

# **SOLVE**

## **Introduction**

**Integrating health promotion into  
workplace OSH policies**

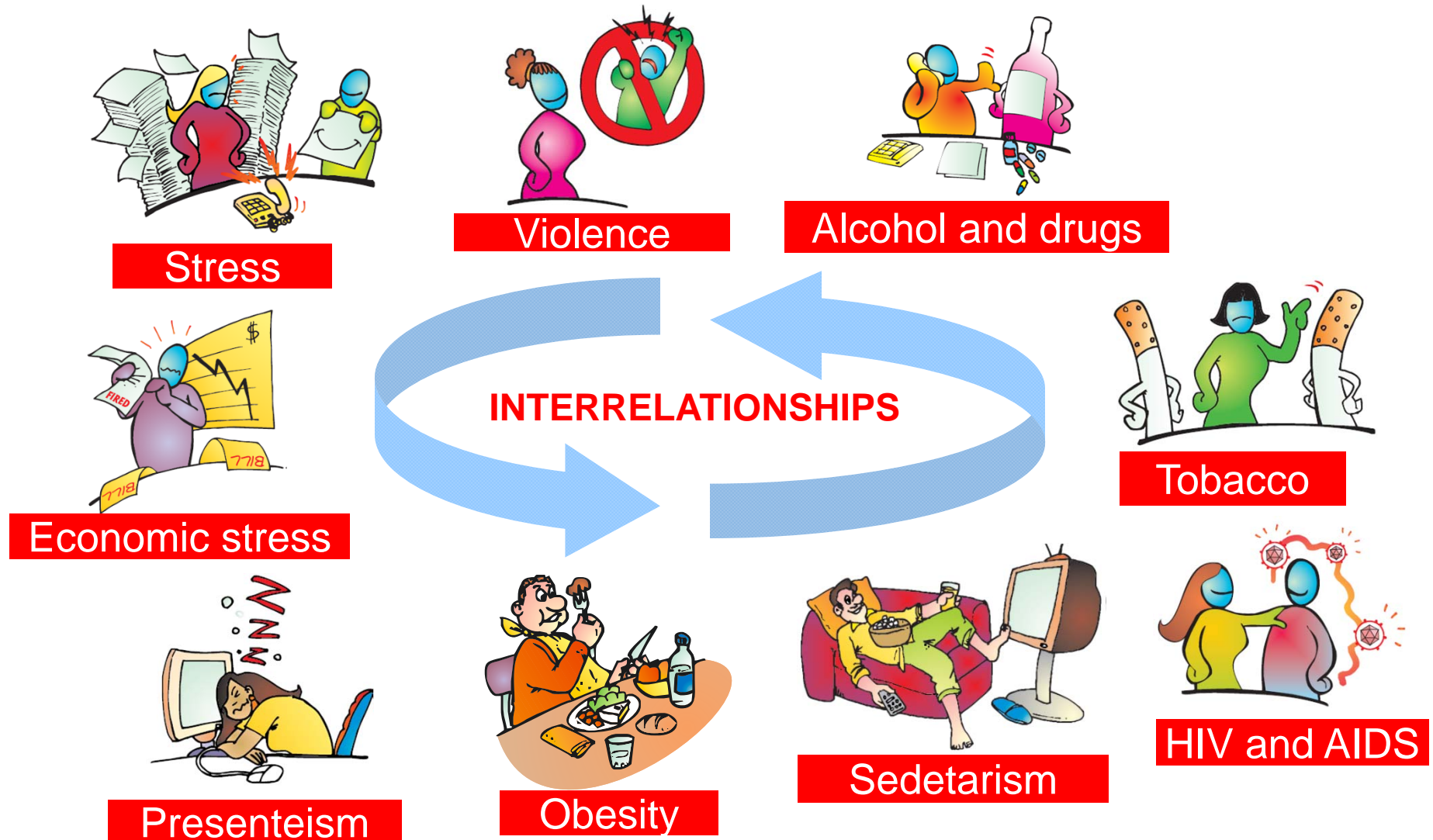


International Labour Office

# The problem



# The problem



# Examples of the scope of the problem

- A recent study by EU-OSHA found that on average 22 % of the European workforce is stressed
- Many national surveys have found that between 40 % and 90 % of the women questioned have suffered some form of sexual harassment during their working lives (Hunt et al., 2007)
- In 2009, an estimated 1.8 million people died of AIDS and in that same year 2.6 million people became infected (UNAIDS, 2010)

# Examples of the scope of the problem

- Unless urgent action is taken, tobacco could kill one billion people during the 21st century
- It is estimated that there are more than 300 million obese people worldwide (WHO, 2006)
- Individuals suffering from sleep deprivation and related disorders are less productive, have an increased use of health care services and likelihood of injury (Colten; Altevogt, 2006)



# Psychosocial risks at work

The levels of stress experienced by different groups of workers in EU Member States:

- Stress by age: highest levels observed among middle-aged workers
- Stress by gender: prevalence of stress among men and women is similar
- Stress by sector and occupation: especially prevalent in education and health, agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing sectors
- Stress by employment status: well-being for self-employed workers is lower than for employed workers

*European Risk Observatory Report 2009, OSH in figures: stress at work - facts and figures*

# The impact of psychosocial risks to the individual

For the worker:



- Higher risk of accidents
- Increased family or social problems
- Stigmatization and discrimination
- Health deterioration
- Physical or psychological illness
- Pain, distress, disability and death

# The impact of psychosocial risks in the workplace

For the enterprise or organization:



