



# Strategies to Support a Positive School Climate

## Job Control

Job control is the ability to influence what happens within one's work environment. This can include authority over decisions and skill discretion (Karasek, 1985), as well as autonomy, which allows employees to determine the order and pacing of their tasks (Johari et al., 2018).



### Why is it important?

- Teachers strongly value autonomy as a workplace condition, as it impacts their professional status and level of job satisfaction (Strong & Yoshida, 2014).
- Educators with low job control are more likely to experience high levels of anxiety and depression (Ibrahim et al., 2021).
- Perceived job control is associated with higher levels of job commitment and performance, and low levels of absenteeism, and job turnover (Spector, 1986).

## In Practice

Wherever possible, allow employees to determine how to complete their work, including the tasks and timeframes expected of them, and provide opportunities for staff to make decisions that impact their roles.



### What can schools do?

#### **Job autonomy**

- While not everything will be negotiable, trust the expertise and intuitions of your staff by giving them greater freedom to determine how their work is done, including the specific processes involved.
- Search for opportunities to give staff greater choice in how they structure key aspects of their workday, the sequence and pace of their work (e.g., order of tasks, deadlines) and allow for flexible arrangements for any tasks that are not urgent (e.g., rotated schedules for after school responsibilities).

#### **Staff voice and input**

- Create an environment where staff are regularly consulted on organisational and role related matters by developing both formal and informal channels to solicit feedback (e.g., suggestion box, scheduling regular touch points with staff).
- Provide transparency around any changes that result from staff input (e.g., in meetings and reports). Staff are most likely to see feedback systems as meaningful when they have an opportunity to see the changes that result from their insights



## Leader Reflection

### Facilitate freedom

- Look into tasks, policies and procedures where little control and autonomy exists and make adjustments accordingly. Even small changes can make a big difference to job satisfaction.
- Allow for discretion in how educators carry out their teaching duties, including instructional delivery, assessment, and disciplinary considerations.

### Professional development

- Develop a performance review process centred around active listening and solicit feedback from employees concerning their roles and responsibilities, goals, and opportunities for future growth.
- Allow staff the ability to choose from a variety of flexible professional development opportunities relevant to their skills and interests.
- Look into arrangements for shared leadership and rotated responsibilities that will promote cross-skill development, instill variety into work routines and reduce workload.

## References

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