



Australian Government

Comcare

Knowledge session: SMART work design essentials for people leaders

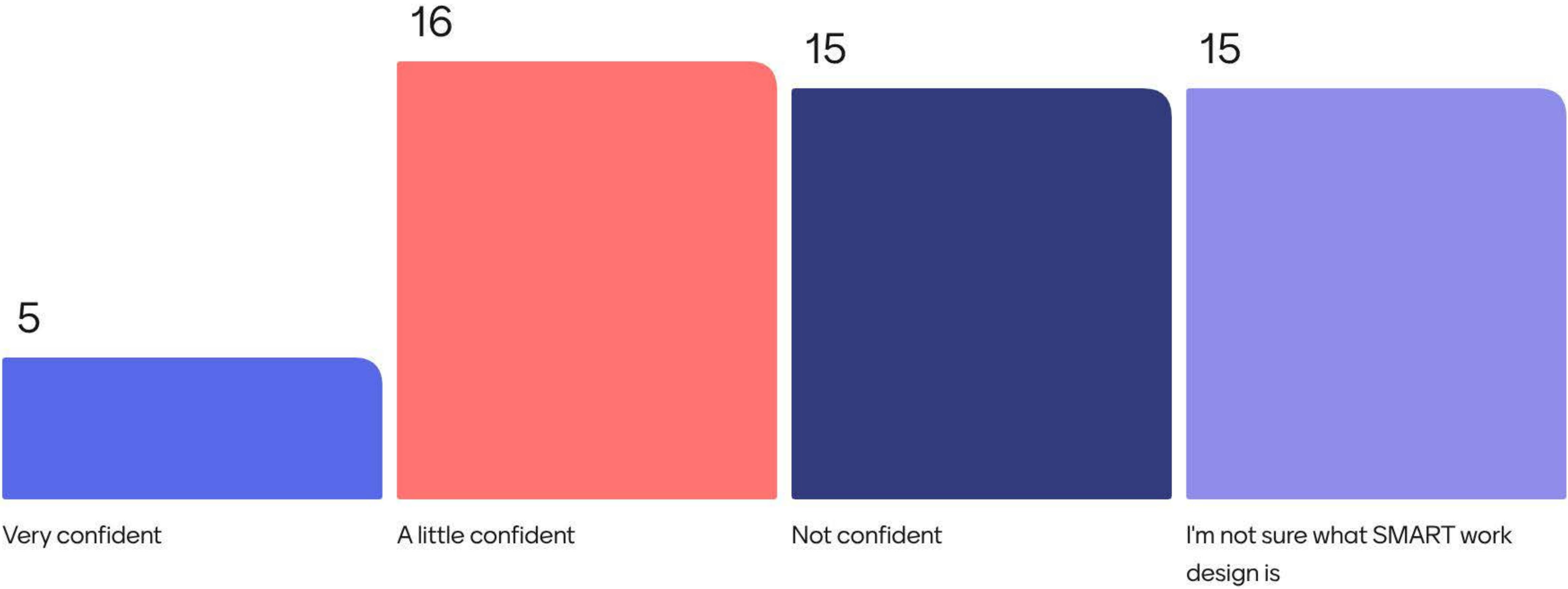
Tuesday 2 June 2026



Overview of today's session

- ▶ Why should leaders use SMART work design?
- ▶ What is SMART work design?
- ▶ What can it look like when leaders use SMART work design in their roles?
- ▶ Reflection activity: what is a current challenge for you at work and how could you apply a SMART lens to it?
- ▶ Preparing for SMART conversations with your team
- ▶ Q&A