- Poor morale
- Increased absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover
- Reduced productivity
- Reduced profits or services
- Higher costs
- Reduced competitiveness



# The costs

# The costs of psychosocial risks at work

- Health and safety at work is not only essential for workers' well-being, but also very important for companies' productivity and society economic development
- Poor working conditions account for a reduction in productivity and lost working days
- For example, in the Netherlands the cost of work-related illness is estimated at 1,368 euros (€) while the cost of prevention at € 400

*European Risk Observatory Report 2009, OSH in figures: stress at work - facts and figures*



# A look at some figures

Average worker  
takes **7 days** of  
sick leave **per year**

Sample enterprise 100 workers:

- **10 drink regularly**
- **30 smoke**
- **10 have been victims of psychological or physical violence**

According to the scientific literature:

- People addicted to alcohol take **7 times** more sick leave than others
- Smokers take an average of **3 additional** sick leave days per year
- Victims of physical or psychological violence take an average of **7 additional** sick days per year

# The costs of psychosocial risks at work

A database with **2 million subjects** was created to study the costs of health risk factors. The following were included:

- Australian Health Management Group
- Bank One
- Detroit Diesel
- Genesis Health System
- Honeywell General Electric
- The Progressive Corporation
- Steelcase
- Xerox
- United Autoworkers General Motors (UAW-GM)

*Health Management Research Center of the University of Michigan  
(Edington. D.W., (2001) American Journal of Health Promotion)*



# The costs of psychosocial risks at work

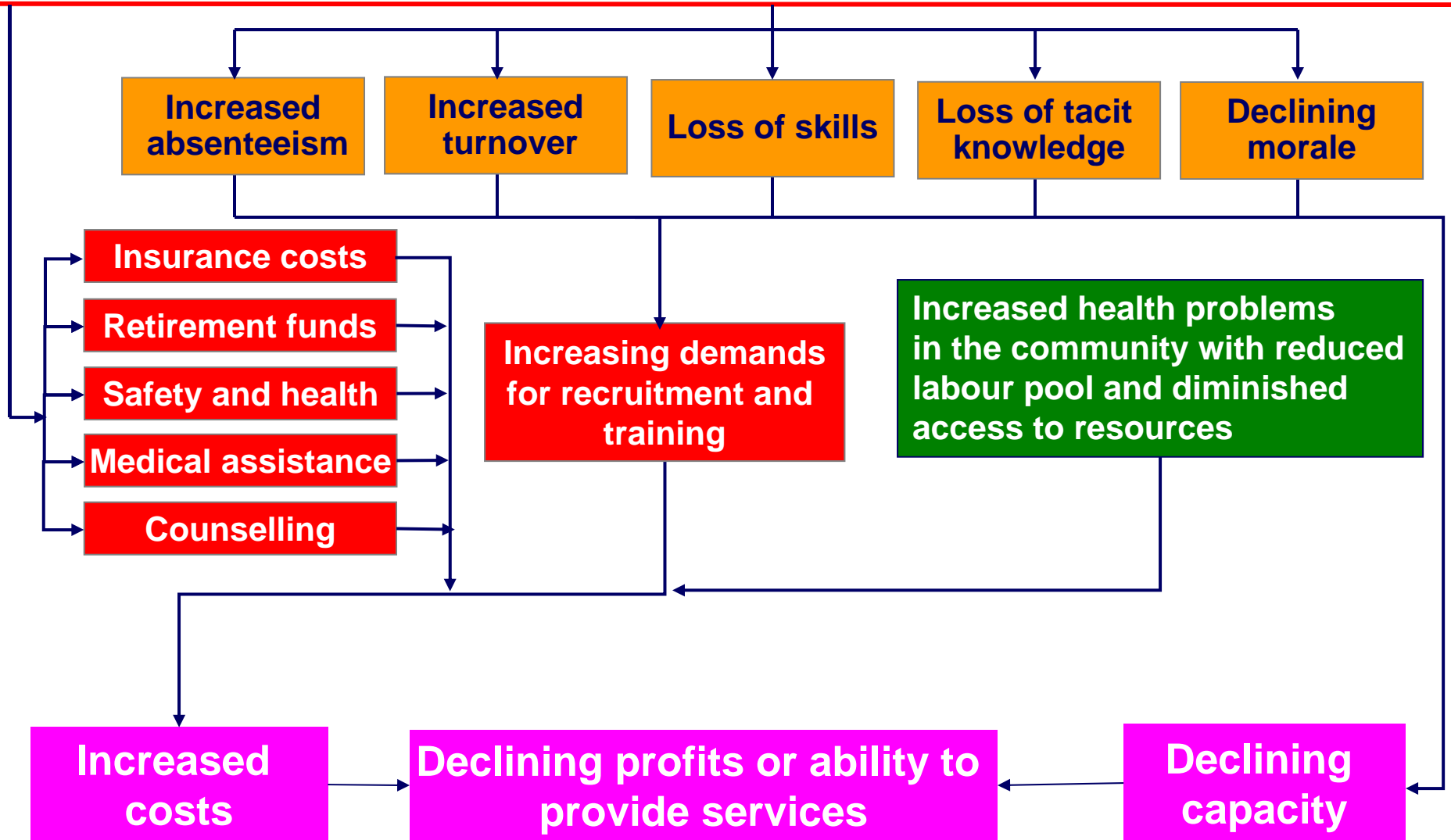
There was a clear relationship between health risk factors and health care costs

- **Reduction** of one worker health risk factor = **\$150 reduction** in health care costs per worker
- **Increase** of one worker health risk factor = **\$350 increase** in health care costs per worker
- Therefore, the cost associated with an increase in health risk factors **is more than twice the amount** saved by the reduction of a health risk factors

