

# Lessons from Evaluating an On-Line Resiliency Training Program

Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace  
WorkSafe Saskatchewan

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Dr. Sean Tucker  
Janelle Gerard

Centre for Management Development



# Acknowledgements

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# Study Context

- Government of Saskatchewan (GoS) strategic focus on improving employee psychological wellbeing
- GoS participation in Centre for Management Development “Saskatchewan Safety Survey” since 2015
- Availability of GoS bench marking data for evaluation
- Agreement between U of R – Centre for Management Development and WorkSafe (October 2018)
- Saskatchewan WCB investment in on-line training to increase knowledge of psychological health



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# Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

Michael Hobeck  
**Associate Dean of Academics**



# Developing the Programs

UFred Partners with National Leader



*Dr. Joti Samra, R. Psych.*  
Program Lead – UFred Centre for  
Psychological Health Sciences



82%

of employees with mental health issues  
indicate it impacts their work



## The Online Experience

- ▶ Completely Self-Paced
- ▶ Convenient & Flexible
- ▶ Accessible Across Devices
- ▶ Real-Time Application



Centre For Psychological Health Sciences  
Programs

**BASIC  
CERTIFICATE**

**MANAGER  
CERTIFICATE**

**ADVANCED  
CERTIFICATE**

**ENHANCING  
RESILIENCY**



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# Basic Certificate

Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

1

Course

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Introduction to Psychological  
Health & Safety in the  
Workplace



# Manager Certificate

Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

3

## Courses

**Introduction to Psychological  
Health & Safety in the  
Workplace**

**Key Principles for Managers**

**Enhancing Managers' Emotional  
Intelligence Skills**



# Advanced Certificate

Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace

5

## Courses

Introduction to Psychological  
Health & Safety in the  
Workplace

Guiding Principles of the  
National Standard

Psychological Health &  
Safety: Planning

Psychological Health &  
Safety: Implementation

Psychological Health &  
Safety: Evaluation,  
Corrective Action & Continual  
Improvement



# Enhancing Workplace Resiliency

6

## Modules

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Building Mental Resilience

Realistic Thinking

Behavioural Action

The Usual Suspects: Sleep,  
Exercise, and Diet

Relaxation & Stress  
Management

Positive Psychology



# Partnerships

Reaching more employees and organizations

wcb



Saskatchewan  
Workers'  
Compensation  
Board

**WorkSafe**<sup>TM</sup>

S A S K A T C H E W A N

*Work to live.*



## Connect with Us



Tammy Brewer

Business Development Specialist

[sales@ufred.ca](mailto:sales@ufred.ca)



Michael Hobeck

Associate Dean of Academics

[michael.hobeck@ufred.ca](mailto:michael.hobeck@ufred.ca)

# UFred On-Line Training Alignment with The National Standard

1. Organizational culture
- ★ 2. **Psychological and social support**
3. Clear leadership and expectations
- ★ 4. **Civility and respect**
5. Psychological demands
6. Growth and development
7. Recognition and reward
8. Involvement and influence
9. Workload management
10. Engagement
11. Balance
- ★ 12. **Psychological protection**
13. Protection of physical safety

# Study Methodology

- University of Regina Research Ethics (REB2019-011)
- Eligibility
  - Units with 10 to 249 employees
  - No planned restructuring in 2019
- Random assignment of “**ministerial units**” (e.g., branches, divisions, locations) to one of these conditions:
  - **Training Group 1** (foundational training for all\*)
  - **Training Group 2** (foundational training for all, two advanced training for supervisors and managers\*\*)
  - **Control Group** (no training)

\* “Enhancing Workplace Resiliency”

\*\* “Enhancing Managers Emotional Intelligence” and “Key Principles for Managers”

# Study Methodology

- Random assignment of 111 ministerial units to one of these conditions:
  - **Training Group 1** (foundational training for all, 37 units)
  - **Training Group 2** (foundational training for all, two advanced training courses for supervisors and managers, 37 units)
  - **Control Group** (no training, 37 units)
- Approximately **8,500** employees eligible to participate in the study
- Approximately **5,100** eligible for training

# Study Methodology

- **Key survey measures**
  - Psychological knowledge + communication
  - Resiliency
  - Stigma
  - Awareness
  - Psychological distress
  - Psychological safety climate
- Employees given 3-4 weeks to complete the training
- Average time to complete foundational training = **43 minutes**
- Average time to complete each manager/supervisor course = **39 minutes**

