

Better Workplace Virtual Conference

April 5–7, 2022

Agenda

Day 1 / April 5, 2022

Reimagining the Better Workplace

1:00 p.m. **Welcome Remarks**

Bryan Benjamin, Vice-President,
The Conference Board of Canada
Erin Mills, Human Capital & Workplace Health,
The Conference Board of Canada

1:05 p.m. **Plenary Keynote**

**The Workplace Has Changed Forever:
Now Comes the Hard Part**

Dan Pontefract, Leadership Strategist, Author, Speaker,
Thinker, Poet, CEO and Founder of Pontefract Group

Looking back over the past 24 months, it is fair to say we have been in some of the most challenging times ever in our careers. The pandemic has cast a long shadow, but we've also learned to adapt, to persevere, and to continue innovating.

Looking ahead, we might suggest that the so-called "future of work" is indeed an exercise in decoding the why of work right now. What should we do?

We must put relationships at the core of our leadership, build on our capacity to work differently, while simultaneously defining and enacting a sense of meaning in our workplaces.

It's all doable. And yes, we might even have the pandemic to thank for thinking differently. Above all, we need tactics and techniques to improve our humanistic practices as we shift into a more caring leadership style. Let's put the word human back in our humanity.

1:35 p.m. **A Conversation with Pedro Antunes**

The Competitive Advantage of a "Better" Workplace: A Conversation With Pedro Antunes and Dan Pontefract

Pedro Antunes, Chief Economist,
The Conference Board of Canada
Dan Pontefract, Leadership Strategist, Author, Speaker,
Thinker, Poet, CEO and Founder of Pontefract Group

Pedro will join Dan for a unique conversation on what companies need to know about the current state of labour in Canada. Their discussion will zero in on the economic and social complexity around labour shortages, resignations, and retention.

1:50 p.m. **Break**

2:00 p.m. **Keynote**

Beyond Burnout: Why Self-Care is NOT the only Solution in the Reimagined Workplace

Hamza Khan, Future of Work Expert, Author of
Leadership, Reinvented

The World Health Organization calls stress "the health epidemic of the 21st century." Canada's corporate, government, and non-profit leaders are all too familiar with the debilitating stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The increased workloads, reactive workflows, economic uncertainty, and existential dread of the past two years have drastically diminished employee wellbeing on all levels: physical, emotional, and mental. A recent study by Workplace Strategies for Mental Health found that more than a third of working Canadians feel burned out, and other studies reveal that more than half of employees worldwide experienced full-blown burnout at least once during 2021. But this state of affairs actually predates the pandemic: A 2019 Gallup survey found that 76% of employees had experienced some form of Agenda burnout.

Day 1 / April 5, 2022 (cont'd)

In the face of these numbers, we need to ask ourselves: Is self-care truly our best defense against chronic stress? And how much is burnout influenced by leadership decisions and workplace culture? In this eye-opening and personal keynote address, Hamza Khan, author of “The Burnout Gamble” and “Leadership, Reinvented”, will make it clear that self-care is far from the best approach if we want to defeat burnout and build resilience. Instead of individualizing solutions, Khan says leaders must take a hard look at how they contribute to the systemic and cultural factors that make burnout inevitable. Hear action-oriented insights and real-world best practices that can promote holistic wellbeing and create a truly resilient workplace. It's time to go beyond burnout and reimagine the systems that affect workplace culture—starting with leadership.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the upstream factors that contribute to burnout.
- Hear new burnout research that reveals the inefficacy of self-care.
- Receive a framework to promote holistic wellbeing among their employees.
- Appreciate the need to adopt a more human-centric leadership style.
- Learn how to create a truly resilient workplace.