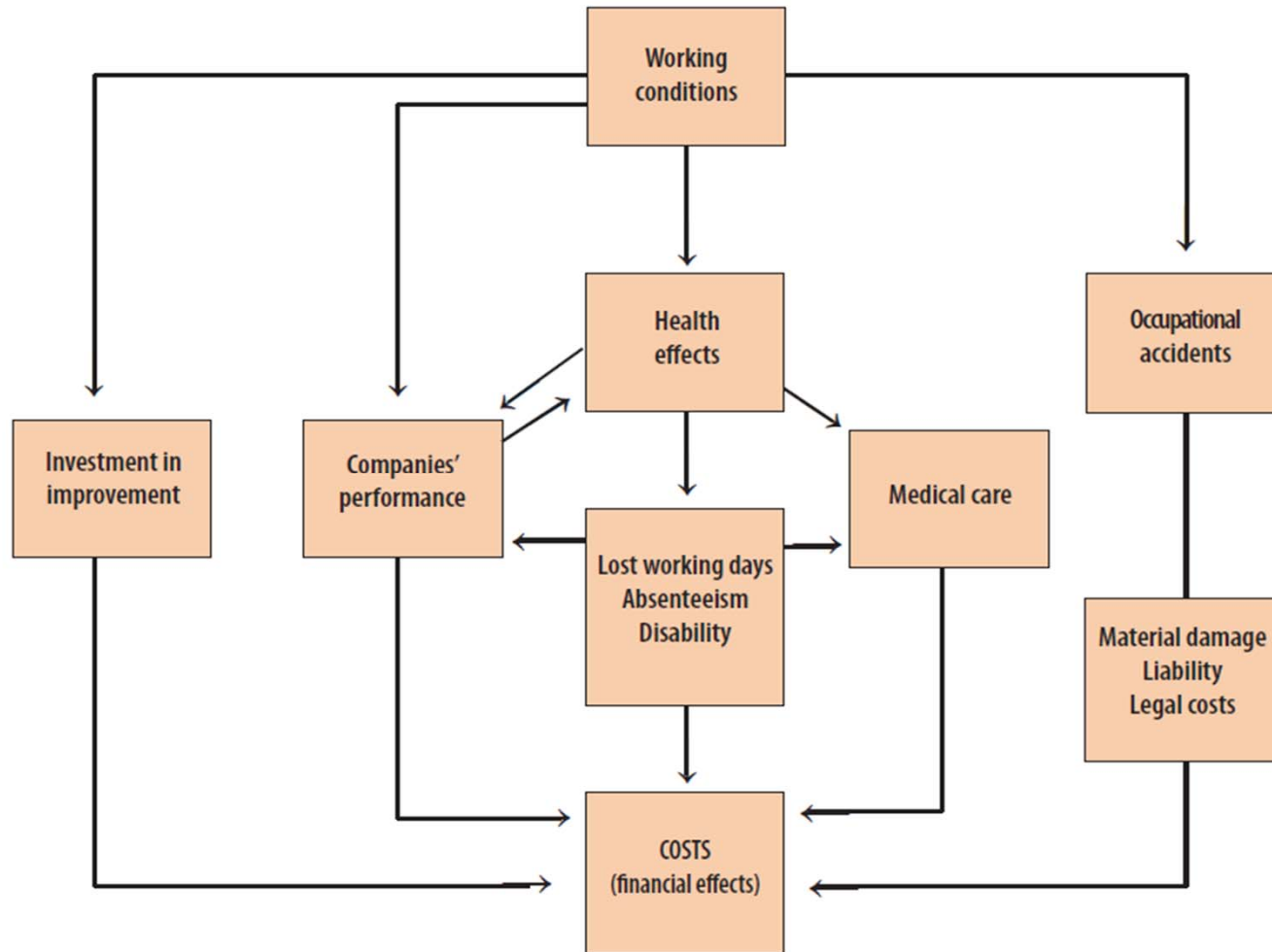
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# The impact of psychosocial risks at work



# The impact of psychosocial risks at work



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# Why SOLVE?

