THE ACCOMMODATION OF HARM FRAMEWORK™

A Spirit Led Institute framework for recognising when organisational stability is being maintained by the people carrying the cost of unresolved behaviour

MASTER FRAMEWORK REFERENCE

Professional Development Stream | Spirit Led Institute

This document expands the complete set of Spirit Led Institute concepts currently referred to across the Professional Development courses. It is designed to give each concept enough substance to stand on its own, while showing how the concepts connect as one coherent framework.

The framework is educational and analytical. Unless expressly identified as legislation or regulator guidance, the named concepts in this document are Spirit Led Institute terminology. They are not statutory SafeWork NSW terms and do not, by themselves, establish bullying, harassment, unlawful conduct or a breach of work health and safety law.

1. Why the Accommodation of Harm Framework Exists

Organisations often recognise risk by looking for visible events: a complaint, an argument, an incident, a resignation, a formal grievance or a finding of misconduct. The Accommodation of Harm Framework asks organisations to look at something quieter: what everyone else has learned to do so that the workplace can continue functioning around an unresolved problem.

A team can look calm because people have learned when not to speak. A manager can appear manageable because another worker translates, buffers or chases every interaction. A staff room can appear peaceful because the person distressed by repeated sexualised conversation has stopped using it. Complaints can fall because people have concluded that reporting does not produce change. A compliance risk can appear contained because one conscientious employee is privately carrying the responsibility for monitoring it.

In each example, visible disruption may decrease while the underlying source of risk remains. The organisation can therefore mistake accommodation for resolution.

> **The central proposition: apparent stability is not always evidence that a risk has been controlled. Sometimes stability is being produced by the people adapting to the risk.**

This framework does not require an organisation to begin by labelling a person abusive, difficult, unsafe or unlawful. It begins with observable organisational questions: Who is changing? What are they changing? What are they trying to prevent? What happens if they stop? Who has authority? Where does information travel? Where does it stop?

That makes the framework useful for psychosocial safety, safeguarding, governance, compliance, workplace culture, faith-based organisations, reporting systems and professional boundaries.

2. The Accommodation Cycle

The Accommodation Cycle describes the process through which unresolved behaviour can gradually become embedded in the way an organisation functions.

> **Problematic or harmful behaviour occurs → others anticipate it → others modify themselves → immediate disruption decreases → the organisation experiences apparent stability → the original behaviour remains insufficiently controlled → accommodation becomes normal → the cost is transferred to those adapting.**

Stage 1 - Behaviour creates disruption or risk

Something repeatedly interferes with safe, respectful or effective organisational functioning. It may involve intimidation, volatility, dismissiveness, obstruction, non-response, sexualised conduct, boundary violations, refusal to engage, missed responsibilities or another pattern requiring others to compensate. A single difficult interaction does not establish a pattern; the framework becomes especially relevant when adaptation becomes repeated or predictable.

Stage 2 - People begin anticipating the behaviour

Workers learn what is likely to happen. They anticipate the reaction, the unanswered request, the sexualised comment, the cancelled meeting, the escalation, the refusal, the conflict or the emotional cost. Their attention shifts from simply doing their work to managing the conditions around another person's behaviour.

Stage 3 - People modify themselves

Adaptations can be interpersonal, practical, emotional or procedural. Workers may soften language, delay raising issues, use intermediaries, avoid certain rooms, alter breaks, keep extensive records, complete tasks that belong elsewhere, approach only when another person is present, stop asking questions, reduce warmth, or quietly accept additional work.

Stage 4 - Immediate disruption decreases

The adaptation may work in the short term. There are fewer confrontations. A task gets completed. The meeting happens because somebody chases it. The staff room is quieter because somebody no longer enters it. The difficult information stops arriving. This can create the appearance that the problem has settled.

Stage 5 - Accommodation becomes the system

Once workarounds become routine, the organisation can begin depending on them. New workers may be taught how to handle a particular person. One employee becomes the permanent intermediary. People know which issues are not worth raising. The adaptation becomes cultural knowledge rather than an exceptional response.

Stage 6 - The burden moves away from the source

The person or system generating the difficulty may change very little. The people around it carry the practical, relational and psychological costs. The organisation may then inadvertently reward the source of disruption with continuity while charging the cost to those who keep the peace.