2:50 p.m. Break

3:10 p.m. Concurrent Session A1

Leadership Perspectives: Using ESG Principles to Cultivate Psychological Safety, Trust, and Inclusion in the Workplace

Moderator:

Henrietta Van hulle, Vice-President of Outreach, Stakeholder & Government Relations, PSHSA

Panellists:

Bob Masterson, President and CEO, Chemistry Industry Association of Canada

Channa Perera, Vice-President, Regulatory & Indigenous Affairs, Canadian Electricity Association

Twiladawn Stonefish, Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Hear three different perspectives on how ESG (environmental, social, and governance) principles can foster a better workplace and contribute to improved psychological safety, trust, and inclusion within organizations.

Key takeaways from this session:

- Better understand the role ESG plays in ensuring that trust and safety are the foundation for all organizational decisions.
- Learn the crucial steps leaders can take to link the social aspect of ESG to healthy and inclusive workplace culture initiatives.
- Hear how Northern employers are recognizing Inuit skills, knowledge, and perspectives and how Inuit communities are redefining the workplace to facilitate sustainable livelihoods.

3:10 p.m. Concurrent Session A2

Creating a Culturally Safe Workplace for Indigenous Employees

Moderator:

Corrina Hill, Manager, Health and Recovery Service, BC Hydro

Speakers:

Matthew Belliveau, Senior Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Wendy Landry, Senior Advisor Indigenous Initiatives & Indigenous Engagement, Enbridge Inc

Jody Whitney, Senior Strategist, Indigenous Collaboration

Cultural safety considers how social and historical contexts and structural and interpersonal power imbalances can shape one's experiences, both in day-to-day life and in the workplace.

Enbridge Gas will share how they foster cultural safety and trust with their Indigenous employees.

Attendees will hear:

- examples of Enbridge's efforts to improve engagement, employment, and retention of Indigenous talent across North America in order to achieve their goal of having 3.5% of their workforce be Indigenous people by 2025;
- insights into how to identify and understand internal and external barriers to Indigenous employment;
- an overview of Enbridge's strategy to ensure they remain attentive and responsive to the needs of their Indigenous partners.

3:10 p.m. Concurrent Session A3

Redefining the Future of Work in a Post-Pandemic World

Moderator:

Tim Petersen, Interim President and CEO, WorksafeNB

Speakers:

Megan Smith, Head of HR, SAP Canada

The term “future of work” was coined to describe what office life will look like in a post-pandemic world. But this phrase envisions the future as an endpoint when, in fact, the workplace journey will continue to evolve indefinitely. Several facets of work, such as technology, environment, policies, and benefits, will each need to be re-evaluated with a fresh perspective to create an optimal company culture in a modern corporate environment—the ultimate differentiator to attract and retain the best talent.

In this engaging session, Megan Smith, head of HR at SAP Canada, will explore questions and provide practical advice for leaders who are designing the future of work for their organizations, such as:

- How does technology support virtual work and transform flexible workspaces?
- How much flexibility in working time and location will empower people while also ensuring customer and business needs are met?
- How can we achieve both the benefits of remote work and the joy, engagement, and learning that come from developing in-person working relationships?
- Who is marginalized by this new work arrangement?

Day 2 / April 6, 2022

Workplace Health and Wellness Disrupters: The Strategy and Risk of Today's Key Challenges

12:00 p.m. [Sponsorship Workshop](#)

Walking the Talk: Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

Esther Fleurimond, Specialized Consultant in Healthy Workplaces, WSPS

WSPS supports organizations incorporate psychological health and safety into their corporate culture to create a more engaged, more productive, and healthier workforce.

Discover WSPS's Mental Harm Prevention Roadmap, which facilitates the creation of mental health strategies appropriate for the needs of Canadian organizations. The Roadmap helps guide intentional action by employers in alignment with the recommendations of the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Hear more about the latest research results and an evidence-based approach to promoting mental health and preventing mental harm based on 13 factors that support psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Key takeaway:

- Practical tools to implement a psychologically safe, healthy, and thriving work environment, leading to a positive employee experience that nurtures engagement, productivity, and mental health.