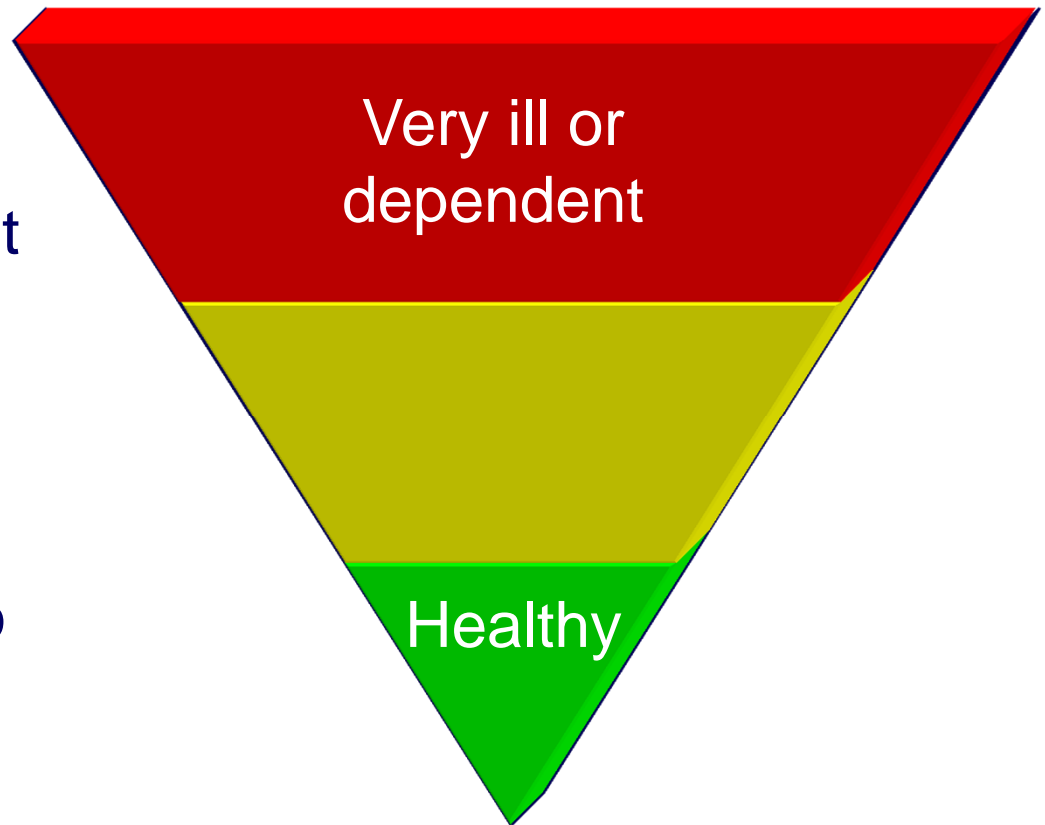
## An ILO response



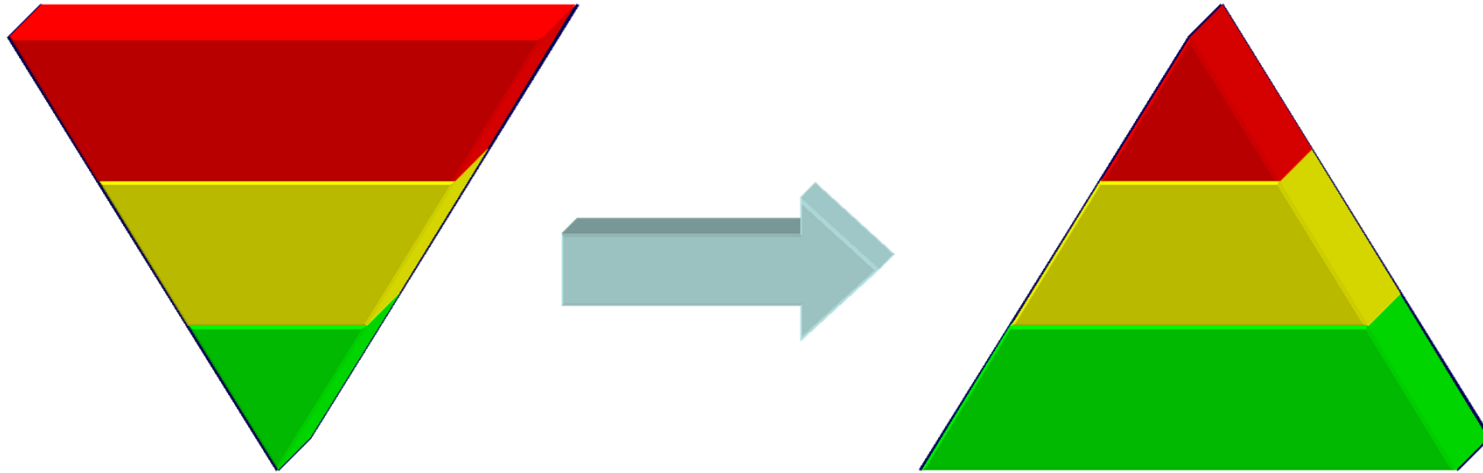


# The traditional approach

- Most resources are focused on the treatment of very ill or dependent workers
- Few, if any resources go towards prevention

