

# Walking in Their Boots: Seeing Safety from the Frontline

WITH DR BRETT SOLOMON



# Your Presenter



## **DR BRETT SOLOMON, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT**

Brett is a leadership expert and organisational culture transformation consultant. He specialises in assisting organisations to achieve significant improvements in performance, employee engagement, leadership effectiveness and safety.

He has a wealth of experience, from being a lieutenant in the army to sitting on the strategic board of a multinational organisation, starting a consulting firm and fulfilling the role of a university dean.

As a recognised leader in combining neuroscience, change management and leadership theory, Brett has been involved in numerous culture change, safety and leadership development initiatives throughout the world.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Sentis acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Australia and recognises their connections to land, waters and community.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to elders past and present. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today. We do this because we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and knowledge.



# Our Mission

To change the lives of individuals and organisations for the better, every day.



**sentis**

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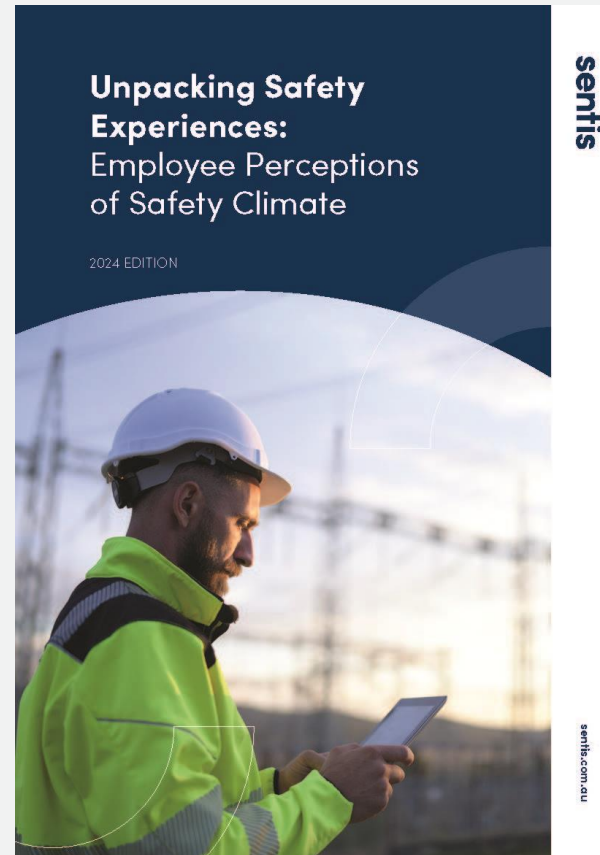
# positive safety and THE SAFETY EXPERIENCE

Positive safety is about focusing on proactive safety controls and genuine, helpful attitudes that can guide organisations to create a culture of trust, growth and excellence that leads to safer results.

Positive safety addresses the physical, social and psychological aspects of safety, resulting in an environment that supports each individual to bring the best of themselves to work.



# Our Research



To learn more scan the QR code or visit  
[sentis.com.au/resources/employee-perceptions-of-safety-climate-ebook](https://sentis.com.au/resources/employee-perceptions-of-safety-climate-ebook)

More than 59,000 respondents participated in the SCS to share their perceptions of safety climate at work. To ensure that no industry or organisation was over-represented, the responses were stratified to a sample of 29,390 respondents. The survey included workers at all levels – including frontline, supervisor and management positions – and a cross-section of demographics.