12:45 p.m. [Break](#)

1:00 p.m. [Welcome Remarks](#)

Erin Mills, Director, Human Capital & Workplace Health, The Conference Board of Canada

1:05 p.m. [Plenary Panel](#)

Research in Action: Future-Proofing Investments in Workplace Mental Health

Moderator:

Erin Mills, Director, Human Capital & Workplace Health, The Conference Board of Canada

Panellists:

Michal Juul Sørensen, Vice President and General Manager, Lundbeck Canada

Rachel McNeill-Thompson, Assistant Vice President Marketing, Communications and Client Experience, Sun Life

Maria-Jose Perea, Senior Director, Head of the Group Service Offer Development Administrative Department, Desjardins

Strong mental health is key for employee engagement, wellbeing, and productivity. Organizations, and the programs they provide, play a pivotal role in supporting employees' wellness.

This session will highlight preliminary findings from a recent Conference Board of Canada study with companies across Canada to identify key areas of where mental health programming can yield the greatest returns and most benefit to employees into the future.

1:50 p.m. [Break](#)

2:00 p.m. [Keynote](#)

Change Starts From the Top: Lead Through Rapid Change and Uncertainty

Dr. Lisa Bélanger, Behavioural Change Expert, Researcher

Change is almost always met with resistance, fear, and the attempt to avoid the unknown. Change in a workplace starts from the top down. With a lack of leadership buy-in, communication, and modelling, many change programs are destined for disaster. As a senior leader or middle management, how do you effectively lead through change and uncertainty?

Dr. Lisa Bélanger shares key techniques leaders can use to inspire and facilitate corporate change and provides case studies on how leaders who model behaviours at work (virtual, hybrid, or in person) have a direct, positive impact on an organization's bottom line.

Beyond personal influence, this talk explores how to set up a physical and social environment and culture to support the desired change. Lisa will lead you through what questions to ask, how to develop a clear strategy, and how to understand your role in implementing sustainable, meaningful change for teams and organizations.

2:50 p.m. [Break](#)

3:10 p.m. [Concurrent Sessions B1](#)

Effective Mental Wellbeing Strategies: Examples From the Field

Moderator:

Shairoz Moledina, Senior Manager, Workplace Well-being, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Panellists:

Carrie Bjola, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Public Service Commission, Government of Saskatchewan

Jenny Winter, Vice President, Global HR Center of Expertise, Talent, Culture, and Learning, CGI

Janet Young, Director, People & Culture, Well-being & Health Services, TELUS

Establishing and implementing an employee mental health and wellbeing strategy within an organization's culture is a continuous journey. Three employers will share their experiences integrating their mental health and wellbeing strategies into organizational priorities, policies, and practices.

Key takeaways:

- an understanding of the critical components of an employee mental health and wellbeing strategy;
- recommendations for effective and successful implementation of these strategies;
- lessons learned and other considerations for organizations looking at implementing a mental health and wellbeing strategy.

3:10 p.m. **Concurrent Session B2**
Responding to Domestic Violence in the Workplace

Moderator:

Angela M. Francoeur, Interim Director of Strategic Planning, WorkSafeNB

Panellists:

Dr. Adriana Berlingieri, PhD, Organizational Consultant, Researcher, Educator/Facilitator, Academic Research Associate, Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children, Western University

Silke Brabander, Senior Policy & Program Advisor in Violence Prevention at the Women's Equality Branch of Executive Council Office with the Province of New Brunswick

Jennie Wilson, Owner, 11th Mile restaurant

Learn how organizations can respond to domestic violence in the workplace. A diverse panel of experts, including a researcher, a policy expert, and a small business owner, will share their expertise and experience on designing and implementing tools, best practices, and policies that support impacted employees and mitigate harm.

Attendees will:

- Explore actions leaders can take to recognize safety issues and ensure they meet their legislated responsibilities to protect employees.
- Gain insight into still-emerging pandemic-related workplace challenges and discuss best practices in the field.
- Learn about available resources, toolkits, and practical steps organizations can take to support impacted employees.