> **The adaptation itself may be data.**

Adaptation does not automatically prove wrongdoing. It does, however, tell an organisation something about how people experience its systems. A pattern of adaptation is therefore worthy of curiosity, consultation and, where appropriate, formal risk assessment.

3. Organisational Accommodation

Organisational Accommodation is the umbrella process within the framework. It occurs when individuals, teams or systems repeatedly change themselves around unresolved behaviour so that organisational life can continue.

Accommodation can be compassionate or sensible in a particular moment. Colleagues naturally make allowances for one another. Workplaces also make legitimate adjustments for disability, illness, family circumstances and other needs. The concern in this framework is different:

accommodation becomes problematic when it repeatedly transfers the cost of another person's unresolved behaviour onto others, particularly when those carrying the cost have less authority to change the underlying conditions.

What accommodation can look like

- Employees warn newcomers about how to approach a particular person.
- Workers carefully time requests according to another person's mood or likely reaction.
- A colleague attends meetings because another worker does not feel safe attending alone.
- People stop raising issues because they expect dismissal, hostility or inaction.
- One employee repeatedly chases decisions that another role is responsible for making.
- Workers alter breaks, seating or shared-space use to avoid unwanted conduct.
- Compliance, HR or safeguarding personnel spend disproportionate energy persuading an authority-holder to engage with information.
- A team quietly completes work that has been left undone so operations can continue.

> **Who is being required to change their behaviour in order to accommodate whose behaviour?**

That question moves attention away from personality labels and toward the distribution of organisational cost.

4. The Human Buffer

A Human Buffer is a person who informally stands between another worker and a difficult, unsafe or obstructive point in the organisational system. The buffer may attend meetings, carry messages, witness interactions, interpret communication, calm conflict, protect access to information or provide enough relational safety for another person to participate.

Human buffers can be deeply valuable to the people they protect. The framework does not criticise the buffer. Instead, it treats the existence of a recurring buffer as organisational information.

Why the buffer matters

If a worker can participate safely only when a particular colleague is present, the organisation should ask what changes when that colleague enters the room. Does the buffer alter tone? Provide a witness? Prevent dismissiveness? Translate communication? Give the worker confidence that what occurs will be accurately remembered? Ensure the meeting actually happens?

The more essential the buffer becomes, the more important it is to examine whether a formal organisational control is missing.

> **Why was another employee required to function as a human buffer in the first place?**

The disappearance test

Human buffers often conceal fragility because they are competent. The system works while they are present. Risk becomes visible when they change roles, take leave, resign or decide they can no longer carry the function.

> **If the person currently holding everything together disappeared tomorrow, what risk would become visible?**

A healthy system should not depend indefinitely on one person's goodwill, emotional labour or informal protection.

5. Reporting Dead End

A Reporting Dead End exists when an organisation has a formal reporting route but workers learn that the route does not reliably move information toward consideration, decision or action.

The policy may say 'raise concerns with your manager'. The practical experience may be unanswered emails, repeatedly cancelled meetings, minimisation, redirection, defensiveness, prolonged silence or no discernible outcome. Over time, the worker can learn that reporting is costly and ineffective.

> **The cessation of reporting is not necessarily evidence of the cessation of risk.**

Complaints can stop because a problem has been fixed. They can also stop because people no longer believe reporting will help. Those two explanations have very different implications.

Indicators worth examining

- The same issue is raised repeatedly without resolution.
- Employees abandon attempts to obtain responses.
- Workers bypass normal reporting lines or seek informal intermediaries.
- HR, compliance or safeguarding staff repeatedly chase decisions.
- People keep unusually extensive records because ordinary communication is not trusted.
- Workers say or imply that there is 'no point' raising an issue.
- Unresolved concerns become normal background conditions.
- The person who raised the concern quietly compensates for the unresolved risk.

> **Can this reporting and decision-making pathway actually function?**

A reporting system is not effective merely because it exists on paper. Its usefulness depends on whether information can travel through it and whether the organisation can act when the ordinary recipient of the information is unwilling or unable to engage.

6. Responsibility Without Authority

Responsibility Without Authority occurs when a person is expected, formally or informally, to carry responsibility for a risk or outcome without possessing the authority necessary to control it.

