

FACT SHEET #7

THE NEUROSCIENCE AND
PSYCHOLOGY OF
INFLUENCING RESILIENCE

Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have.

*Resilience is a set of **THOUGHTS, FEELINGS** and **BEHAVIOURS** that individuals can learn and develop.*

Importantly, one of the most powerful factors in an individual's response to change, challenge and adversity; and their openness and engagement to developing their resilience - is through the influence of leaders - both formal and informal in the workplace.

The neuroscience and psychology of leadership helps us understand how you, as a leader in your organisation are in a unique and important position to influence resilience in others.

1

First, our brain is the control centre of who we are and what we do. It is a 60% fat and 40% water **electrochemical machine made up of 100 billion specialised cells known as neurons.**

2

Secondly, **our brain has evolved in a social environment.** The reason for this is that our survival depended upon our ability to be part of a group which required everyone to cooperate. Cooperation requires organisation, direction and leadership.

3

Consequently, as we translate this into the modern world - decades of research into the neuroscience and psychology of leadership has shown us that **our brains are hardwired to be influenced by those who are in a position of perceived or actual authority or power.**

4

Furthermore, through the mechanism of what we call **mirror neurons**, our brains are actually structured to mimic others - particularly those in a powerful position. This results in individuals having an evolutionary tendency towards emulating the behaviour of their leaders.

As such, the mindset and behaviours that you encourage in others and demonstrate as a leader in response to change, challenge and adversity - will in turn, influence the resilience of those around you.



THE LEADER'S ROLE IN INFLUENCING RESILIENCE



Fascinatingly, the insights into the neuroscience and psychology of leadership tells us about the mechanisms behind the unique opportunity that leaders have to influence resilience in those around them.

However, how do we translate this into action and cultivate a resilient team and culture?

The answer lies in leaders consciously using what they **think, feel, say and do** to demonstrate resilience and encourage resilience in others.

In fact, did you know that the latest organisational research has identified that the culture of your workplace determines the results of your business more than any other factor in your organisation?

IMPORTANTLY, it is the words and actions of leaders that create the culture of your business.

This is the extraordinary power of leadership.

To what extent are you influencing resilience with your words and actions?

If you or someone you know needs help contact **TIACS** on 0488 846 988 or your organisation's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), your GP or call: **LifeLine** on 13 11 14, **Kids Helpline** on 1800 551 800, **MensLine Australia** on 1300 789 978 or the **Suicide Call Back Service** on 1300 659 467.