



Worksheet

Acceptance and change

Sometimes, we cannot change a situation that's causing us stress so we need to find ways to accept it. Usually we will need to use a combination of acceptance and change strategies when we're feeling stressed. This worksheet will help you/your team come up with strategies to help accept and/or change situations that are causing stress and provides a simple problem-solving template.^{1,2,3}

To manage stress and improve situations, we often only focus on what can be changed. Change-oriented strategies include active problem-solving, changing our behaviour or changing our thinking about situations. However, the things that cause us stress are rarely black and white, so a combination of both acceptance and change strategies is often needed to help us cope.

Acceptance is not passively putting up with rotten situations (when active problem-solving, self-advocacy and other change strategies can make a real difference). But it does mean we don't waste our energy fighting things we can't currently change.

Example: "X and Y get their rosters for the next two weeks and find they've been rostered on the night shift.

X hates the night shift and gets angry and worked up, already dreading the fortnight ahead.

Y also doesn't like the nightshift, but accepts that it's part of the job and knows she can make some changes to make these next two weeks easier, like blocking out times when she can have a nap, prepping food she can eat on her breaks and looking forward to the week after, when she will have four days off in a row."

When the situation is out of our control and dangerous, this is not something we should accept, and it can be difficult to change. When this is happening, get support and help from others, find someone you feel safe to talk to or look at some of the supports available on the [Getting help and advice](#) fact sheet to keep yourself safe.

Activity:

1. Consider some of the situations you/your team identify as challenging and possible strategies to help accept or change the situation. (For support with [identifying challenges](#))

Situation	Acceptance (Strategies for tolerating reality)	Change (Problem solving strategies)

2. Weigh up the ideas that feel achievable and realistic to you. Make sure you have included, where you can, accessing other supports.

Problem solving template

Situation (what is happening):

What is the challenge for me/the team?

What acceptance and change options would work for me/the team?

List of solutions	List advantages and disadvantages of each solution		Choose best or most practical solution or combination
	Advantages	Disadvantages	

Plan how to carry out the solution: How will I/we achieve the goal?

1. List the steps to achieve your goal.
2. Remember to look at the supports (both resources and people) you have identified in the **Fuel in, Fuel out** worksheet and use these.

Review how well the plan went

Remember this is about reducing stress by resolving an issue, so thinking about how we felt about the process and results is important to review how successful it was.

- **During the situation – how did the approach go?**
E.g. How did I/the team feel, what were my/our thoughts, how did I/we manage them?
- **Afterwards – what was the result?**
E.g. How did I/the team feel, how did I/we deal with it, what can I/we learn from this?
- **Next steps – What else needs to happen?**
E.g. Do I/we need to talk to someone, get in other support, change anything for the future?