Sample

Stratified sample of  
**29,390**  
from a total sample of more than 59,000



Countries

**15** countries:  
Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States, Ireland, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam



Industry

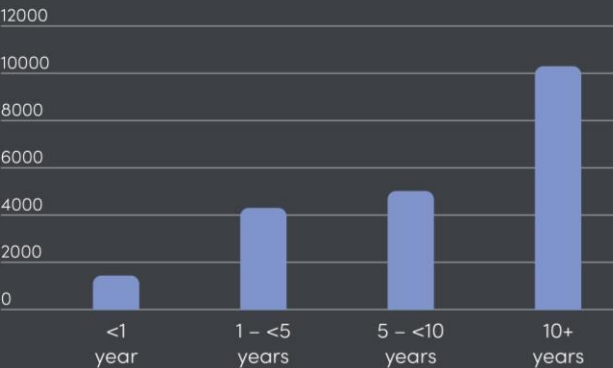
**12** industries:  
Utilities, mining, construction, oil and gas, transport, healthcare, manufacturing, government, agriculture, aquaculture, industrial services and education

Organisations

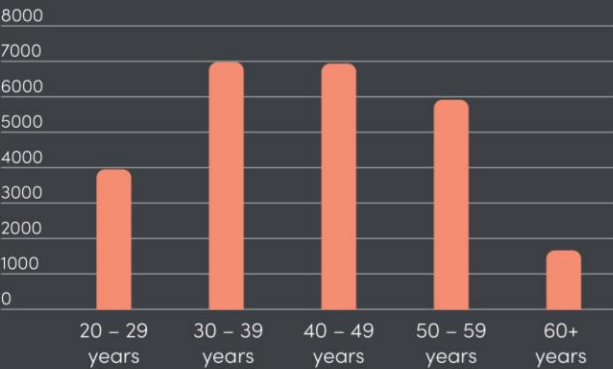
**75** organisations



Industry Tenure



Age



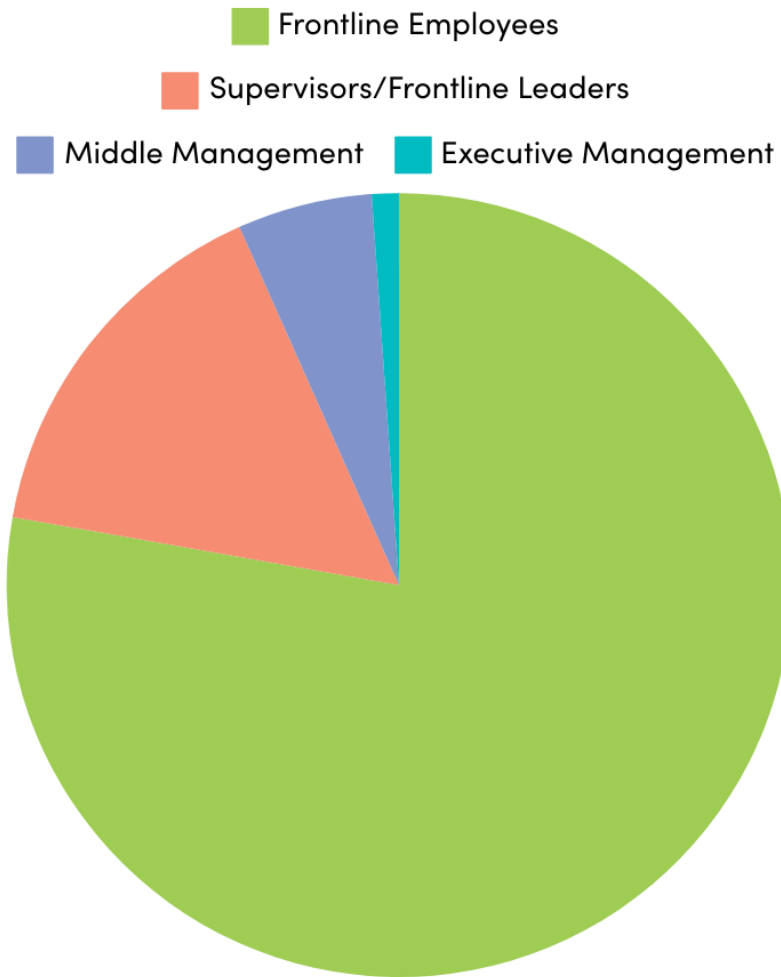
Position





# Our Sample

- 70% Frontline Employees
- 14% Supervisors/Frontline Leaders
- 5% Middle Management
- 1% Executive Management





## The Results

Frontline workers perceive safety more negatively across the physical, psychological and social experiences than supervisors, middle managers and senior leaders.