This is particularly important in compliance, safeguarding, administration and WHS roles. A worker may identify a legal, safety or procedural concern, communicate it accurately and recommend action, but a more senior person controls the decision, resources or implementation. If the senior person does not engage, the worker can become trapped between knowing the risk and lacking the power to resolve it.

The hidden workload

The worker may then keep reminding, documenting, monitoring, checking, escalating, rewording and worrying. Because they know the risk exists, simply ignoring it can feel professionally or ethically impossible. Yet they cannot compel the necessary organisational response.

> **Does the person carrying responsibility for this risk actually possess the authority required to control it?**

Healthy governance aligns accountability with authority. Where that alignment is impossible, there should be a functioning escalation pathway so that responsibility does not remain stranded with the person least able to act.

7. Knowledge-Burden Transfer

Knowledge-Burden Transfer is closely related to Responsibility Without Authority. It describes what happens after a worker identifies and reports a risk but the organisation does not resolve it.

The information has moved into the organisation, but the psychological and practical burden may remain with the reporter. They know the risk. They know management knows. They may know who could be affected. They may also know that nothing has changed.

The result can be an informal second job: monitoring the unresolved issue, keeping evidence, checking whether something has happened, reminding decision-makers and compensating for consequences.

> **Raising a concern is not the same as controlling the concern.**

> **Has the organisation unintentionally made the person who identified the risk responsible for ensuring that management responds to it?**

Silencing, avoiding or exhausting the messenger does not control the risk. It may simply make the risk less visible.

8. Review Resistance

Review Resistance describes repeated failure or refusal by a relevant authority-holder to engage meaningfully in a legitimate review, consultation, risk discussion, investigation, mediation or corrective process.

The framework makes an important distinction: disagreement is not refusal. A manager may disagree with a complaint, interpretation, recommendation or proposed control. Participation does not require agreement. Likewise, a person's refusal to participate does not prove the underlying allegation.

The organisational question is whether the system can continue to examine and manage risk when somebody with relevant power will not engage.

Forms review resistance may take

- Repeatedly declining reasonable meetings required for review.
- Withholding or refusing information necessary for a process.
- Preventing relevant staff from contributing.
- Blocking escalation or allowing a matter to stall indefinitely.
- Redirecting attention from the reported concern onto the person who raised it.
- Treating requests for review as personal criticism rather than organisational process.
- Refusing meaningful participation in a conflict-resolution or risk-management process.

> **Can the organisation effectively review risk when a person with relevant authority refuses to engage?**

The answer should not depend on forcing reconciliation. It should depend on whether the organisation has alternate authority, escalation and governance mechanisms capable of continuing the process.

9. The Peacekeeping Paradox

The Peacekeeping Paradox describes the situation in which apparent harmony is produced by people learning what they must absorb, avoid or not say.

The better workers become at accommodating a problem, the less visible the problem may become. The person who eventually stops accommodating can then appear to be the source of conflict because their refusal exposes what everyone else had been smoothing over.

> **The more successfully workers accommodate a problem, the less visible the problem can become.**

This is particularly important in communities that highly value harmony, loyalty, collegiality or unity. Conflict is not always evidence that somebody has damaged a healthy system. Sometimes conflict becomes visible because somebody has stopped carrying an unhealthy system silently.

> **Did this person create the dysfunction - or did they stop compensating for dysfunction that already existed?**

10. Poor Procedural Justice as Organisational Information

Procedural justice concerns how decisions and processes are experienced: whether people receive meaningful consideration, whether processes are consistent and transparent, whether relevant information is heard, whether senior people are effectively exempt from scrutiny, whether reviews occur, and whether recommendations lead to action.

Within the Accommodation of Harm Framework, poor procedural justice matters because workers watch what happens to other people's concerns. Every organisational response teaches the wider workforce something about whether speaking is worthwhile.

If workers observe complaints disappearing, senior people avoiding review, reporters carrying consequences or recommendations producing no action, they may rationally adapt by becoming quieter.

> **Having watched how we handled this concern, would another employee feel safer or less safe about raising the next one?**

The framework therefore treats organisational responses not only as resolutions of individual matters, but as messages to the entire workforce about the practical value of reporting.

11. The Boundary-Maintenance Burden

The Boundary-Maintenance Burden describes the additional work imposed on a person when a professional boundary that should ordinarily be respected must instead be continually defended.

