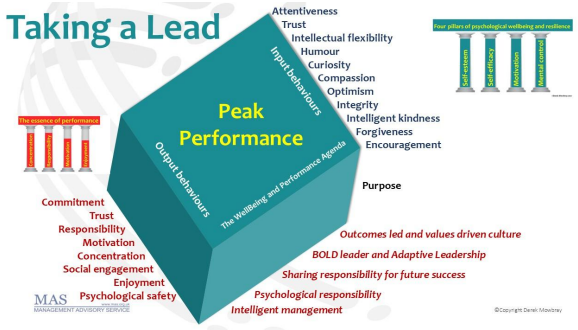
BOLD leaders ADAPTIVE Leadership

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY

ADAPTIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

INTELLIGENT MANAGEMENT

RESILIENT, PRODUCTIVE and HIGH PERFORMING WORKFORCE



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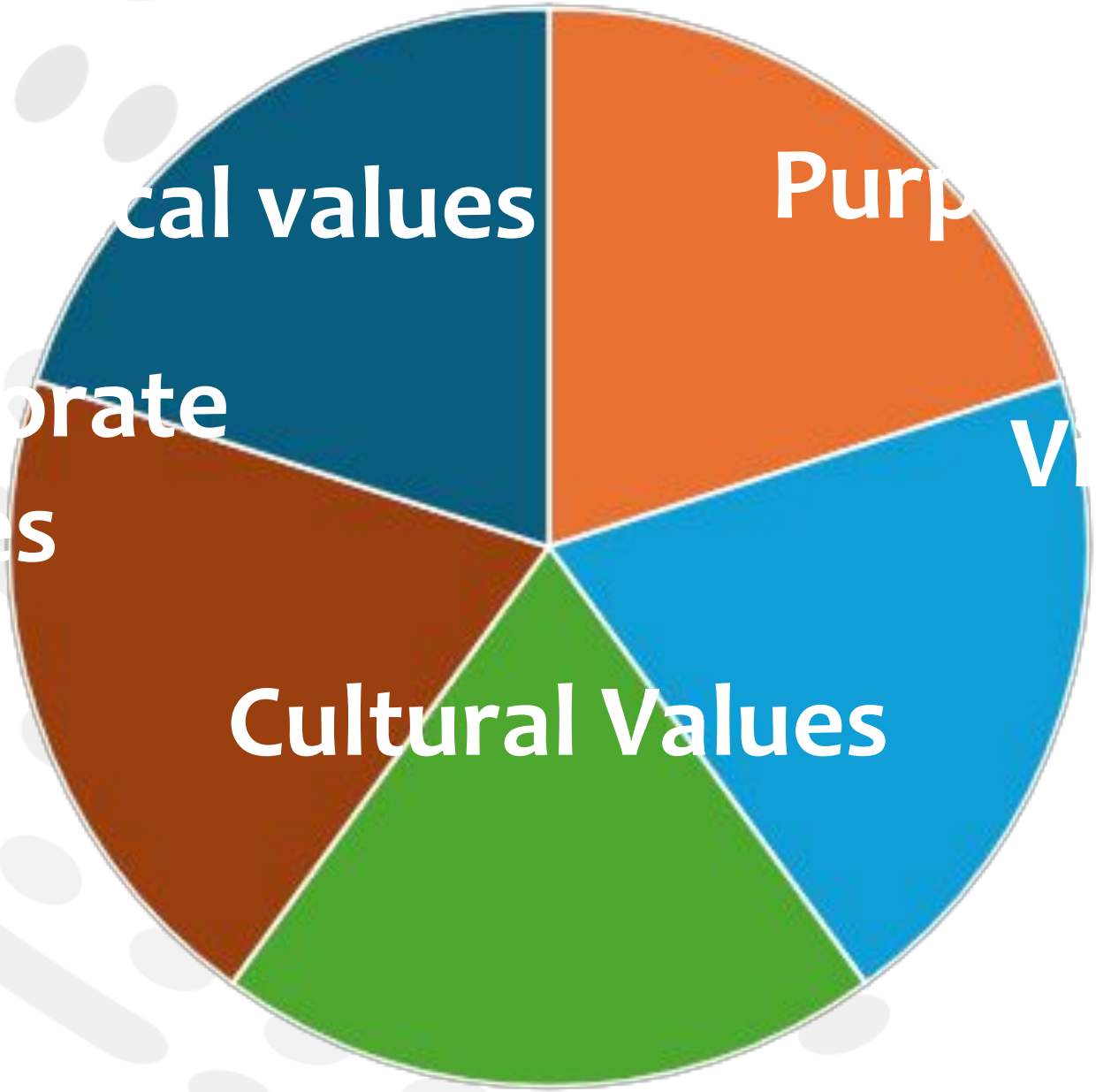
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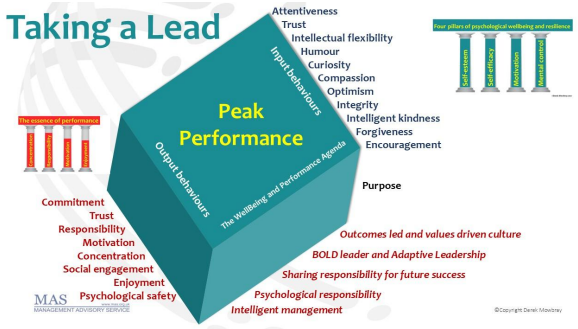
Outcomes led and values driven culture

