Speaking up isn't enough: Why bystander intervention doesn't automatically create inclusion

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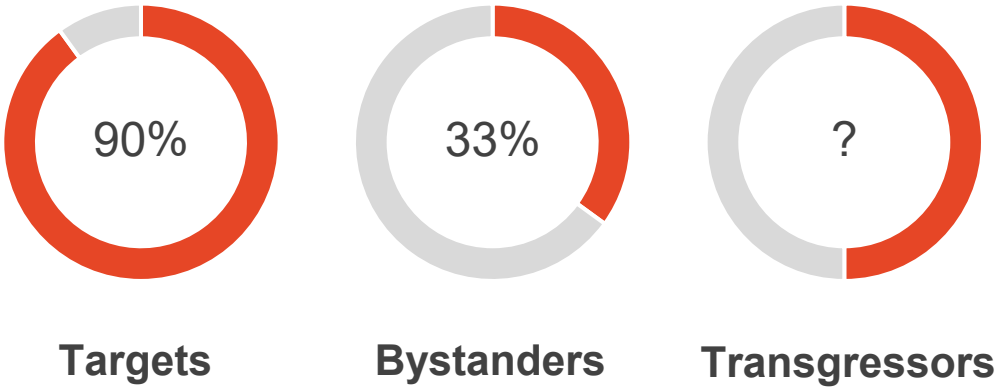
"…perhaps the most empirically supported method of addressing undesirable behaviour…"

Griffith et al., 2021

Positive bystander intervention consequences

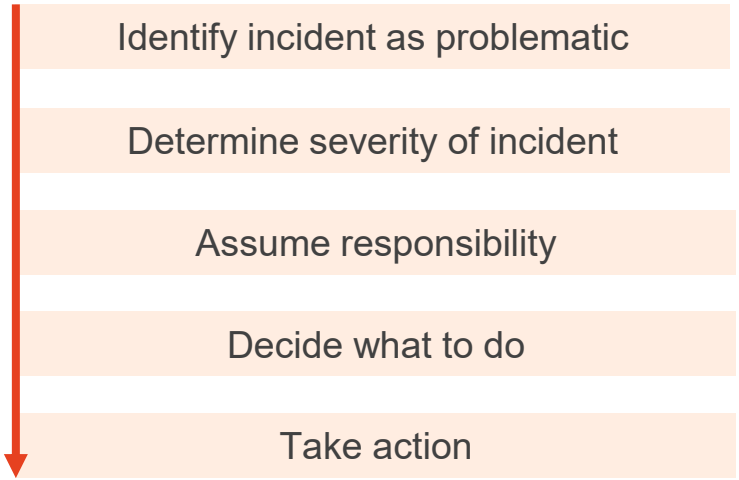


Jennings et al., 2024

Bystander intervention 101

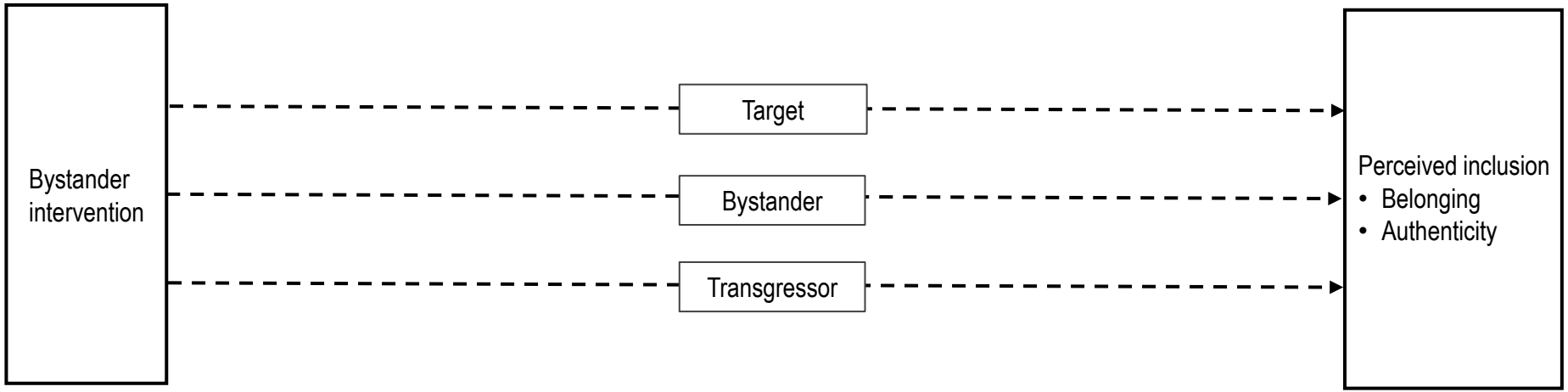
Actions taken by a person who notices a problematic or harmful situation in the workplace and intervenes to resolve or affect the situation

- Immediacy
- Involvement
- Toward different parties



Latane & Darley, 1968

Does bystander intervention lead to workplace inclusion?