Boundaries are often discussed as though they are solely an individual's responsibility: say no, speak up, leave, change the subject, be clearer. Those responses can be useful choices. The problem arises when the workplace relies on the affected person's continuing ability to perform them every day.

What boundary maintenance can require

- Repeatedly changing the subject.
- Leaving a room when conversation becomes sexualised or otherwise inappropriate.
- Changing break times or seating.

- Positioning oneself near exits or other colleagues.
- Avoiding being alone with a person.
- Reducing warmth, openness or ordinary social interaction.
- Restating a boundary that has already been communicated.
- Remaining alert for the next intrusion.
- Planning ordinary work around avoiding another person's behaviour.

> **A boundary that must be defended every day is not functioning as an organisational control.**

This does not mean organisations can guarantee that no boundary will ever be crossed. It means a workplace should not make ordinary professional safety conditional on a worker's endless capacity to police the same boundary.

> **How much of this worker's energy is being spent maintaining a boundary the workplace should already be protecting?**

12. Forced Proximity and Loss of Shared Space

The cost of boundary maintenance increases when the worker cannot practically move away. Work is spatial. People share staff rooms, offices, vehicles, classrooms, meetings, lunch rooms, corridors, equipment, rosters and communal facilities.

A staff room is not merely a room. It can be the place where a worker eats, rests, reconnects, receives informal information and participates in ordinary collegial life. If repeated unwanted conduct makes that space unusable for one person, the organisational impact extends beyond each individual incident.

The false neutrality of 'just leave'

Leaving can be a legitimate temporary safety choice, especially when chosen by the affected worker. But 'just leave' is not neutral when the worker must repeatedly surrender access to spaces, information, rest, belonging or professional participation while the source of the problem retains unrestricted access.

> **Who loses access to the workplace when the control measure is always for the affected person to leave?**

If one person stops entering the staff room, changes lunch times, avoids meetings or withdraws from shared spaces, visible incidents may decrease. That does not necessarily mean the hazard has disappeared.

> **Have we confused the disappearance of the affected worker from a space with the disappearance of the hazard?**

Forced proximity is therefore relevant to the framework because it reveals who has genuine freedom of movement and who is required to reorganise their working life around another person's conduct.

13. Sexual Imagery Without Consent™

Sexual Imagery Without Consent™ is a Spirit Led Institute concept developed to describe unwanted exposure to sexualised imagery, narratives, explicit commentary or sexualised conversation, particularly when that material is repeatedly inserted into ordinary workplace or relational spaces.

The concept begins with a simple proposition: not all sexual harassment or sexualised boundary violation is physical. People can be exposed through words, images, stories, messages, jokes, questions, digital material and conversation.

In the professional-development context, the concept must be kept distinct from a legal conclusion. Not every unwanted sexual topic automatically meets the statutory definition of sexual harassment. Context, the applicable legal test and the facts matter. The concept is used as a lens for recognising exposure and asking better risk-management questions.

Social responses are not simple consent tests

People do not always respond to unwanted sexualised material by making an immediate formal objection. They may freeze, laugh nervously, redirect the conversation, remain professional, withdraw later or continue working. Those responses do not automatically prove harassment, but neither should they simply be treated as proof that the conduct was welcome.

Cumulative exposure

Repeated exposure can alter the workplace environment. A person may begin monitoring where they sit, avoiding being alone, reducing social warmth, changing breaks or withdrawing from shared spaces. The Accommodation of Harm Framework treats those adaptations as potential organisational data rather than demanding that the worker first produce a perfect verbal objection.

> **Has the organisation controlled the source of the unwanted conduct - or has the exposed worker been required to reorganise themselves around it?**

14. When Grace Becomes Accommodation

Faith-based organisations bring distinctive strengths to community life: grace, forgiveness, reconciliation, service, loyalty, unity, fellowship and the conviction that people belong to one another as the family or body of God. The Accommodation of Harm Framework does not treat these values as hazards. It asks what happens when good spiritual values are used without equally strong organisational accountability.

A person may be encouraged to give more grace, forgive again, avoid division, protect the ministry, understand another person's weakness, reconcile quickly or preserve fellowship. In some circumstances those invitations are pastoral and life-giving. They become organisationally concerning when they function as substitutes for addressing repeated harmful or unsafe conduct.