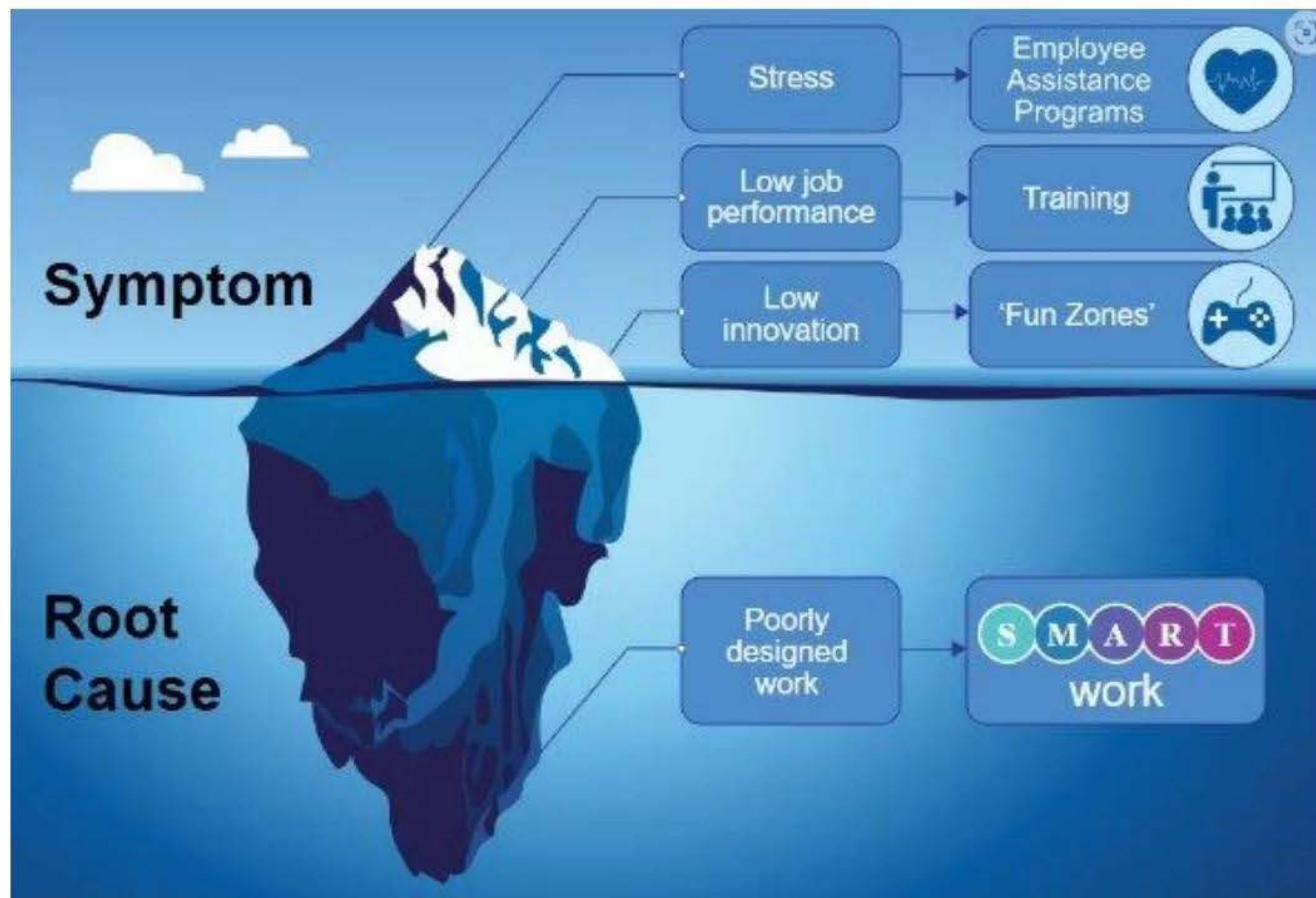
How confident are you about using SMART work design?



Why use SMART work design?



Why use SMART work design?



The five themes of SMART



'S' for
Stimulating



'M' for Mastery



'A' for Agency



'R' for Relational



'T' for Tolerable
demands

The five themes of SMART

Job resources



Job demands



3 ways to do SMART work design

Lead for SMART

Daily actions that shape work design and SMART work



Work redesign

Bake in new work roles with reconfigured tasks, responsibilities, relationships &/or decision-making

Activate job crafting

Encourage & enable workers individual and collective job crafting

How leaders use SMART work design

Enhancing performance

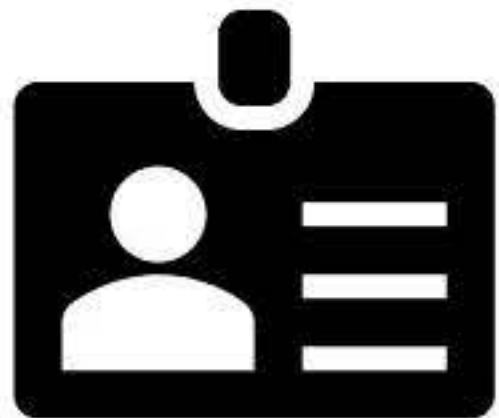


Example: A team member who felt isolated at work

- Getting involved in work for other business areas and teams
- Representing the team in a workplace advisory group
- Developing new skills and varying day-to-day work

How leaders use SMART work design

Supporting a new team member



Example: Building confidence and autonomy

- Giving freedom and authority in the work and decision making
- Encouraging connections with other team members
- Using existing skills to feel a sense of mastery

How leaders use SMART work design

**Supporting
health and
wellbeing**



Example: Struggling with perimenopause

- Discussing changes with manager and colleagues
- Changing start and finish times to suit concentration
- Using tools and saying no where possible to help with mental load

What is a current work challenge and what is one way SMART can help you address it?

understanding direction - relational work will help by having more catch ups with my supervisor and advising what I am doing and what the next steps will be. Insisting on these meetings will help

R
lational
work
support fr

Job demands is an issue for me. Maybe role clarity and people knowing roles and responsibilities would be good for me to focus on

Agency - Flexible working time - Autonomy over timing of work tasks and methods

Challenge - controlling micromanaging colleague, combined with Burnout. Smart can help me translate the issues I am having at each stage of work each week and help me find ways to redesign my work

- Task variety
- Problem-solving
- Information processing
- responsibilities
- Feedback from the job
- Feedback from others
- autonomy
- Autonomy over timing of work tasks
- Autonomy over work
- supervisor & peers
- Sense of task significance
- Connection
- workload/time pressure
- Low work-home conflict
- Low role conflict

