# THE DNA REVIEW – POSITIONING DOCUMENT

*A structural audit of workplace psychosocial risk*

Aligned to BS 30480:2025 and ISO 45003, principles of Behavioural Science, and Organisational Transactional Analysis

## The proposition

**Workplace mental health risk audits routinely explore how employees feel. The DNA Review considers instead what behaviours are being influenced by organisational structures.**

Existing diagnostic tools measure symptoms in individuals and aggregate them into a score. They reveal that people are struggling but not why, and it is rare that they consider or examine the organisational structures that might be producing difficulties.

The DNA Review starts from structure: founder's legacy, business history, policies and processes, meeting approaches, reward systems, conduct management, physical layout, etc It looks for areas of significance that might be driving particular behaviours. It treats psychosocial risk in the same way that organisations treat physical risk: as a hazard to be identified, assessed, mitigated or controlled, and reviewed for control effectiveness.

## Why the structural approach

The Health and Safety Executive's 2024/25 statistics name the leading causes of work-related stress as workload and tight deadlines, lack of managerial support, bullying, and organisational change. Each cause on this list is structural rather than a failure of individual resilience.

BS 30480:2025 finds that organisational structures affect whether a worker feels able to disclose a mental health concern, particularly where people fear for their job or their reputation.

The implication is that an organisation can invest in individual support and see limited improvement, because the structural mechanics generating or amplifying the risks are not appropriately considered.

### The evidence base

- Eric Berne's organisational work, which is the origin of the DNA Review: structure produces behaviour; behaviour, repeated, becomes culture.
- Dr Timothy Ludwig's behavioural science research on dysfunctional practices; processes installed with good intent that become, over time, the obstacle to the open honesty they were built to produce.
- Maslach's organisational burnout factors; workload, control, reward, fairness, community, values, used as the diagnostic frame rather than as an individual measure.
- Amy Edmondson's work on psychological safety.

# Scope and boundaries

*This review assesses organisational readiness and structural risk. It does not assess individual risk and is not a clinical service. Any individual identified as being in current distress during the process has a clear, pre-agreed route to professional support. This is never routed into the report. The board receives a structural diagnosis; the individual receives support, separately through an agreed pathway.*

### What The DNA Review does not do

- It does not screen, assess or diagnose individuals.
- It does not produce a score, a ranking, or a benchmark against other organisations. This is not a competition.
- It does not claim to prevent every act of self-harm as no structure can do or guarantee this. What a well-designed structure can do is notice earlier, respond better, and avoid causing further harm through its own processes.
- It does not predict behavioural outcomes. Recommendations are structural changes to consider, not guaranteed results.
- It does not provide legal advice. Protocols supplied require your own legal review before adoption.

### A note on accountability

Systemic does not mean anonymous. Every finding names the decision, policy or practice, and the role that owns it. "The culture" is never an acceptable resting place for a finding: someone, at some level, made or maintains every structural decision this review points to as significant. Moving accountability away from a struggling individual only works if it lands somewhere with a named responsibility for changing or monitoring the structures.

### A note on how this is approached

We often resist conclusions we are given, however accurate or well intentioned, a phenomenon sometimes described as counter-will. This can result in defensiveness, and defensiveness is not the desired outcome of this work.

The DNA Review is conducted mindful of this and therefore approaches with curiosity. Findings are offered as observations of significance to examine together, not judgements to be imposed or rejected. Where something appears significant, we explore what appears to be producing it and who is best placed to change it. The work is never approached through a lens of error, fault or blame, and never with a punitive mindset. Restorative is the way forward.

# Method

The DNA Review is essentially anthropological in method: it looks for what is significant, not only for what is measurable. Interpretive judgement, observed group dynamics, and documentary evidence are compared, rather than relying on self-report alone.