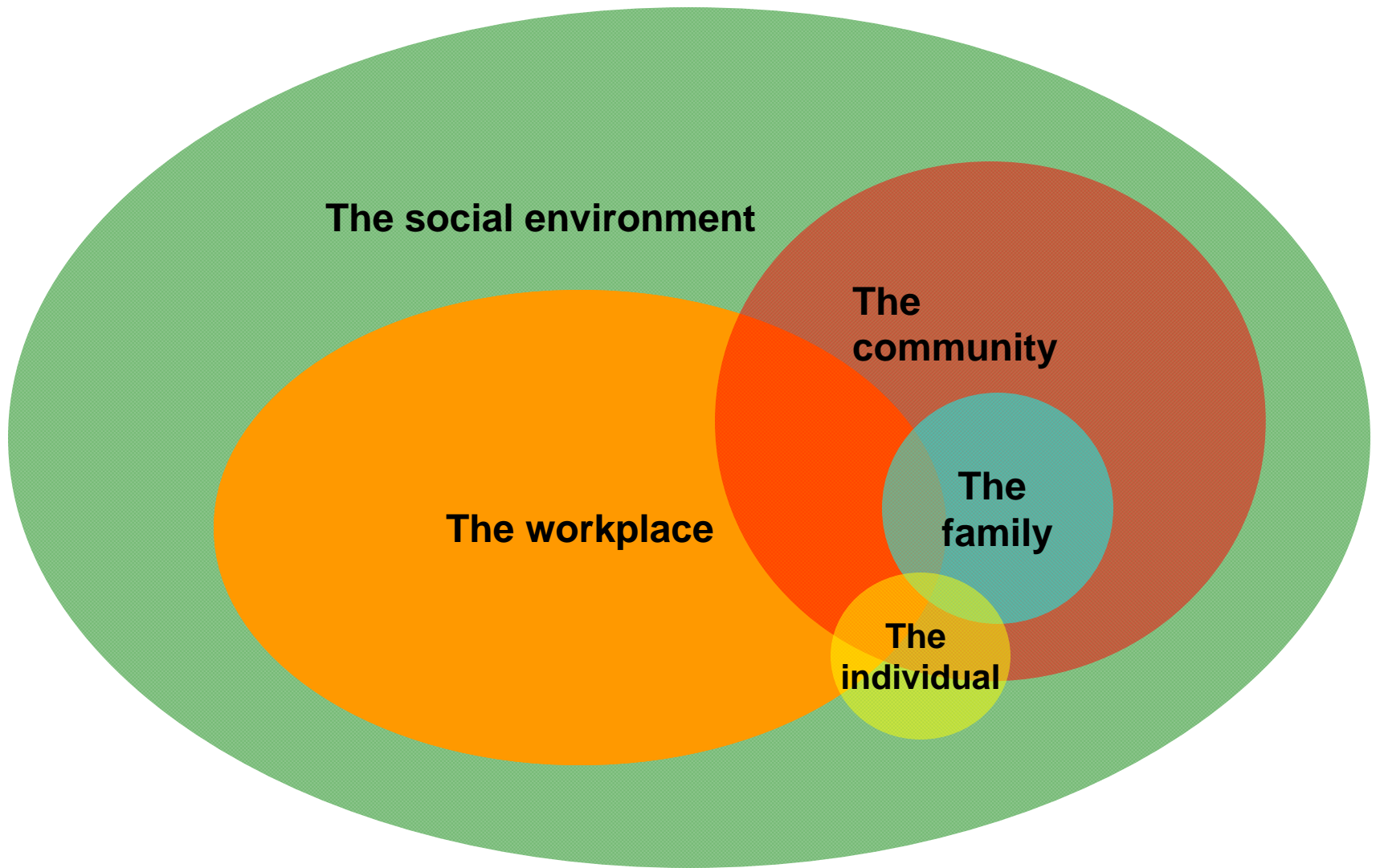


# Paradigm shift

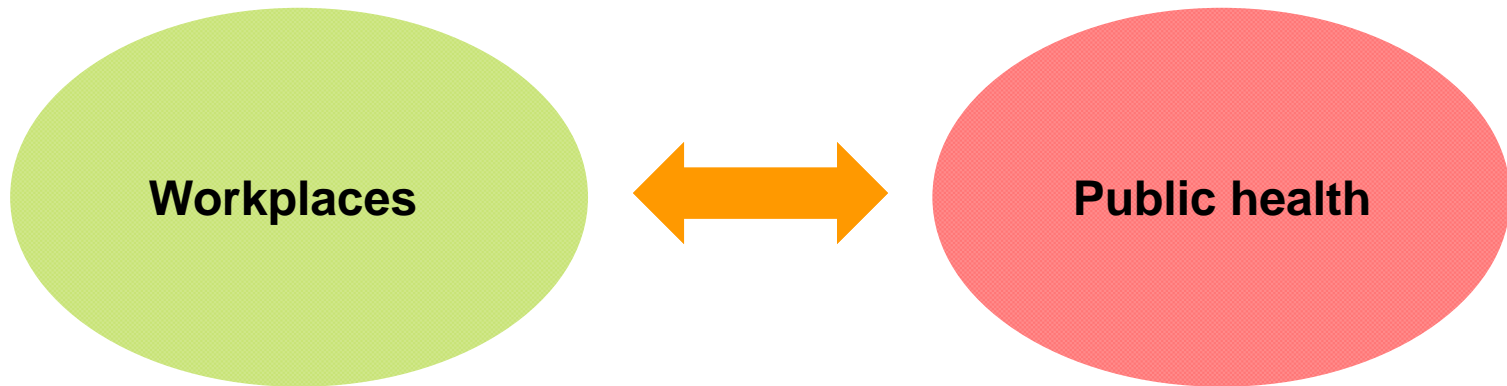


- The focus of our efforts needs to be on preventing healthy workers from becoming ill
- Therefore, the paradigm shift is from treatment to prevention

# The ecological model



# Workplace vs health promotion



- **Workplace impact on public health:**

- **Working conditions** e.g. smoking bans at work; stress resulting from high demands and little control
- **Working culture** e.g. tolerance of alcohol use; lunch style; attitudes to overtime (related to sleep)

- **Public health impact on workplaces:**

e.g. increased absenteeism; reduced productivity.