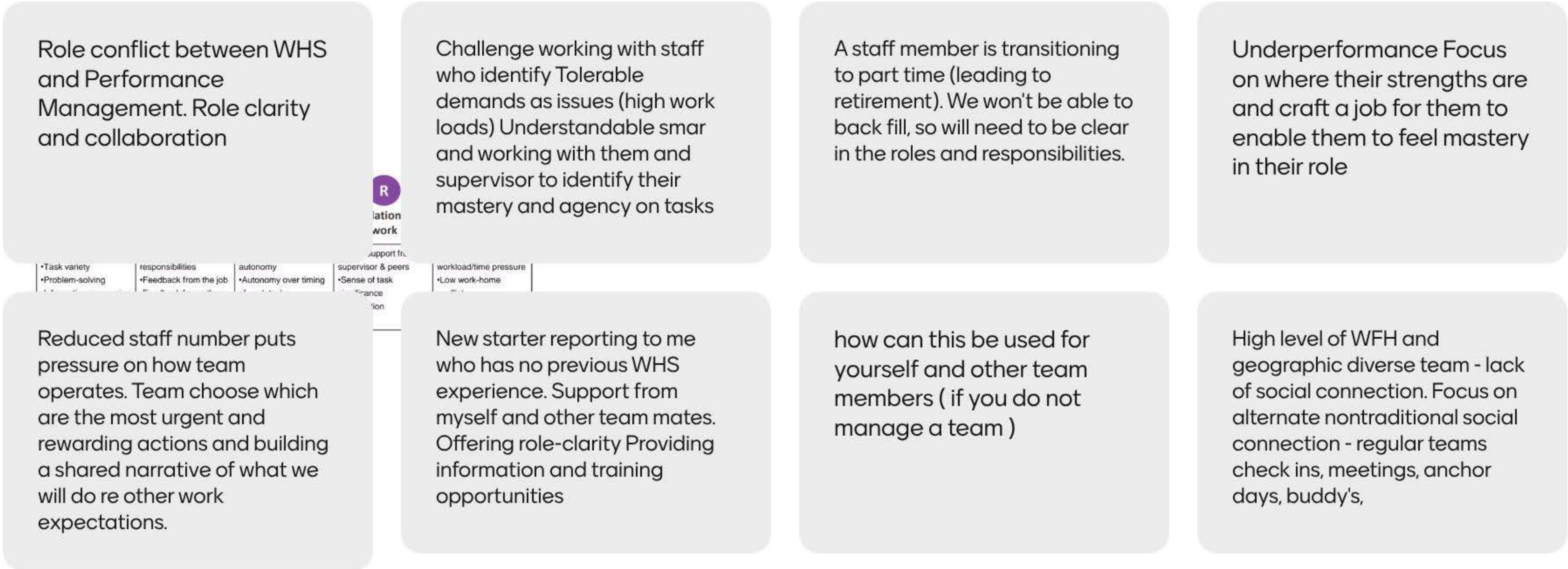
Work groups spread between a range of offices, reducing connection between workers. Online/ teams' breakout and game rooms.

Challenge: disengagement of staff members Solution: focus on quality of relations, knowing the person and creating trust and space to exchange

Focusing on stimulating work - giving people some task variety in repetitive jobs

A new starter who is highly skilled but the role doesn't challenge their skill set, I try and give them tasks to challenge them and give them variety = stimulating work

What is a current work challenge and what is one way SMART can help you address it?



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There are several projects we are working on at the moment plus BAU needs to continue to flow to keep well functioning services. We have started a 5 minute catchup each morning via chat as a check-in

Team member in a new role escalating decision making as they feel unsure (has the capability to make decisions). Focus on decision-making autonomy, providing feedback (mastery) and social support.

Challenge-Meeting multiple priorities all at the same time Agency is a solution with allowing ownership of how to meet the multiple project's timelines

Role clarity and decision making for projects. Need clarity and ownership to deliver. (Mastery and Agency)

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|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| •Task variety | responsibilities | autonomy | supervisor & peers | workload/time pressure |
| •Problem-solving | •Feedback from the job | •Autonomy over timing | •Sense of task | •Low work-home |

Roles and responsibility are not always clear. Diversity in how tasks are conveyed will assist (not only in writing, can have a meeting or phone conversation to discuss)

challenge - high workload and resource restrictions
solution: support, relationships,

Learning to share the load, not having to do all the work myself and giving others the chance to build their own mastery

My team operates as a triage and support function and work leaves the team for management. It was important to build in role clarity and agency over what function we do have.

What is a current work challenge and what is one way SMART can help you address it?

Managing remote or geographically dispersed teams. Using SMART, under the relational work, look at how to facilitate better engagement and team collaboration. Not just meeting for the sake of meeting



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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <p>• Information processing</p> | <p>• Feedback from others</p> | <p>• Autonomy over work methods</p> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Getting started using SMART with your team

Which **SMART** element would you like to discuss today?

As a **team**, when and how should we talk about our **work design**?



'S' for Stimulating



'M' for Mastery



'A' for Agency



'R' for Relational



'T' for Tolerable demands

