

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

Trauma-Informed HR Practices

Redesigning People Processes for Employees with Trauma Histories

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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Programme Overview

A significant proportion of employees carry the burden of past experiences, often unknowingly. This programme aims to equip HR professionals with the understanding and skills to navigate workplace interactions, including hiring, performance, and disciplinary processes, in a way that avoids re-traumatisation and fosters a supportive environment.

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the prevalence and profound impact of various forms of trauma within the Indian workforce, recognizing how these experiences shape employee behaviour and workplace dynamics.
- ✓ Acquire practical strategies to adapt hiring processes, ensuring interviews and onboarding are sensitive to potential trauma triggers, thereby promoting a more inclusive and safe candidate experience.
- ✓ Learn to implement performance management techniques that are empathetic and supportive, focusing on growth and development without inadvertently causing distress or re-traumatisation.
- ✓ Develop skills to conduct disciplinary and grievance procedures with heightened awareness, ensuring fairness and respect while minimising the risk of triggering past traumatic responses.
- ✓ Gain insights into the specific cultural contexts of trauma in India, such as childhood adversity, domestic violence, and generational impacts, and how these manifest in the workplace.
- ✓ Build capacity within HR teams to respond effectively and compassionately to employees who may be experiencing distress related to past traumatic events.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for HR Business Partners, HR Directors, Learning & Development professionals, and anyone involved in shaping organisational policies and employee relations within Indian companies.

Programme Content

1. Trauma in the Workforce: Prevalence and Impact

This module delves into the widespread nature of trauma and adverse experiences within the Indian workforce, including common forms like childhood adversity, domestic violence, and generational trauma. We will explore how these experiences, often carried silently, can significantly influence an individual's behaviour, concentration, stress responses, and overall well-being at work. Understanding these underlying factors is crucial for HR professionals to foster a more empathetic and effective workplace environment, moving beyond surface-level observations to address root causes of employee challenges.

 **Activity: Small group discussion on identifying potential workplace stressors.**

2. Trauma-Informed Hiring: Reducing Re-traumatisation

Traditional hiring processes can inadvertently trigger past trauma through intense questioning, unfamiliar environments, or perceived judgment. This section focuses on adapting interview techniques, candidate communication, and onboarding procedures to be trauma-sensitive. We will explore how to create a safe and respectful candidate experience, ensuring that the selection process itself does not cause further distress. Implementing these changes helps attract diverse talent and builds a foundation of trust from the very beginning of the employment journey.

 **Activity: Role-playing exercise for trauma-informed interview questions.**

3. Trauma-Informed Performance Management

Performance conversations, when handled insensitively, can be highly distressing for individuals with a history of trauma. This module provides strategies for conducting performance reviews and feedback sessions in a way that is supportive, clear, and focused on growth. We will discuss techniques for setting realistic expectations, acknowledging challenges without blame, and fostering a collaborative approach to development. This ensures that performance management supports employee well-being and enhances productivity rather than creating anxiety.

 **Activity: Case study analysis of performance feedback scenarios.**

4. Trauma-Informed Disciplinary and Grievance Processes

Navigating disciplinary actions and grievance procedures requires careful consideration, especially for employees who may have experienced trauma. This section outlines how to conduct these processes with a focus on fairness, dignity, and minimal re-traumatisation. We will explore communication strategies, the importance of clear procedures, and providing appropriate support during investigations. Ensuring these critical HR functions are trauma-aware promotes a just and respectful workplace for all.

 **Activity: Developing a checklist for trauma-aware grievance handling.**

5. Training HR Teams in Trauma-Awareness

Equipping HR professionals with essential trauma awareness is paramount for effective implementation of trauma-informed practices. This module addresses the importance of self-care for HR personnel, understanding their own potential triggers, and developing compassionate communication skills. We will cover how to recognise signs of distress and respond appropriately, creating a supportive internal HR function. Building this internal capacity ensures a consistent and sensitive approach across all HR interactions.

 **Activity: Guided self-reflection on personal stress management techniques.**

6. Cultural Nuances of Trauma in India

This section specifically addresses the unique cultural and societal factors that contribute to trauma within the Indian context. We will discuss how historical events, societal pressures, family dynamics, and socio-economic conditions shape experiences of adversity and their impact on individuals in the workplace. Understanding these nuances allows HR to develop more relevant and effective support systems and policies that resonate with the lived realities of employees across diverse backgrounds.

 **Activity: Group brainstorming on culturally sensitive workplace support initiatives.**

Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Develop a draft policy outline for trauma-informed HR practices.	HR Leadership Team	Week 1	Incorporate feedback from initial training sessions.
Conduct an initial training session for all HR staff on trauma awareness.	HR/L&D Department	Month 1	Focus on foundational concepts and self-care for HR personnel.
Review and revise interview guides and onboarding materials for trauma sensitivity.	Recruitment & HR Operations	Week 2	Ensure language is inclusive and avoids triggering content.
Integrate trauma-informed communication guidelines into performance management training.	L&D Department	Month 1	Provide practical examples for managers.
Update disciplinary and grievance procedure documentation with trauma-informed considerations.	HR Compliance & Employee Relations	Month 2	Ensure all steps are clearly defined and empathetic.
Establish a confidential resource or referral system for employees needing additional support.	HR Benefits & Wellness	Quarter 1	Partner with external mental wellness providers if necessary.

About Manas



Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

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A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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Disclaimer: This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma – Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance – organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential – prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: manu@manas365.com | +91 99818 13224 This document does not constitute a legal instrument and carries no legal standing or admissibility in any court of law or official proceeding.