Case study design

Consulting firm
Melbourne/Sydney/Wollongong
2000 employees
White collar

Mine site
Pilbara
1000 employees
Blue collar

53 interviews (online and onsite)



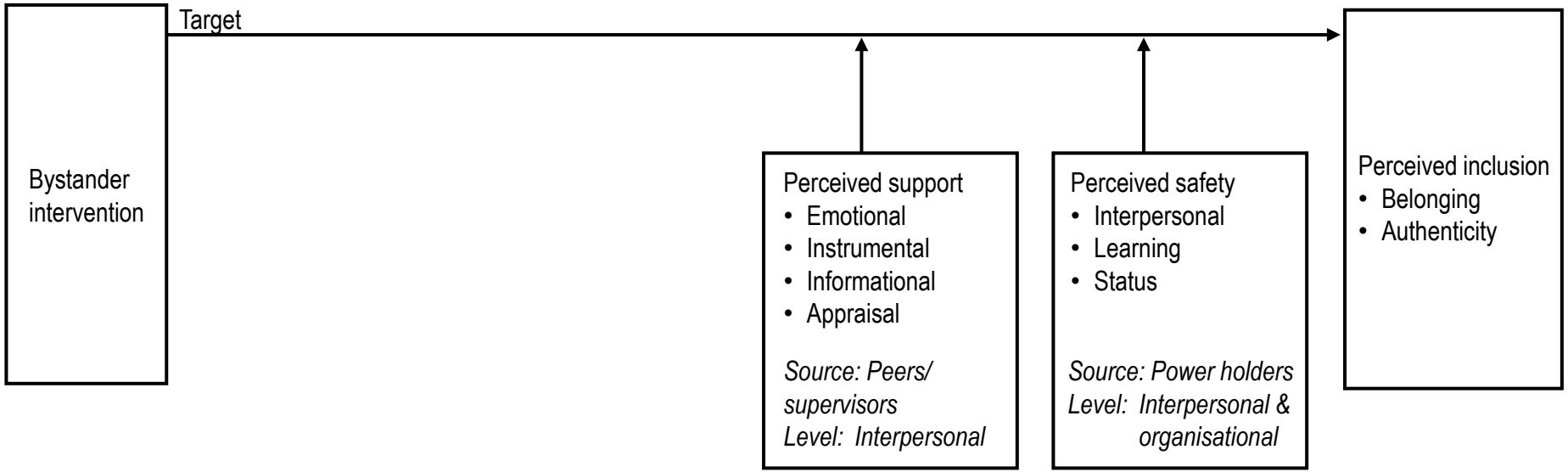


Strong commitment to diversity & inclusion





Does bystander intervention lead to workplace inclusion?



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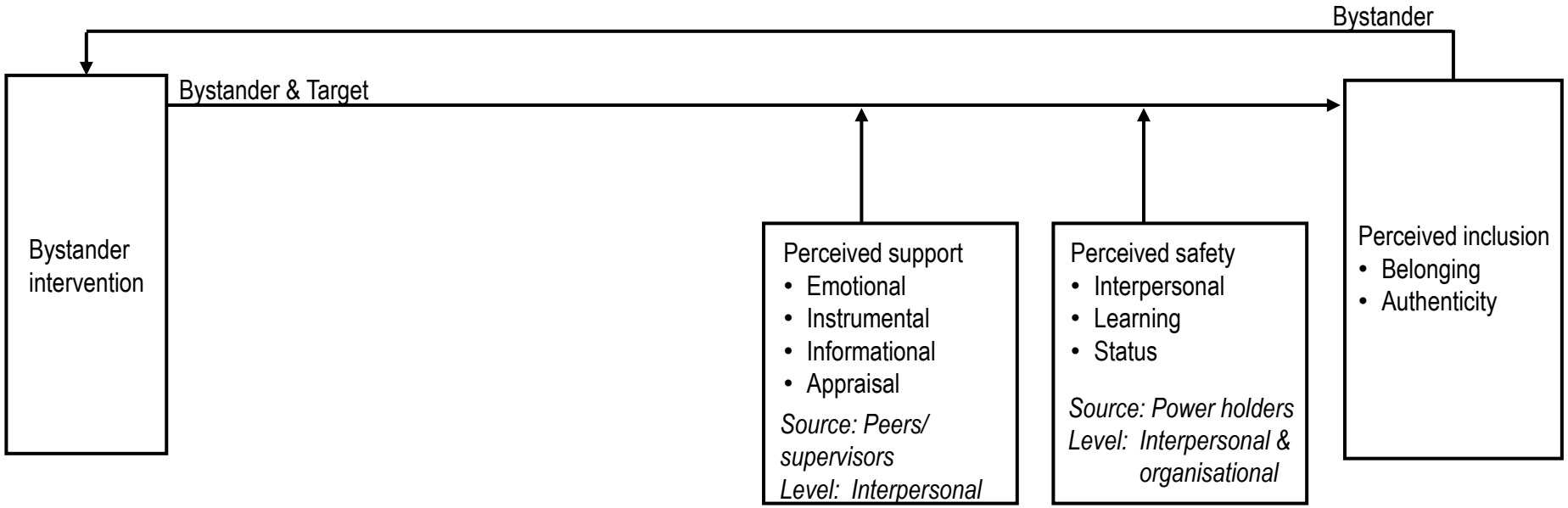

