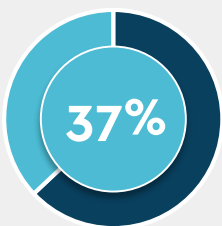


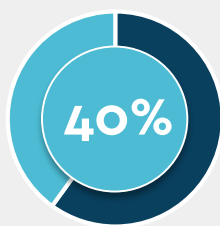
Positive Connections at Work – The Fight Against Loneliness



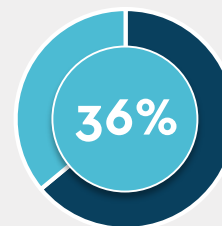
Loneliness shortens lifespans in a way similar to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.



37% of Australians adults report they feel lonely at work.



40% of lonely workers feel less productive at work.



36% of lonely workers report getting sick more often.

Feelings of loneliness occur when we feel disconnected from others. It's different from solitude or depression. Loneliness is different from solitude or depression and but can hurt as much as any physical pain we experience.

Loneliness is considered a "modern health epidemic". How we work and live has contributed to the growing feelings of loneliness in workplaces and the society.

- High workload increases stress levels and reduces the opportunity we have to engage with others. The focus on 'getting the job done' means less time is available to participate in activities that connect us with our colleagues.
- The nature of contract work and flexible working arrangements can mean we have less time to build strong connection with team members.
- More employees are relocating for employment opportunities and career advancements. While this is positive, it can mean living away from our family and friends, our social support.

Human connection as a solution to loneliness.

When we experience close bonds with those around us and interact with them regularly, we're happier and less stressed. We can all play an important role in creating a connected culture at work where everyone feels belong, valued, and appreciated.

What can we to promote positive connections at work?

- Role model the types of relationships you want to see at work. Team relationships that are filled with generosity, compassion and kindness create more positive emotions at work and help promote personal resilience.
- Invest in work relationships. Share more of who we are and look for common interests, goals and values. Take time to learn about your colleagues' life and passion outside of work. Talk to the person, not just communicate role-to-role. The more we understand each other, what drives our actions and behaviours, the better we can work together effectively.
- Reach out to help others and accept help when it is offered. If you notice a colleague struggling with a task, offer a hand or time to discuss the issues at hand.
- Look out for colleagues around you – even if you don't directly work with them. Notice the subtle changes like their mood, routine, and behaviours. Are they withdrawing from meeting, lunchroom, work events? Check-in and converse with them privately to provide support.