- **Public health impact on individual workers:**

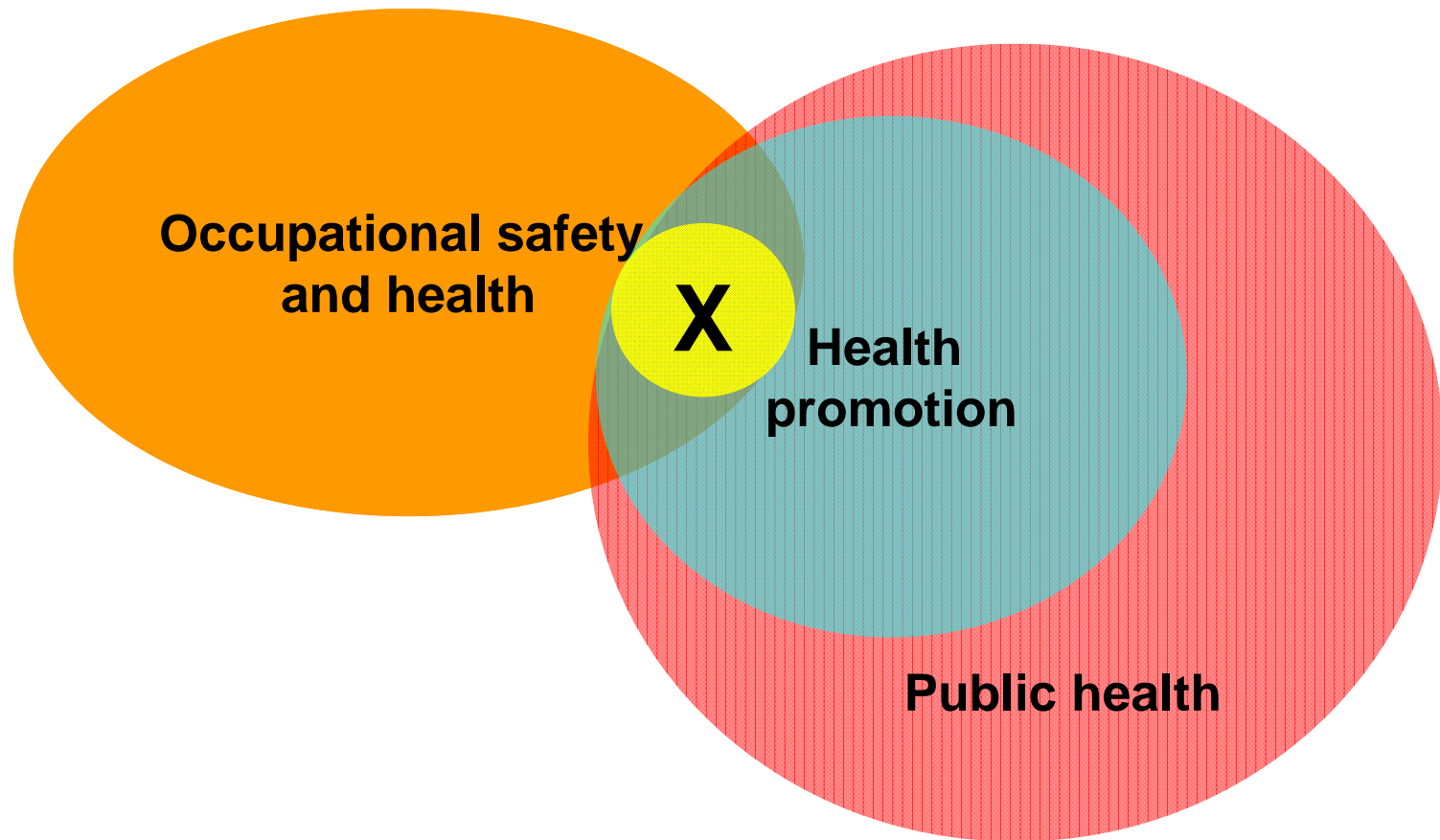
e.g. sickness, ability to work, well-being

# The goal of SOLVE



**Integration of health promotion into a comprehensive organizational **policy** on **occupational safety and health** and development of action based on the policy**

# Workplace health promotion and OSH



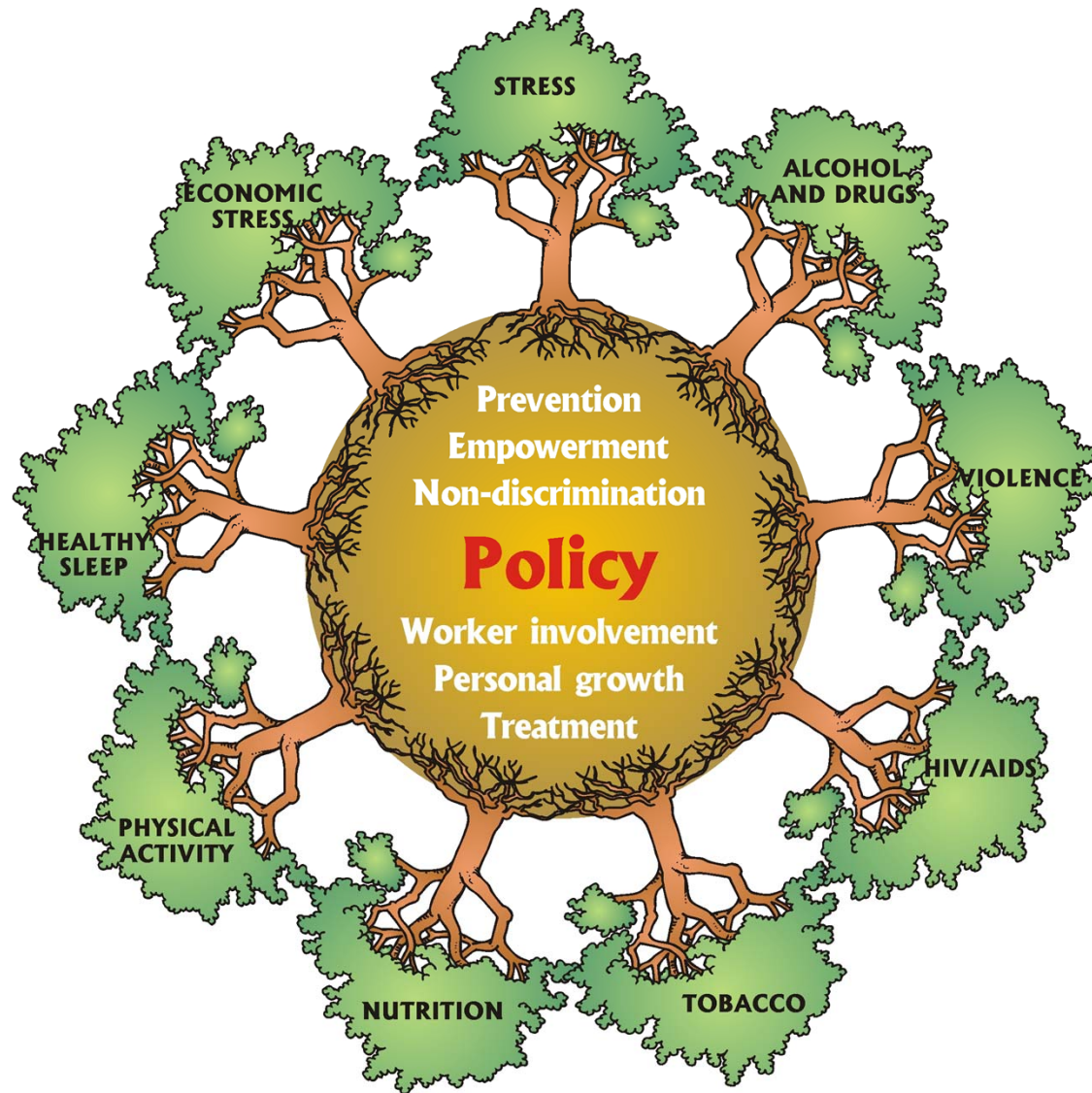
# What is Workplace Health Promotion (WHP)?

