

# State of Executive and Work Health

## Re-envisioning Management

The Call for Systemic Change

Engagement Sessions Roll up





# Presentation Objective

1. Recap key insights gained through the 6<sup>th</sup> APEX **Executive Work** and **Health Study** and APEX Advisory Services client sessions.
2. Share **feedback** from 70+ sessions reaching 2,800 executives in 2022-2023.
3. Set out the APEX call for action through **system-wide change**.

*‘What does inclusion look like in the everyday?’*

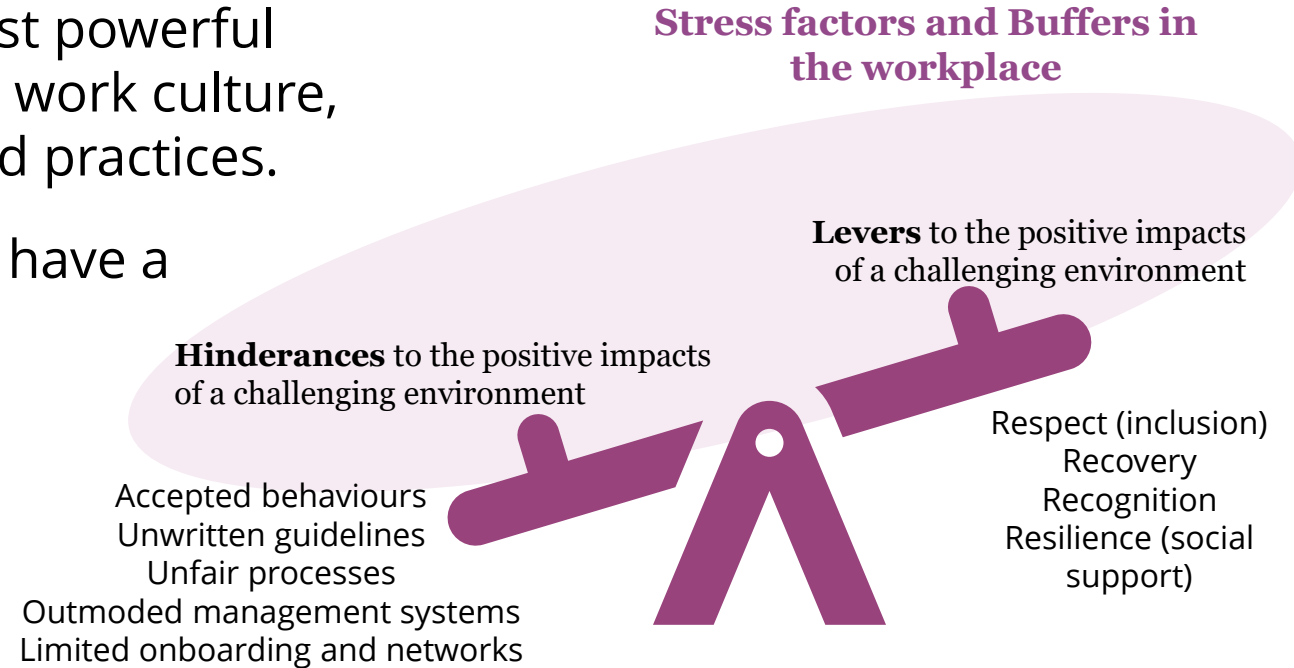
*- discussion participant*



# Health Study Recap

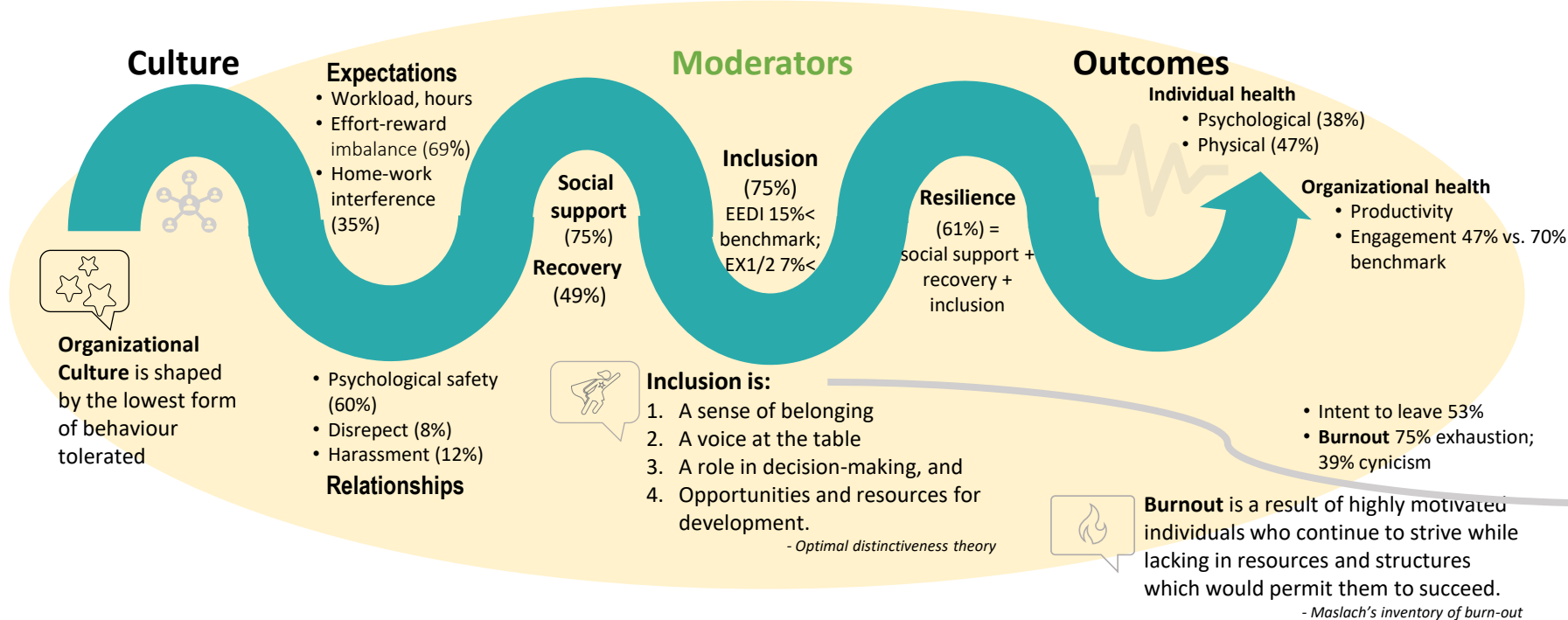
HERE'S WHAT WE KNOW

- Executives are proud of their work (88%), but the long hours and the impacts of virtual work have increased rates of burnout (75%) across the executive community.
- Work is a determinant of health. The most powerful influences on wellbeing are embedded in work culture, fed by management systems, policies and practices.
- The unwritten rules within the workplace have a significant impact on wellbeing. Notably:
  1. **Respect** (inclusion),
  2. **Recovery** (time and workload),
  3. **Recognition** (effort/reward), and
  4. **Resilience** (inclusion + recovery + supervisor support).



# The Core of the Health Study

## APEX HEALTH MODEL



Epidemiologists use this **APEX Health Model** to track the paths and relationships between stress factors at play.

The most powerful points for intervention are identified as buffers or **moderators**.

### Inclusion

Inclusion is the most potent moderator of wellbeing, it increases odds of:

- Job satisfaction by 319%