# Key Survey Measures

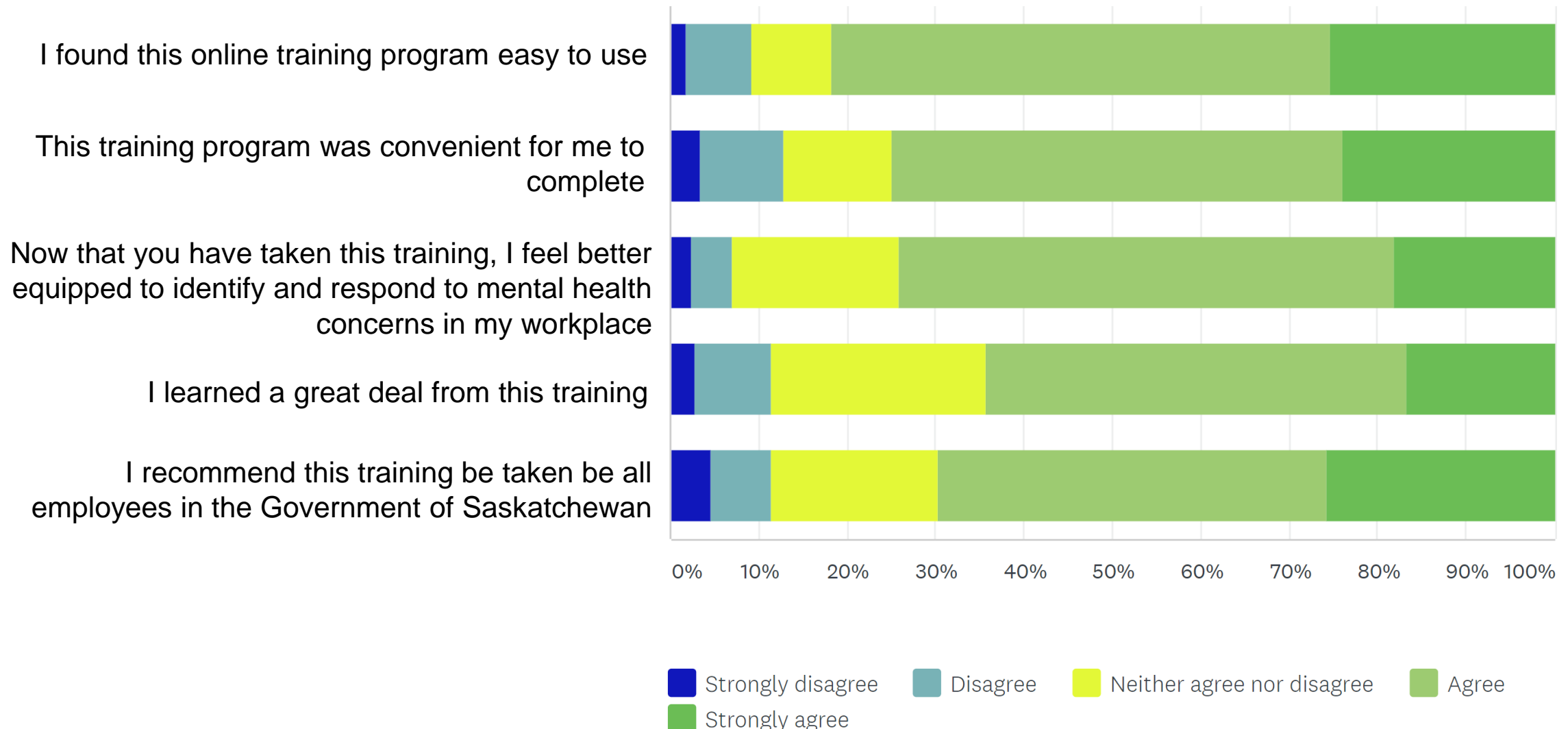
Stage	Timing (+/- 2 months)	Safety Climate	Distress	Know. + Comm.	Resiliency	Stigma	Awareness
Pre-Training Survey (1)	- 8 Months	X	X	X	-	-	-
Pre-Training Survey (2)	- 1 Month	-	-	X	X	X	X
On-line Training (May-August 2019)	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post-Training (1)*	0	-	-	-	-	-	X
Post-Training (2)	+ 3 Months	X	X	X	X	X	X
Post-Training (3)	+6 Months	-	-	X	X	X	X