### Phase One — Diagnose (3–4 weeks)

| Component | What it examines |
|---|---|
| **Pulse instrument** | Approximately 14 items plus free text, mapped to six organisational burnout factors. Asks about structural conditions, not feelings. No personal disclosure required. |
| **Structural artefact review** | These can include organisational history, structural layouts both physical and digital, metrics relating to absence, attrition, exit themes, EAP utilisation, meeting cadence, reward framework, physical layout, grievance and disciplinary volume at pattern level, as well as observation of application of policies and processes in practice. |

| Component | What it examines |
|---|---|
| **Confidential conversations** | Semi-structured, across all levels, with a distinct senior-leader variant. Reported at group and demographic level only where it makes sense to do so. |
| **Performance, grievance and conduct pipeline review** | Is there a route by which distress is recognised before it is disciplined? Every case is screened on this question, regardless of how long the issue has run or whether anything visibly changed. |
| **BS 30480 gap analysis** | Guided by key areas of BS 30480 we look at leadership accountability, policy integration, private-world awareness, operational protocol, and what work is being done on the ground to affect change. |
| **ISO 45003 gap analysis** | Guided by key areas of IS045003 we ask how psychosocial risk is represented on the risk register; how is control effectiveness monitored; are controls targeted to workforce diversity or applied uniformly, and what work is being done on the ground to affect change. |
| **Structural and burnout diagnostic** | Dysfunctional practices and an eight-factor structural safety check. |

### Phase Two — Design (2 weeks)

A board-ready report naming areas of significance relating to specific structures and the behaviours they seem produce. Prioritised and sequenced, and approached by what is a quick structural fix versus multi-year cultural work.

Deliverables:

- Findings, each with a named owner and recommendation.
- A documented psychosocial risk position, drafted in your own risk register format where practicable, or in a standard format where you do not hold one, and ready for your risk owner to adopt: risk description, owner, current controls, control effectiveness, residual rating, recommended additional control, review date.
- Adoptable protocols for the loss of a colleague to suicide and for return to work after a suicide attempt, with your roles and contacts, plus one-page manager versions taken from BS 30480's recommendations.
- An evidence trail of due diligence: scope and method statement, completed gap analyses with evidence, findings log recording what was decided or deferred and why, and an action plan with owners and dates.

*On the evidence trail: this is evidence of due diligence, not legal protection, and confers no immunity. Its value is that it allows the organisation to answer, with dates and named owners, the question "what did you know and what did you do about it?"*

### Phase Three — Embed (optional)

Ongoing structural support and facilitation offered only where Phase One has identified a need for it and priced separately. Nothing in Phase Three is required to realise the value of Phases One and Two.

## Who this is for

Boards, Executive teams, People Directors and their teams, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing roles and others who suspect their current wellbeing investment is not delivering as well as intended.

It suits organisations prepared to hear findings with curiosity that appropriately and respectfully question decisions that are made and well-intended structures that have been put in place that no longer serve. It does not suit organisations seeking a certification or measure of relative performance to competitor groups.

## Engagement

Phases One and Two are delivered as a fixed-fee package rather than an open day rate, which is easier to approve and gives cost certainty. Scope is set by organisation size, number of areas included within the review, and the volume of conversations required. Phase Three is priced separately so no commitment is made before the diagnosis exists.

Delivery is by Steve Hoblyn with, for larger engagements, a second practitioner trained in organisational Transactional Analysis and complementary professional experience. Paired working is preferred for group sessions so that one practitioner holds the room while the other observes the dynamics the audit exists to notice.

Sessions are audio recorded confidentially for post-session analysis and to be able to provide non-attributable direct quotes. These recordings are not shared with the organisation. Facilitators are professionally supervised and therefore excerpts from recordings may be anonymised within the supervisory setting to ensure ethical and professional standards are met and maintained.

## About

Steve Hoblyn is the founder of iGallos®, trading name of Inner Child Ltd. He began in psychology, trained in financial audit and advisory, and spent 25 years in senior global HR leadership with responsibilities for employee engagement, HRIS and people strategy, before moving into organisational mental health, suicide prevention and facilitation a decade ago. He is an advanced Transactional Analysis practitioner with organisational and counselling specialisms, an MHFA England Instructor, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

**A free ten-question board self-assessment is available.**

*If any of this is close to home, Samaritans are there on 116 123, day or night.*