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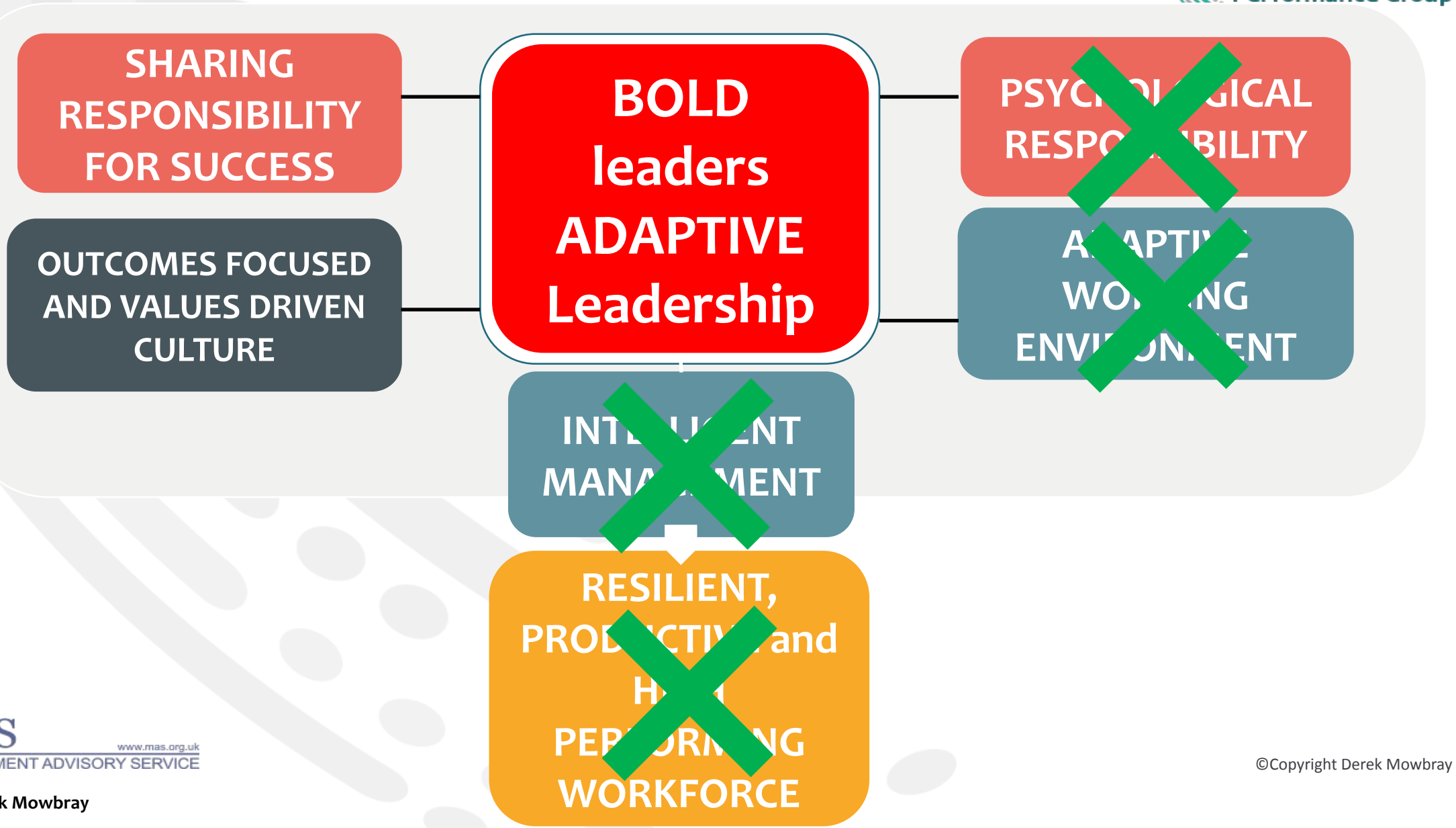
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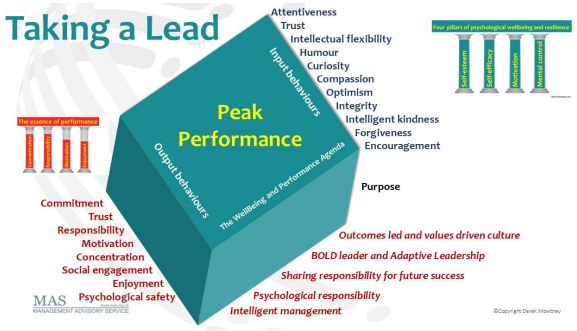
Sharing Responsibility for the future success of the organisation amongst all the workforce