3:10 p.m. **Concurrent Session B3**
Immigration Inclusion in the Workplace

Kathryn Dennler, Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, The Conference Board of Canada

With many industries facing persistent labour shortages, it is increasingly important for businesses to leverage immigrant talent. But many immigrants in Canada are overqualified for the jobs they are in. Studies show that addressing underemployment could contribute \$50 billion to Canada's GDP each year. This session examines the role of Canada's immigration system in meeting labour market needs and the steps businesses must take to create a positive work environment for newcomers. Attendees will learn:

- which immigration channels can address labour shortages in different sectors;
- why it is important for immigrants to get a first job in Canada that is commensurate with their experience;
- who can play a role in advancing immigrant inclusion in the workplace.

Day 3 / April 7, 2022

The Way Forward: Toward a Healthy Workplace Culture

1:00 p.m. **Welcome Remarks**

Susan Black, President & CEO, The Conference Board of Canada

1:05 p.m. **Plenary Panel**

Research in Action: Strengthening the Engagement of Neurodiverse Workers

Shelley Alderman, Administrative Clerk, Risk Division, FCC

Donna Flaman-Johnson, Inclusive Employment Broker, University of Regina

Michael Hoffort, President and Chief Executive Officer, FCC

Leah Sharpe, Director, HR, Farm Credit Canada, FCC

Neurodiversity is an area of inclusion that is becoming increasingly important for workplaces and employees. Hear some preliminary research findings from CBoC, followed by an impactful and informative story from Michael, Leah, and Leslie of Farm Credit Canada.

Donna from the 4to40 program will build on this story to share a successful and innovative model that is working to support neurodiverse people from education through to employment.

Key takeaways:

- Hear the latest insights from The Conference Board of Canada's research on strengthening the engagement of neurodiverse workers.
- Learn about the benefits of hiring neurodiverse workers and the available supports.
- Engage with employers and employees who have implemented innovative and inclusive hiring practices.

1:50 p.m. **Break**

2:00 p.m. **Keynote**

Fire Up Your Mental Health with Anthony McLean: Mental Health in Times of Change

Moderator:

Michael Lavis, Founder & CEO, Creative Options Regina (COR)

Speaker:

Anthony McLean, Leadership, Mental Health, Inclusivity

The effects of COVID-19 have left many people feeling lonely and isolated. Burnout rates have reached an all-time high. People are overwhelmed. Now more than ever, we need to talk about mental health. In this interactive and upbeat presentation, Anthony offers effective self-care strategies, practical coping skills for stress, and proven resources to avoid burnout. Above all, Anthony reminds us that mental health is a journey we take as a community. When we support each other, we break the stigma around mental health and empower those who need it the most.

Learning outcomes:

- Understand the difference between everyday ups and downs, temporary mental health problems, and mental illnesses.
- Learn healthy coping skills to deal with stress and anxiety.
- See the role exercise, sleep, hydration, and nutrition play in mental health.
- Empowers participants to reach out for help when they need it.

2:50 p.m. **Break**

3:10 p.m. **Plenary Session**

Inclusive Leadership: From Silos to Safety

Tina Varughese, Cross-Cultural Communication and Diversity Expert

Creating a great organization isn't just about breaking down cultural barriers. It's about building a workplace where everyone works toward a common purpose, feels a sense of belonging (not a sense of longing to be), and feels included, regardless of title, rank, or position. Inclusive leaders understand that people don't leave jobs—they leave people. They believe not only in investing in themselves, but in encouraging others to grow, learn, and build inclusivity and trust. Why? To break down silos, foster employee engagement, encourage open lines of communication, promote creativity, offer a safe place to land, and create a healthy, happy, and inspiring workplace.

Key takeaways:

- Psychological safety is the key to belonging and inclusion in the workplace.
- Understand microaggressions: Intention and impact.
- How to give feedback that is constructive, continuous, influential, inclusive, and solution-based.
- Death by meeting: Learn the five key steps to inclusive and effective meetings.
- Creating a culture of inclusion starts with authenticity.
- Negative Nellie and Nasty Ned: How to actively listen, include, and empathize to change negative behaviours at work.