- It complements OSH measures and is integrated into the OSH management system of the organization
- It contributes in establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment enhancing the quality of working life and physical and mental health at work
- It enables workers to cope more effectively with psychosocial risks and work-related personal or family problems that may impact their well-being and work performance, such as stress, violence or the abuse of alcohol and drugs
- It enables enterprises to incorporate into their preventive measures health promotion and tackle emerging risks
- It assists workers in becoming more skilled in managing their chronic conditions and proactive in their health care, improving their lifestyles, diet, sleep and physical fitness

*WHP should deal both with an individual and a collective approach: (individual response, working conditions, work organization, family, community and social contexts)*

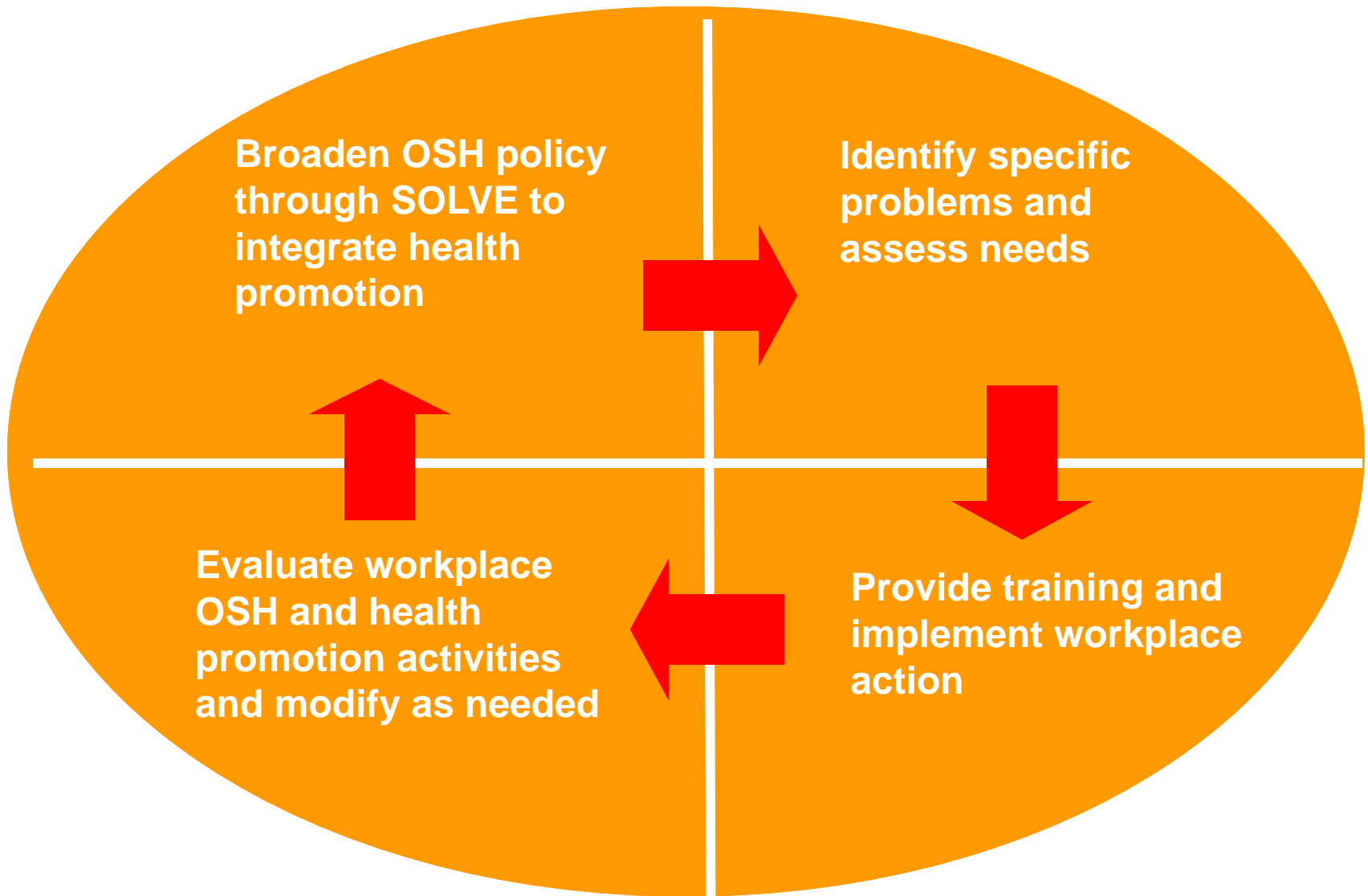


# The SOLVE Policy Approach





# The continuous improvement cycle



# SOLVE Methodology

Each of the SOLVE activities:

**ATTITUDE**  
**KNOWLEDGE**  
**APPLICATION**



- Builds an open attitude towards the subject
- Builds sufficient knowledge for the participant to apply the knowledge gained
- Applies the new knowledge through exercises

# SOLVE Methodology

Four mechanisms in place:

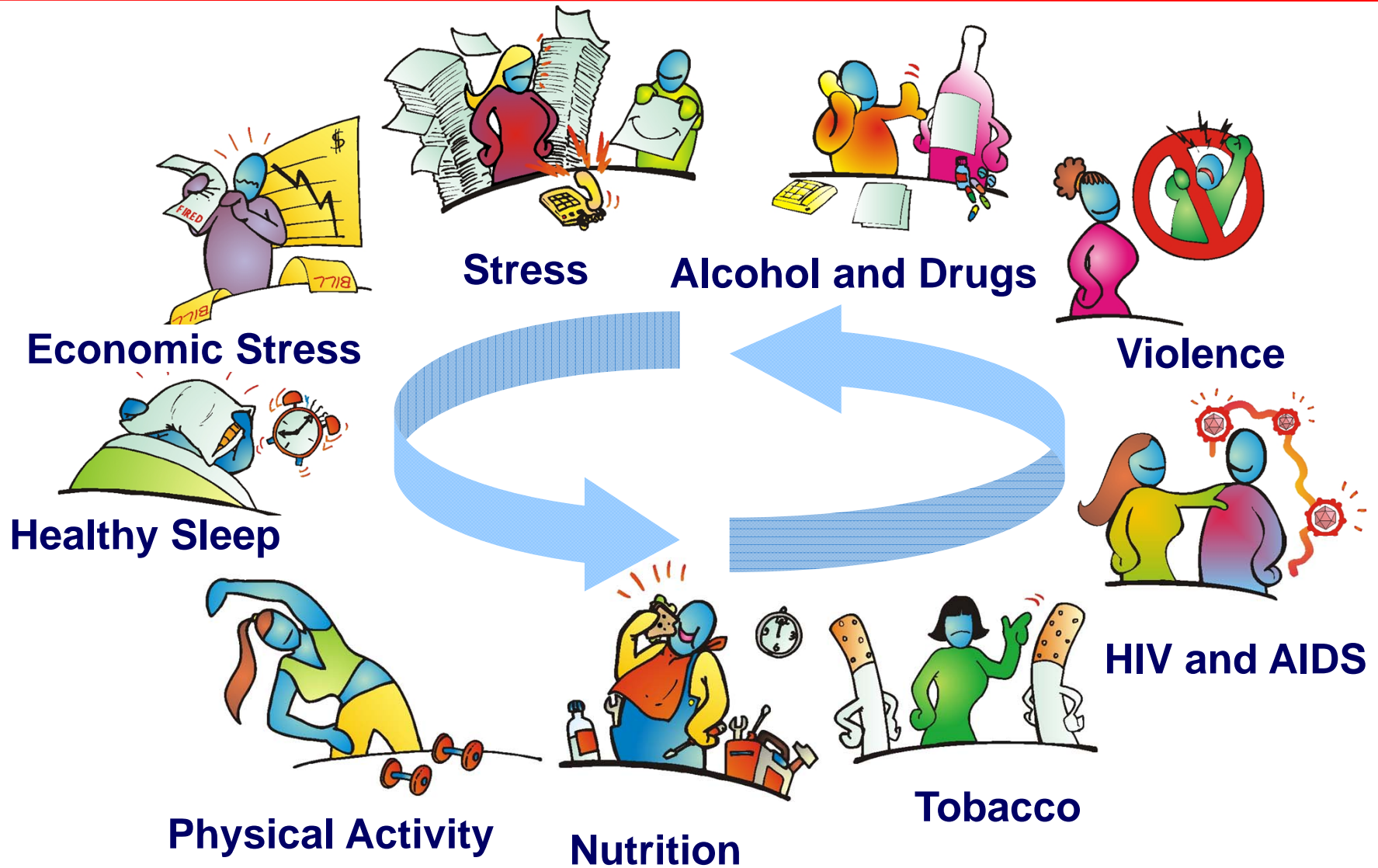
- Pre-test / post-test
- Long-term evaluation of attitudes and experience in areas related to health promotion
- Qualitative evaluation by participants
- Participants competent to design a post-course action plan to implement SOLVE in their enterprise

# NEW VERSION OF SOLVE 2012

## Improvements:

- Previous subject areas updated and expanded
- Four new subject areas included (nutrition, healthy sleep, physical activity, economic stress)
- An OSH management approach and a trainers guide incorporated
- A peer review conducted in collaboration with former Course Directors
- Validation of the material through technical cooperation
- Incorporation of the SOLVE Programme in the curricula of the ILO International Training Centre

# SOLVE STRATEGY



– END OF PRESENTATION –