> **Grace and accountability are not opposites.**

Forgiveness and risk control are different tasks

Forgiveness is a spiritual, moral or relational matter. Risk control is an organisational responsibility. A person can forgive and still require a boundary. A community can pursue reconciliation while also investigating concerns. A church can value unity while maintaining reporting pathways, safeguarding processes and clear behavioural expectations.

> **Spiritual reconciliation is not a substitute for organisational risk control.**

In sexualised-conduct contexts, the distinction becomes especially important. Forgiveness does not retroactively make unwelcome conduct welcome, and it should not require the affected person to resume unsafe proximity or repeatedly defend the same boundary.

> **Forgiveness does not convert unwelcome sexualised conduct into acceptable workplace conduct.**

The cost of keeping the peace

If one person is continually expected to forgive, redirect, leave the room, avoid someone, extend grace and remain quiet so the community can feel united, the organisation may have placed the cost of its peace onto that individual.

> **Are we preserving genuine peace - or asking particular people to carry the cost of keeping the peace?**

A healthy faith community should be capable of grace and accountability at the same time. Pastoral care can accompany formal organisational processes, but should not replace safeguarding, WHS, governance, reporting, fair review or appropriate controls.

15. The Empty-Chair Test

The Empty-Chair Test is a practical way to expose hidden organisational dependencies.

Imagine that tomorrow every person who currently smooths conflict, compensates for missed responsibilities, protects colleagues, chases decisions, reminds managers, quietly corrects compliance issues, translates difficult communication, absorbs additional work, keeps everyone calm, avoids particular spaces or enforces repeated boundaries simply stopped.

> **What would break?**

The answer may reveal where the organisation relies on human accommodation rather than robust systems. A process that works only because one conscientious person constantly rescues it is not necessarily a strong process. A relationship that feels safe only because a third person is always present may not be intrinsically safe. A staff room that appears peaceful only because one worker has stopped entering it is not necessarily a safe shared space.

The test is deliberately simple because hidden accommodations are often most visible when we mentally remove the person providing them.

16. When Authority Becomes the Barrier

Many organisational systems assume that information can travel through a supervisor or manager. The model works only if the person occupying that role can receive concerns, make decisions, support workers, participate in review, approve controls and escalate matters when required.

A serious governance problem can arise when the person who ordinarily performs those functions is also the point at which those functions repeatedly stop.

The response cannot simply be 'communicate better' or 'try again' forever. A resilient organisation needs alternative pathways: another executive, HR, WHS, safeguarding, governance, an independent reviewer or another appropriate escalation route depending on the context.

> **No single individual should inadvertently become the point at which important risk information permanently stops.**

This principle connects Reporting Dead End, Responsibility Without Authority, Knowledge-Burden Transfer and Review Resistance. Together they ask whether authority is enabling the risk-management system or preventing it from functioning.

17. The Organisational Accommodation Audit

This audit is designed to help organisations notice what ordinary incident reporting may miss. It is not a diagnostic instrument and does not produce a finding of misconduct. Its purpose is to generate questions for consultation, risk assessment, governance and review.

- □ Who do people behave differently around?
- □ Who is routinely described as 'complicated', 'difficult', 'strong', 'sensitive' or someone who must be 'handled'?
- □ What does that description require everyone else to do?
- □ What legitimate conversations are employees reluctant to have?
- □ Where have complaints decreased, and do we actually know why?

- ☐ Who acts as an informal intermediary, witness or human buffer?
- ☐ What happens if that person is absent?
- ☐ Who repeatedly completes, chases or absorbs work because another role has not engaged?
- ☐ Can compliance, safeguarding, HR or WHS personnel communicate unwelcome findings without repeatedly persuading an authority-holder to hear them?
- ☐ Does the person identifying a risk possess the authority required to control it?
- ☐ What happens when an immediate manager refuses to engage?
- ☐ Can a review continue if a relevant authority-holder refuses to participate?
- ☐ Do workers have more than one safe reporting pathway?
- ☐ Would workers expect something useful to happen if they spoke?
- ☐ Where can important information become trapped?
- ☐ Who ultimately owns an unresolved risk after it has been reported?
- ☐ Are workers withdrawing from staff rooms, communal breaks, meetings or shared spaces to avoid conduct?
- ☐ Is the organisation relying on an affected worker to repeatedly leave, avoid, deflect or enforce the same boundary?
- ☐ Are workers able to maintain ordinary personal space and participate in shared environments?
- ☐ Have we confused reduced reporting with reduced risk?
- ☐ Have we confused the disappearance of the affected worker with the disappearance of the hazard?
- ☐ Are particular people carrying the emotional labour of keeping the organisation calm?
- ☐ Are spiritual, relational or cultural values being used to strengthen accountability or to discourage difficult information?
- ☐ If everyone stopped compensating tomorrow, what would become visible?