# Participation (to date)

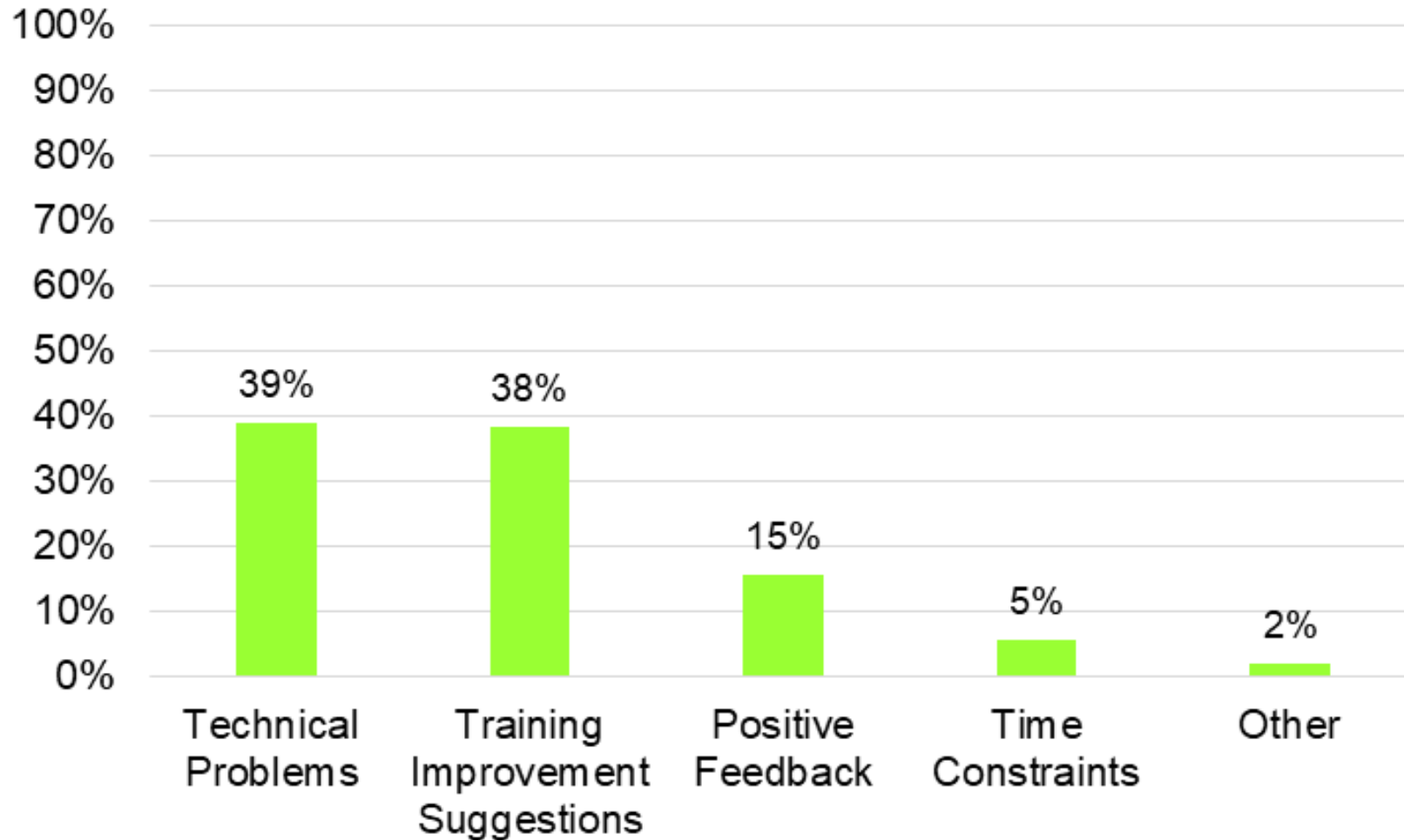
Stage	Timing (+/- 2 months)	Number of Responses	Approximate Response Rate
Pre-Training Survey (1)	- 8 Months	5,190	53%*
Pre-Training Survey (2)	- 1 Month	3,400	40%
On-line Training (May-August 2019)	0	4,440 started 3,360 Completed	87% 66%
Post-Training (1)	0	1,330	-
Post-Training (2)	+ 3 Months	Forthcoming	-
Post-Training (3)	+6 Months	Forthcoming	-

# Post-Training (1) Feedback

(N = 1,330 or 30% of employees who started the training)



# Post-Training (1) Written Feedback (N = 610 or 14% of employees who started the training)



# Lessons Learned (So Far)

- Individual versus group-level training effects
- Think carefully about what your training is designed to change and then select appropriate measures
- Extensive pilot testing
- Use an incentive (e.g., draw for Tim Horton's gift cards)
- Clear communications with Ministry Safety Champions and employees (and avoid over communication)
- Ensure users/students have direct contact with training provider
- Timely resolution of technical issues
- Your evaluation will probably take longer than you originally thought it would!

# Lessons Learned (So Far)

- Avoid gender stereo types in training images:

*“I’m 5 minutes into this course [...] Why is the middle aged, white, male portrayed as the person with all the answers? Why are the women portrayed as the “helpless little lady who is SO upset”?* Employee feedback

- Ethical considerations associated with measuring mental health stigma  
E.g., “Depression is a sign of personal weakness”

# Reflections on “The National Standard”

- Revised in 2018
- What does it mean to “implement” the standard? How does one measure success?
- Independent auditing to assess degree of compliance
- Growing health care costs a major driver
- Sustaining top management support a major barrier to success
- Progress in improving mental health knowledge and awareness BUT orgs. tend to overlook culture change and other difficult systemic issues. Current approaches addressing the ‘tip of the iceberg’
- Will attention wane during an economic downturn?
- The Standard as a *journey* rather than a *destination*

## Assembling the Pieces

An Implementation Guide to the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

