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HELPING PEOPLE AND
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CASE STUDIES 2017–18

PLATINUM

DELNAS METAL ROOFING

26 staff

Delnas Metal Roofing was interviewed by Grosvenor Management Consulting on 9 May 2018 as part of a formal Healthier Work Evaluation. Delnas Metal Roofing is a Canberra-based commercial, residential and heritage roofing company that has been involved in numerous high-profile Canberra building projects, such as the National Arboretum Village Centre.

Nicole Leishman is the co-owner and Office Manager of Delnas, and Delnas' Healthier Work Champion.

Six years ago, the company was struggling with the sudden passing of a long-term employee, a big personality whose loss was felt deeply by everyone. Nicole was worried about the mental health of her employees and was searching for solutions. She heard about Healthier Work through the ACT WorkSafe Commissioner's twitter feed early the following year.

"Healthier Work has been a turning point for this company," says Nicole. "Previously, as a blue-collar company, our focus was very much on safety and reducing workplace incidents: we thought we were valuing our staff and we thought they knew that. But we were concentrating on output, , not necessarily on the people. Now the focus includes health and wellbeing. It's made me as a business owner, and my staff, much more mindful of what is going on with the people around us. This has always been a family business, but we're a really big family now, looking out for each other!"

Delnas has focused many of their Healthier Work initiatives on mental health, and fostered a close relationship with the OzHelp Foundation. With a workforce of predominantly young men who spend most of their time on-site, getting buy-in for Healthier Work initiatives is not always straight-forward. Last Monday, as part of Healthier Work, Delnas offered all staff flu vaccinations.

"It can be a challenge," explains Nicole. "I've got a lot of tough boys who don't like needles! But Healthier Work is all about starting conversations, and Christine and Michael [from Healthier Work] gave us the motivation to take small steps towards making health and wellbeing part of our core business, which is where we are now. Recently I was out on a building site and overheard our employee banter over who had brought the healthiest lunch!"

In an industry with high staff turnover, Delnas' staff retention has been strengthened since joining Healthier Work. Of 26 permanent staff, they have had three leavers in the last two years, a staff turnover rate of just 6%. One contractor even asked to become a permanent staff member on the basis of the company culture.

Absenteeism has reduced with improvements in morale, noticeably turning around the performance of some staff members, and presenteeism has decreased since implementing the Fit For Work policy developed as a result of Healthier Work.

"The success is that this is Delnas now," says Nicole. "Our staff expect it, and it feels like home. Healthier Work highlighted various issues that we didn't realise we had, and it's also helped our bottom line."



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Changing the culture at Delnas has even touched people who don't work for Delnas.

"It's not just about generating conversation here, but also at home. I know that this has had a wider impact, because employees approach me about their family members' health and wellbeing. I think my repeated acknowledgement of the importance of mental and physical health has encouraged this."

Since January, Delnas has had Platinum Status in the Healthier Work program.

"We're very proud of it: we put it in our address block and email signatures!" Nicole says. "I've been quite surprised at all the attention we've had as a result of our involvement. Healthier Work is just so simple."