18. Applying the Framework: A Worked Example

Consider a fictional workplace in which one long-term employee frequently introduces explicit sexual stories and imagery into ordinary staff-room conversation. No formal complaint has been lodged. Several colleagues laugh awkwardly. One worker initially changes the subject, then begins

sitting farther away, times breaks differently and eventually stops using the staff room. Other employees describe the colleague as 'just like that'.

What an incident-only lens might see

There is no formal complaint. Nobody has been physically touched. The worker has removed themselves from the staff room, so overt conflict has decreased.

What the Accommodation of Harm Framework notices

- The worker, not the source of the conduct, has changed behaviour.
- The worker has lost ordinary access to a communal break space.
- Nervous laughter and continued employment are not reliable evidence that the conduct was welcome.
- The team has a cultural explanation - 'just like that' - which may function as an accommodation instruction.
- The worker is carrying a Boundary-Maintenance Burden.
- The reduction in visible incidents may be caused by withdrawal rather than control.
- The absence of a formal complaint does not erase the risk information already available.

Questions for the organisation

- What is known, and what still needs to be established?
- What consultation is appropriate?
- What is the source of the risk?
- Who currently bears the cost?
- What reporting options are available?
- What controls could address the environment, expectations, supervision and behaviour rather than merely relocating the exposed worker?
- How will the organisation review whether those controls work?

The framework does not decide the legal outcome. It changes the quality of the organisational questions.

19. Applying the Framework to Compliance and Governance

The same framework can operate without interpersonal harassment. Imagine a compliance officer identifies a significant risk and reports it to a manager who controls the decision. The manager

repeatedly declines to engage. The officer sends reminders, keeps records, worries about exposure, tries alternative wording and quietly creates workarounds.

The relevant concepts now become Responsibility Without Authority, Knowledge-Burden Transfer, Reporting Dead End and potentially Review Resistance. The accommodation is not avoiding a staff room; it is the compliance officer privately carrying the burden of an unresolved organisational risk.

> **Silencing, avoiding or exhausting the messenger does not control the risk.**

The governance question is whether the organisation has designed a pathway capable of functioning when the normal authority-holder does not want to receive unwelcome information.

20. Applying the Framework to Faith-Based Organisations

Imagine a faith-based workplace where a worker raises concern about repeated boundary-crossing behaviour. Leaders emphasise forgiveness, unity and reconciliation. The worker is encouraged to meet privately with the person, restore fellowship and avoid damaging the ministry's reputation.

The framework asks whether pastoral values are being used alongside organisational controls or instead of them. It examines who is being asked to move, forgive, reconcile, remain silent or absorb further proximity. It also asks whether the organisation has independently assessed the reported risk.

The aim is not to secularise faith communities or diminish grace. It is to prevent spiritual language from carrying a function it was never designed to carry: replacing governance, safeguarding or risk control.

21. Core Questions of the Framework

- Who is being required to change their behaviour in order to accommodate whose behaviour?
- Who is carrying responsibility for a risk they do not have the authority to control?
- Where does important information go when the person with authority does not want to receive it?
- Can our review and escalation systems still function when somebody with power refuses to engage?
- If everybody stopped compensating tomorrow, what risks would suddenly become visible?
- Has the organisation controlled the hazard - or have workers learned to accommodate it?
- Why is another employee required to function as a human buffer?
- How much of this worker's energy is being spent maintaining a boundary the workplace should already be protecting?

- Who loses access to the workplace when the control measure is always for the affected person to leave?
- Having watched how we handled this concern, would another employee feel safer or less safe about raising the next one?
- Are our values strengthening accountability - or making difficult information harder to hear?
- What has our organisation learned not to tell us?