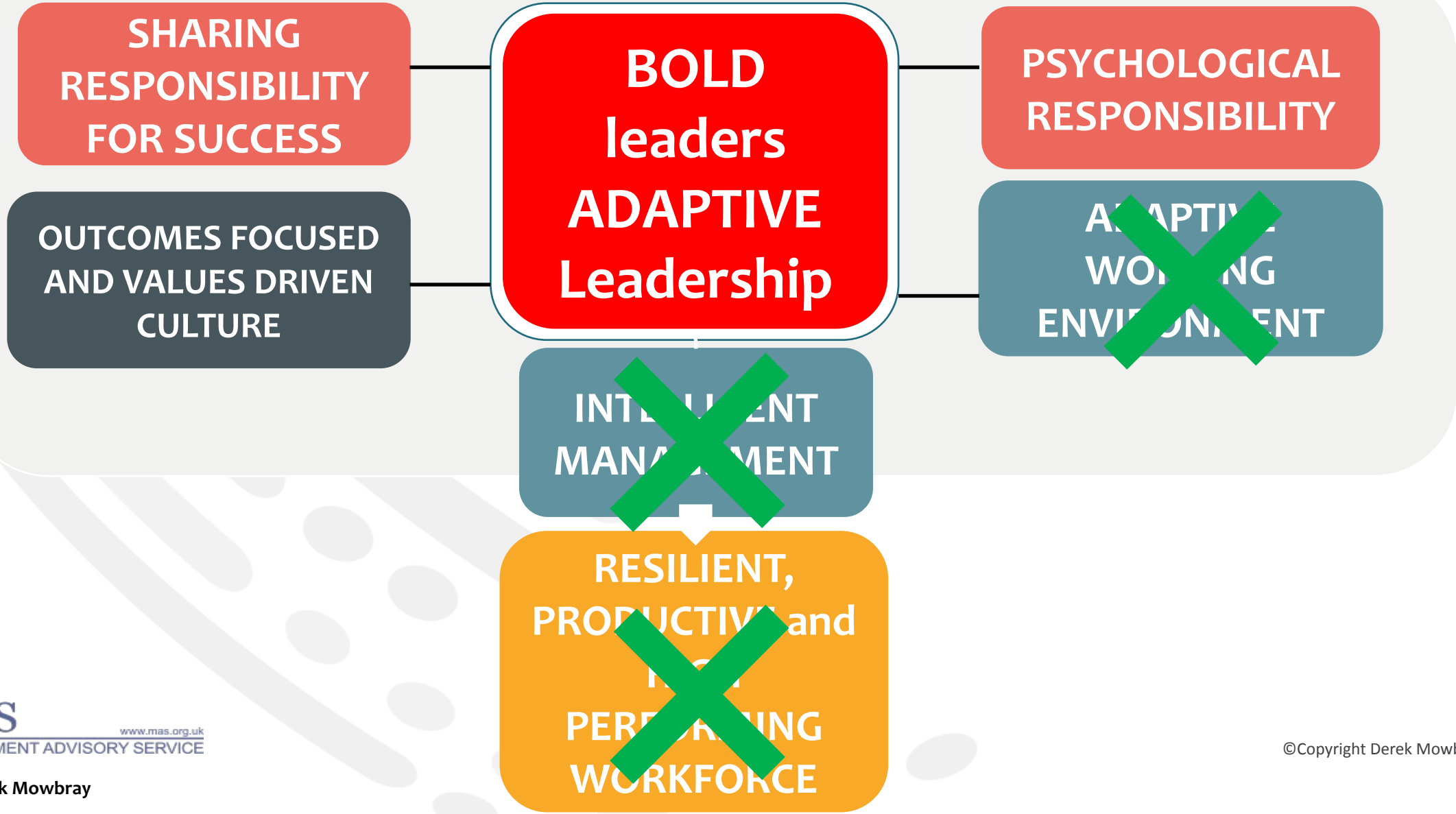
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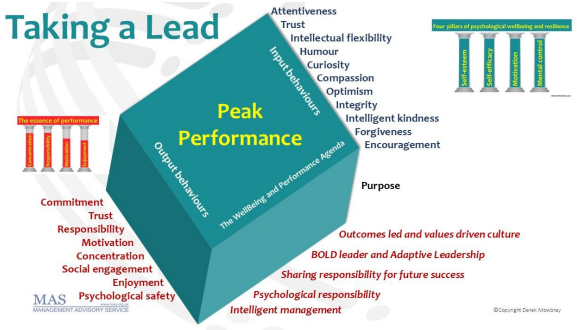
Psychological Responsibility