- Commitment by 266%
- Engagement by 168%
- Resilience by 65%
- Mental wellbeing by 34%

In 2022-23, APEX met with over 2,800 executives in 70+ organizations to discuss the health model and findings. Advisory Services for Executives shared advice and offered support.



# Executive feedback

WHAT WE HEARD

From March 2022 to March 2023, APEX validated the findings with executives:

- Some surprise of the depth of the issue.

*Below the surface:* A key determinant of wellbeing is **how leaders behave**.

Respect (inclusion, psychological safety) figured prominently in the feedback sessions. For example, a lack of transparency in promotions were described as 'arbitrary' and demoralizing. EWHS data tell us that those experiencing a lack of respect are twice as likely as others to disconnect from their organization.

- Assumption that leaders have tools they are not using.

*Below the surface:* **how organizations are organized**. Participants spoke about the need to limit clutter to build recovery. They referred to the drain of meaningless tasks and suggested processes and practices that focus on outcomes more than tasks enabled more purpose-driven work. Recognition for effort is wanting.

- Belief that impacts could be reversed with time off.

*Below the surface:* **how organizations get work done (work design)**.

There was much talk about how to build resilience, that ability to pivot forward not snap back to pre-pandemic norms. Resilience is learned and depends on inclusion plus recovery plus supervisor social support. Participants spoke frequently about the gaps in expectations between individuals and managers.