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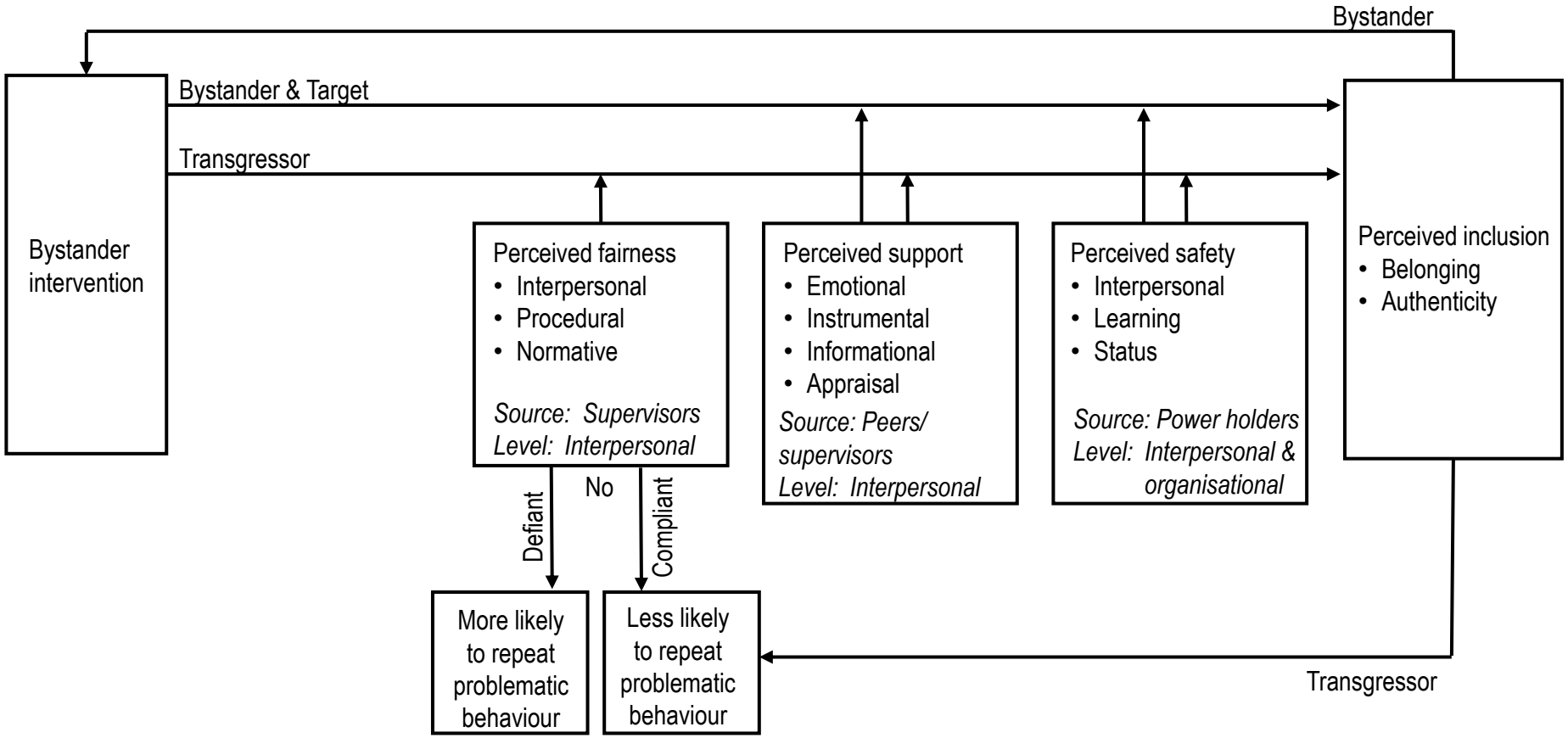


Organisational enablers

Leadership behaviour

- Modelling
- Ok to make a mistake
- Visibility & accessibility

Organisational initiatives

- Function as signals
- Aid or weapon?

Alignment between the two

- Walk the talk

Implications



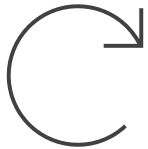
Beyond the individual

- Training is insufficient
- Safety and support generate inclusion



Align policy and practice

- Visible leadership
- Align espoused policy and enacted practice



Restorative vs punitive

- Foster learning and growth over punishment
- Preserve dignity and learning safety

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