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Responsibility to:
Look after your own Psychological Wellbeing



Responsibility to:
Look after the Psychological Wellbeing of everyone else

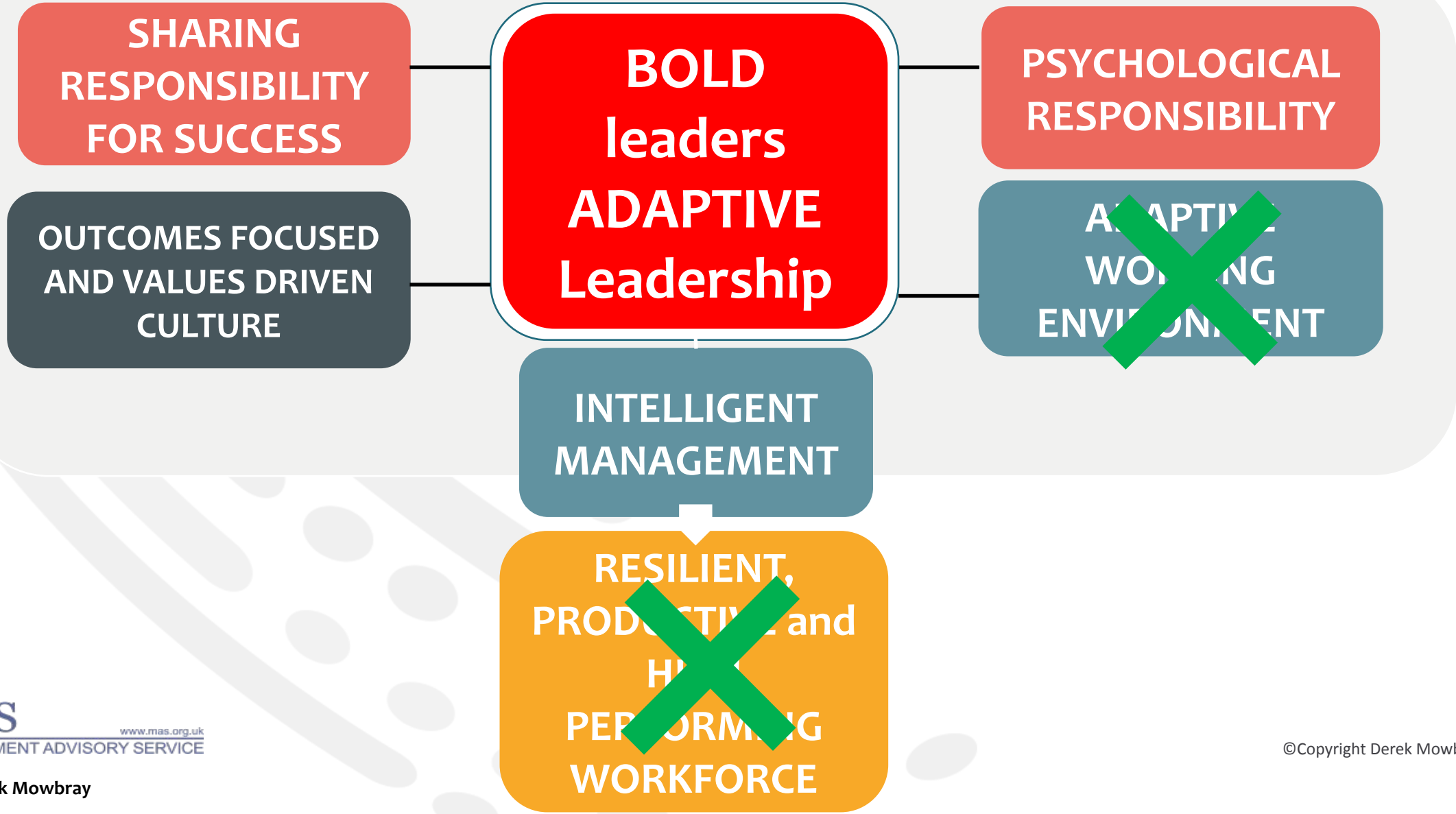


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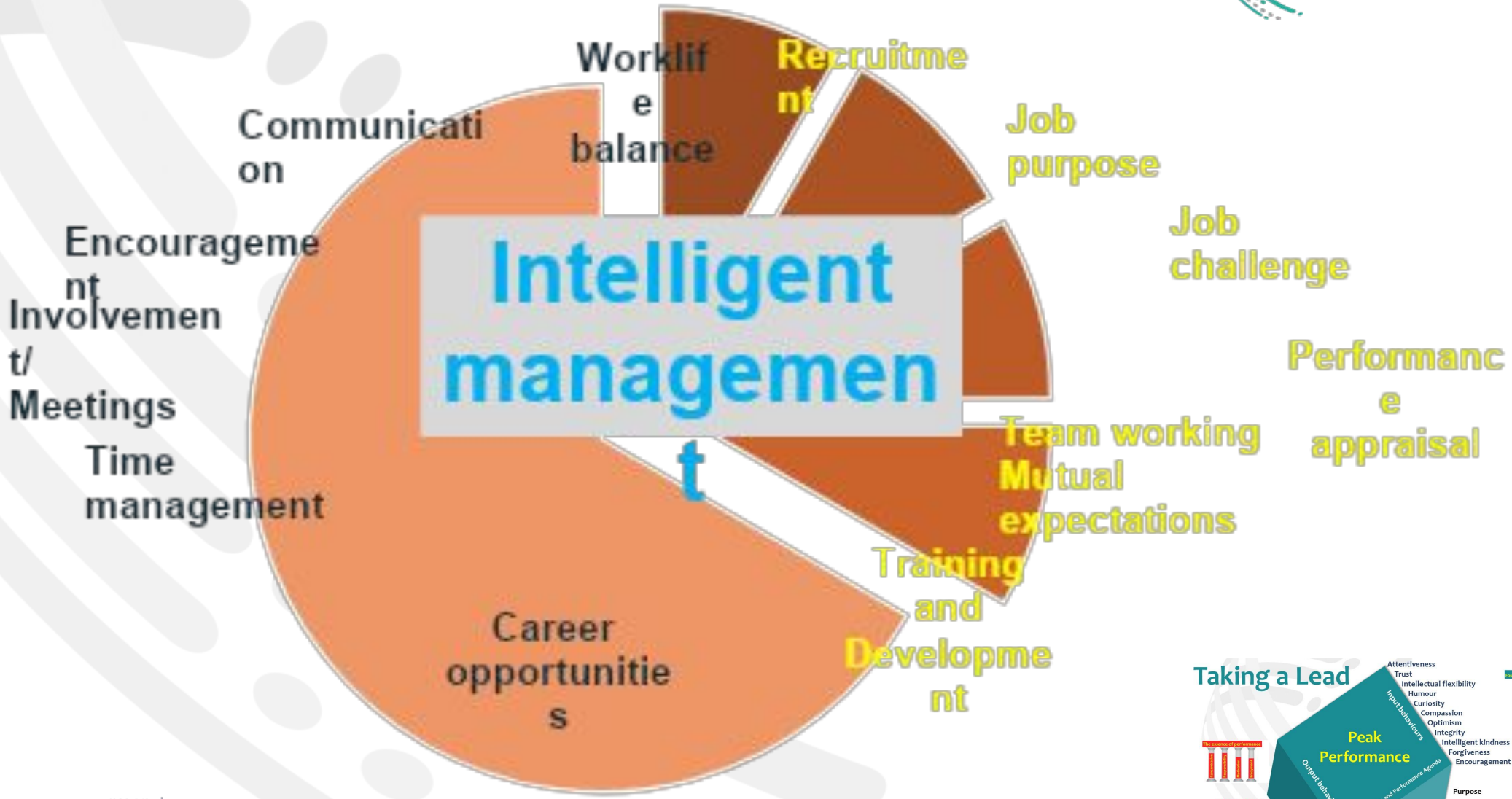