2,800

Executives  
at 70+ sessions

596

ASE clients

# The Framework: Re-envisioning Management

## Leadership; Design of Work; and Ways of Working

LEADERSHIP

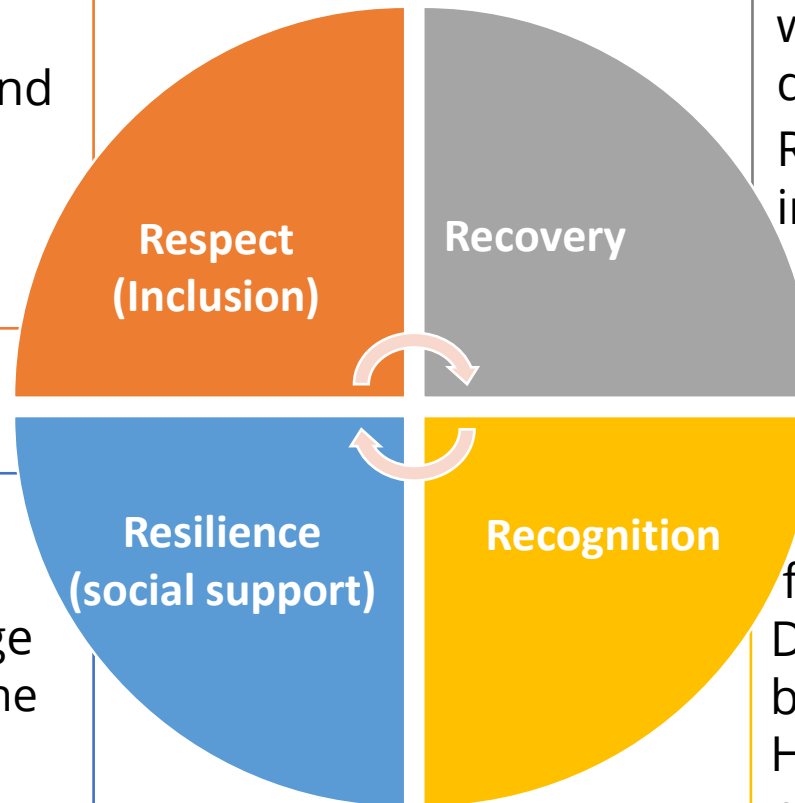
Be aware of how my leaders behave. Intervene early.  
Check my own practices and processes for inclusion.  
Who do I listen to?

Pebble: rewarding those who deliver at any cost

WAYS OF WORKING

Keep wellbeing forums.  
Reinvest time saved into recovery efforts. Encourage flexibility. How do I share the reasons for change?

Pebble: continuing the stigma. Treating wellbeing as separate and apart from work instead of a part of work



Re-examine my expectations for workhours and workload. How do I limit clutter?  
Review my practices to expedite information flow. How do I rebuild network?

Pebble: unsustainable expectations for after hours

Talk to my manager about the feedback I need. Ask my team.  
Demonstrate the benefits of being an executive.  
How do I express meaningful recognition?

Pebble: "arbitrary" promotions (unexplained)

DESIGN OF WORK

LEADERSHIP



# APEX is taking action

Executives told us that they can **thrive** in challenging environments... with the **right systems** and **supports** in place.

APEX is taking action and driving change in leadership behaviour, design of work and ways of working, by:

- Advocating to senior decision-makers up to and including the President of Treasury Board (on [topics of wellbeing and total compensation](#))
- Hosting a Deputy Minister forum that meets regularly on wellbeing of executives;
- Briefing HR Council monthly with milestone follow up with the Public Service Management Advisory Committee;
- Tailoring tools for executives including: [best practice guides and tool kits](#) (3); [professional development sessions](#) (6); [secondary research and think pieces](#) (3)
- Accelerating the next EWHS to every three years. Watch for it in summer of 2024!

Join us! Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and find out more at the APEX website ([apex.gc.ca](http://apex.gc.ca))



# Next Steps

More tools and products are in development with our Advisory Services for Executives.

In the meantime, if you are in need of support, please contact our confidential APEX Advisory Services [APEX.GC.CA](mailto:APEX.GC.CA)

*Discussions are underway to launch the 2024 Executive Work and Health Study.*



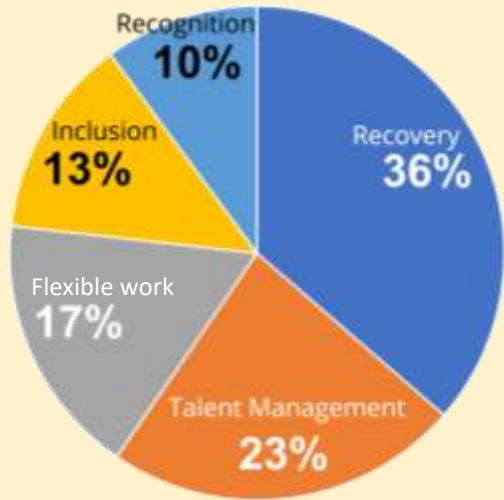
**THANK YOU**

**MERCI**

## FEEDBACK FROM 70+ DEPARTMENTAL / AGENCY SESSIONS:

# Comments heard during the sessions

### Top question themes:



‘How do I unplug or take leave when the cost to catch up is so high? Administrative burden is increasingly my afterhours work.’

Executives need to recharge to pivot forward

‘I got to know my team well during the pandemic. It made a difference. I know I need to be deliberate to keep that.’

### Ideas / best practices

Build recovery into workflow

Open up inclusion

Flexible work environment offers empowerment, choice and fulfilment

‘We won’t get hybrid right the first time. What does inclusion look like in the reality of everyday work?’

Leverage APEX

Prioritize people skills

‘How do I create a psychologically safe environment?’

‘How can I compete to retain and attract new leaders?’

Be deliberate  
In office is the new off-site

Revisit T&Cs

Tailored responses is expected to accelerate churn

‘The benefits of being an executive are being eroded with every decision that suggests a lack of trust, respect or information.’