# The Results

POSITION	SOCIAL	PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL
Frontline Worker	5.4	5.4	5.2
Supervisor/Frontline Leader	5.7	5.6	5.5
Middle Management	5.6	5.6	5.7
Executive Management	5.7	5.6	5.5



# The Psychological Experience

The most **negative** result for frontline employees was in the psychological experience of safety

The PSYCHOLOGICAL experience relates to the internal thoughts a person has about work and their experience of wellbeing, stress levels and mental health.

By fostering a supportive environment where workers feel valued, respected, and clear on their job role and requirements, organisations can reduce stress, increase job satisfaction, and improve safety.



# The Psychological Experience

## Areas for improvement:

- Employee **willingness** to try new ways of doing things
- Provision of **regular feedback** on strengths and areas for improvement
- Extent to which individual skills and experience are **valued and respected**
- Flexibility of workplace to **balance work and life demands**
- Mental health and wellbeing being **treated as a priority** by senior management



# The Risks of Disconnecting



Results indicate leaders' frames don't necessarily align with workers



There can be a perception that leaders just don't 'get it'



Resource allocation and safety solutions can miss the mark





# The Value of Diagnostics



# Understanding the Employee Experience: What Leaders Can Do



Create a culture of  
psychological safety  
emphasizing trust  
and authenticity



Choose how to  
invest your time



Relentlessly seek  
employee input



Collaborate and  
break down silos

# Understanding the Employee Experience: What Leaders Can Do



Create a culture of  
psychological safety  
emphasizing trust  
and authenticity





## Creating a Culture of Psychological Safety

- Be honest and authentic
- Give trust to build trust
- Remember that trust is built through small, ordinary interactions
- Ask the team for feedback
- Treat them like the experts they are

# Understanding the Employee Experience: What Leaders Can Do



Create a culture of  
psychological safety  
emphasizing trust  
and authenticity



Choose how to  
invest your time

# Poll: How you Invest Your Time

**How would you describe the amount of time you spend in the field?**

- a) Hardly any time at all
- b) I spend time in the field for meetings, observations and other formal activities
- c) I try to spend informal time in the field but it doesn't always happen
- d) I prioritise spending time in the field, both formally and informally



# Benefits of Spending Time in the Field



See firsthand  
what's going on



Hear about  
challenges or  
issues



Fix  
inefficiencies



Strengthen  
relationships  
and build  
empathy



Build credibility  
and trust

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# Poll: Seeking Input

**How would you describe the reaction you get when you ask for input in a team meeting?**

- a) Nothing...I get crickets
- b) I hear from the exact same people every time
- c) It's slow to start, but once someone speaks the others tend to get involved sharing ideas and opinions
- d) My team doesn't wait to be asked for their input, they are always sharing suggestions and feedback with me



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# Us VS Them

When an 'us vs them' barrier exists between leaders and employees it can lead to:

- Inefficient or lack of communication
- Lack of sharing information
- Damaged trust and relationships
- Blame culture
- Lack of visibility
- Inconsistent



# Breaking Down Barriers

- Create cross-functional project teams
- Take opportunities to shift the dynamic
- Role model collaboration, empathy and respect for other teams
- Remember it won't happen overnight



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## REPORT

# Unpacking Safety Experiences: Employee Perceptions of Safety Climate



In this eye-opening report, we explore the balance and interplay between the physical, social and psychological experiences of safety.



Express your interest

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# Dr Brett Solomon

Principal Consultant



[brett.solomon@sentis.com.au](mailto:brett.solomon@sentis.com.au)



0447 451 887



[Linkedin.com/in/dr-brett-solomon](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-brett-solomon)

[sentis.com.au](https://www.sentis.com.au)

1300 653 042

## Q&A

OVER TO YOU