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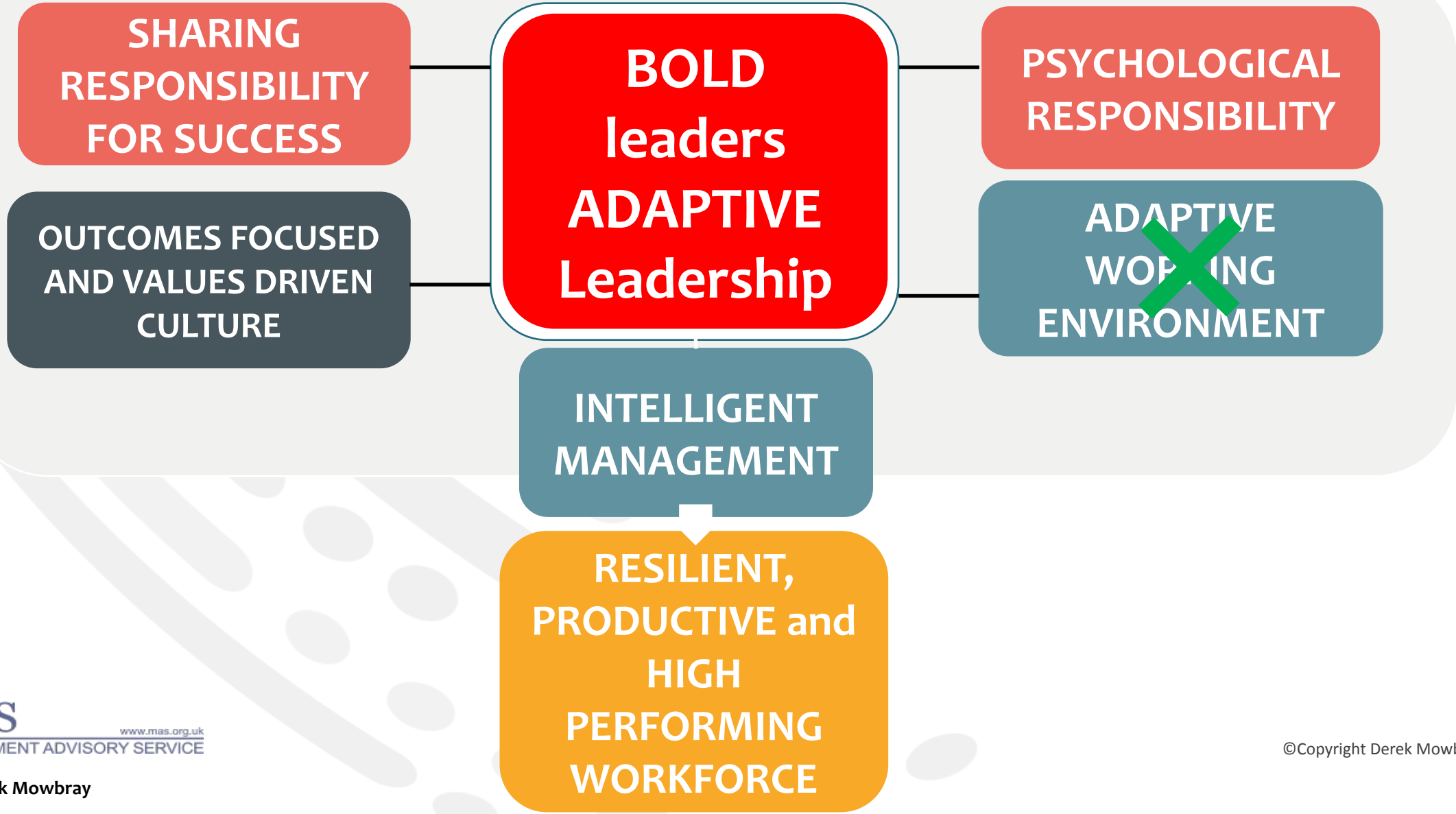


