

Respectful Workplace Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | June 2026

Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only. Customise it to suit your business needs and ensure it complies with relevant workplace legislation including anti-discrimination and work health and safety laws.

1. Our Commitment

[Company Name] is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace where everyone is treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect. We believe that a respectful workplace is essential for employee wellbeing, engagement, and productivity.

This policy reflects our values and sets expectations for how we interact with each other, our customers, and the broader community.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Foster a positive workplace culture built on mutual respect
- Set clear expectations for respectful behaviour
- Complement our bullying and harassment policies
- Support inclusion and diversity
- Promote psychological safety at work

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of [Company Name]. It covers all interactions in the workplace and extends to:

- Work-related social events and functions
- Business travel
- Electronic and online communications
- Social media interactions related to work
- Client and customer interactions

4. What Respect Looks Like

4.1 Communication

- Speaking to others courteously and professionally
- Listening actively and allowing others to speak
- Using inclusive language
- Giving constructive, not personal, feedback
- Responding to communications in a timely manner
- Being mindful of tone in written communications

4.2 Everyday Interactions

- Acknowledging colleagues and visitors
- Being punctual for meetings and commitments
- Respecting personal space and boundaries
- Cleaning up after yourself in shared spaces
- Being considerate of noise levels
- Sharing resources fairly

4.3 Valuing Differences

- Embracing diverse perspectives and experiences
- Being open to different working styles
- Avoiding assumptions based on personal characteristics
- Respecting cultural and religious practices
- Using preferred names and pronouns

4.4 Supporting Colleagues

- Offering help when colleagues are struggling
- Recognising and appreciating others' contributions
- Mentoring and sharing knowledge
- Standing up against disrespectful behaviour
- Checking in on colleagues' wellbeing

5. Disrespectful Behaviour

The following behaviours are inconsistent with a respectful workplace and are not acceptable:

- Belittling, dismissing, or ignoring others
- Shouting, swearing, or using aggressive language
- Making jokes at others' expense
- Spreading gossip or rumours

- Excluding colleagues deliberately
- Taking credit for others' work
- Interrupting or talking over others consistently
- Making assumptions or judgments based on stereotypes
- Invading personal space or privacy
- Sending rude or dismissive emails

Note: Serious or repeated disrespectful behaviour may constitute bullying or harassment and will be dealt with under our Harassment & Bullying Policy.

6. Creating a Respectful Culture

Building a respectful workplace is everyone's responsibility:

All Employees

- Reflect on your own behaviour and its impact
- Speak up respectfully if you witness disrespectful behaviour
- Be open to feedback about your own conduct
- Model the behaviour you want to see

Managers and Leaders

- Set the tone for your team
- Address disrespectful behaviour promptly
- Recognise and reward respectful conduct
- Create opportunities for team connection
- Ensure workloads and expectations are reasonable

7. Addressing Concerns

If you experience or observe disrespectful behaviour:

- Where appropriate, address it directly with the person involved
- Speak with your manager or supervisor
- Contact HR for advice or to raise a concern
- Use the formal grievance process for serious or ongoing issues

You will be supported in raising concerns and protected from any retaliation for doing so in good faith.

8. Consequences

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Coaching and feedback
- Mediation between parties

- Formal warning
- Further disciplinary action

The approach will depend on the nature, severity, and frequency of the behaviour.

9. Support Resources

The following resources are available:

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – [Insert details]
- HR Department – for guidance and support
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
- Lifeline: 13 11 14

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and aligned with our values and legal obligations.

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Respectful Workplace Policy. I commit to treating all colleagues, customers, and stakeholders with dignity and respect.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____