22. Relationship to Spirit Led Institute Professional Development

The Accommodation of Harm Framework is designed to operate as a signature analytical lens across the Spirit Led Institute Professional Development stream. It provides a common language while allowing each course to examine a different type of organisational risk.

Psychosocial Risk, Authority and Organisational Accountability

This course applies the framework broadly to authority, reporting pathways, responsibility without authority, review resistance, procedural justice, escalation, psychosocial risk and organisational controls.

Sexual Harassment Beyond Physical Contact

This course applies the framework to non-physical sexualised conduct, unwanted sexual conversation and imagery, shared-space exposure, forced proximity, the Boundary-Maintenance Burden, reporting and prevention.

Future professional-development courses can apply the same framework to other organisational lessons without assuming that every problem has the same cause or requires the same response.

23. What the Framework Does - and Does Not - Claim

The framework is intended to help organisations notice patterns that can otherwise remain invisible. It supports reflection, consultation, professional learning, governance discussion and risk identification.

It does not declare that every difficult manager is harmful, every accommodation is inappropriate, every unanswered message is stonewalling, every workplace conflict is bullying, or every unwanted sexual conversation automatically satisfies a legal definition of sexual harassment.

Patterns, context, frequency, severity, power, work design, organisational response and applicable legal standards matter.

Where a course addresses NSW work health and safety or sexual harassment law, Spirit Led Institute materials should place authoritative legislation, Codes of Practice and regulator guidance beside the Institute framework so learners can distinguish the source of each proposition.

The framework helps organisations ask better questions. It does not replace investigation, risk assessment, legal advice, clinical assessment or a regulator's determination.

24. Master Glossary

Concept	Working definition
Accommodation of Harm Framework™	The complete Spirit Led Institute analytical framework for recognising when apparent organisational stability is being maintained by people adapting around unresolved behaviour or risk.
Accommodation Cycle	The recurring sequence through which behaviour generates adaptation, adaptation reduces visible disruption, apparent stability develops and the cost shifts to those adapting.
Organisational Accommodation	The broader process of people or systems modifying themselves around unresolved behaviour so organisational life can continue.
Human Buffer	A person who informally provides protection, mediation, witnessing, translation or relational safety between another worker and a difficult point in the system.
Reporting Dead End	A formal or informal reporting route that does not reliably move information toward meaningful consideration, decision or action.
Responsibility Without Authority	Being expected to carry responsibility for an outcome or risk without the authority needed to control it.
Knowledge-Burden Transfer	The practical and psychological burden that can remain with the reporter after an unresolved risk has been communicated to the organisation.
Review Resistance	Repeated failure or refusal by a relevant authority-holder to engage meaningfully in a legitimate review or risk-management process.
Peacekeeping Paradox	The appearance of harmony produced by people suppressing, avoiding or absorbing problems, such that the person who stops accommodating can appear to create the conflict.
Boundary-Maintenance Burden	The extra work required when a professional boundary must be repeatedly defended rather than being reliably supported by the workplace.

Forced Proximity	A condition in which a worker has limited practical ability to move away from unwanted conduct because of work design, shared spaces, duties or participation requirements.
Empty-Chair Test	A thought experiment asking what would fail or become visible if the people currently compensating, buffering or keeping the peace stopped doing so.
Sexual Imagery Without Consent™	A Spirit Led Institute educational concept focusing on unwanted exposure to sexualised imagery, narratives, commentary or conversation, distinct from the statutory legal test for sexual harassment.
When Grace Becomes Accommodation	A faith-based application examining when spiritual values such as grace, forgiveness, reconciliation or unity are used in ways that shift the burden of unresolved organisational risk onto the affected person.

25. Closing Principle

The Accommodation of Harm Framework ultimately asks organisations to notice where the cost of unresolved behaviour has gone. If the source has not changed, the risk has not been controlled and the organisation still appears functional, somebody or something may be carrying the difference.

> **A safe organisation should not depend on the most conscientious, accommodating or vulnerable people continually absorbing what the system has failed to resolve.**
>
> **What has our organisation learned not to tell us?**

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Master framework reference. Institute terminology should be clearly distinguished from statutory, regulatory and professional standards when used in formal training.