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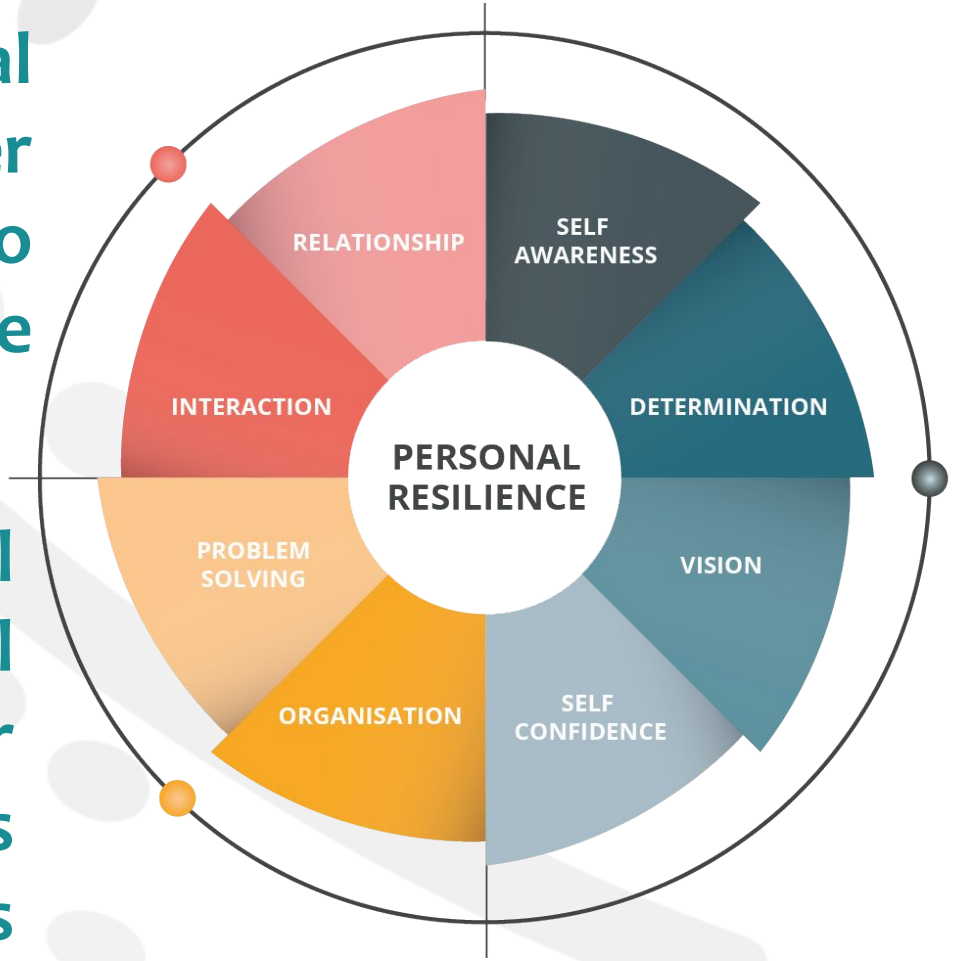
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The Personal Resilience Development Framework

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Personal control over responses to people

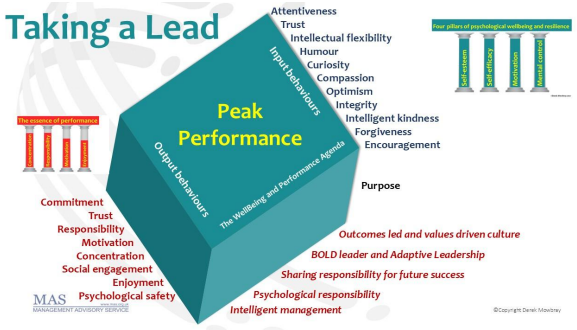
Personal control over responses to events



Personal control over oneself

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Outcome

Commitment

Trust

Responsibility

Motivation

Concentration

Social engagement

Enjoyment

Psychological safety

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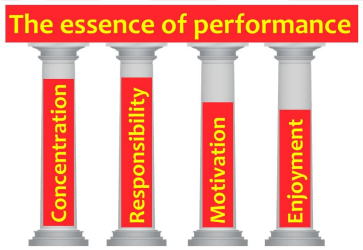
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The role of leaders in preventing stress in the workplace

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Making the workplace a fabulous place to work

Thank you

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