



sustainable  
labour peace  
and stability



# employee relations.

**Labour peace and stability is crucial for business success.**

In South Africa this arena is particularly complex and regrettably labour unrest is not a chapter limited to our apartheid history. Since 2010 violence and unprotected strikes have steadily gained momentum and there seems to be a growing perception that these are the only ways to obtain results.

The 2012/3 World Competitiveness Report confirms this state of affairs with SA ranking last out of 144 countries in the category labour-employer relations.

OIM helps organisations to actively manage these relations.

With 28 years' experience in employee and labour relations, we realise there are many factors that are

beyond your control. Therefore our solutions are designed to focus on those factors you can control to achieve sustainable business success.

In essence we assist organisations to:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive employee relations strategy in line with overall business goals.
- Promote labour peace and stability.
- Foster a climate conducive to optimal performance.
- Proactively manage and resolve conflict.
- Position employee relations (ER) as a strategic instrument, not a tactical tool.
- Move from a legalistic industrial relations approach to a more inclusive, people-orientated ER approach.





## DID YOU KNOW?



In the 2012/3 World Competitiveness Report the following weaknesses in South Africa's economy were highlighted (\*the rankings relate to SA's position compared with the 144 participating economies).

- Labour-employer relations (144)
- Labour market efficiency (113)
- Health of the workforce (132)

- Inflexible wage determinations by companies (140)

Significantly the weaknesses all relate to employee relations and performance.

In addition, South Africa has one of the highest, if not the highest, strike figures in the world. It is difficult to quantify statistics, but several research findings have mentioned the high number of working days lost in South Africa.



## FAST FACTS

- OIM's history is deeply rooted in establishing constructive workplace cultures, management-union relations and conflict resolution. Since 1985 we have often mitigated the effects of instability and disruption through timeous interventions especially in the mining, construction and manufacturing sectors, both locally and abroad.
- Some of the management-union-employer partnerships we facilitated more than a decade ago are still effective.
- Our specialists in the field are often approached by the media for their expert opinion.



**“Problems cannot be solved with the same mindset that created them.” – Albert Einstein**

Many South African managers and shop stewards still resort to dated thinking and behaviour patterns. As a result ER challenges are often tackled with mindsets that can only generate short-term relief, not long-term solutions.

Every aspect of OIM's integrated offering is aimed at

- Changing mindsets
- Providing toolsets and
- Improving skillsets at all organisational levels



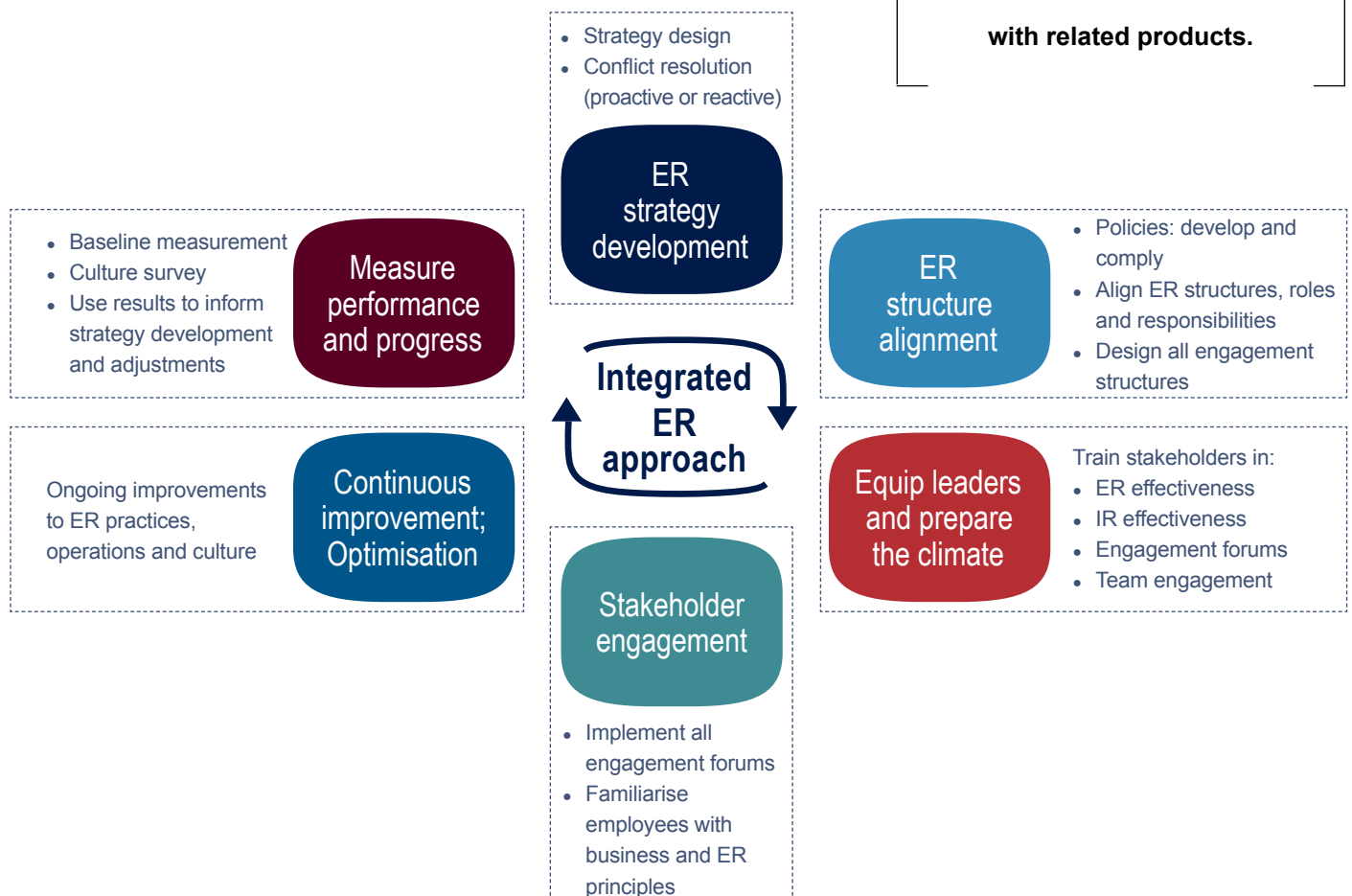
## OUR OFFERING

OIM helps clients to develop a comprehensive ER strategy.

### > Main elements of the integrated approach

This is translated into support processes, policies, structures, practices, skills development and measurements to ensure proper implementation and sustainability.

**Our approach consists of seven main elements with related products.**





The **baseline measurement** involves an analysis of the available ER policies, procedures and practices to establish the status quo and identify gaps. Focus areas can include recruitment and selection, disciplinary activities, risk management, alcohol and drug management, remuneration and reward, wellness/HIV, performance management, use of information technology, employment equity, skills development, union recognition agreements, basic conditions of employment, discrimination, diversity and equity, transformation, health and safety.

Prior to the engagement phase we also conduct a **culture survey** to gauge

employee perceptions on a range of organisational practices including vision, structure, roles, leadership, teamwork, reward and recognition, communication, engagement, policies and procedures. Later in the process OIM conducts another survey to measure progress made.

**Baseline measurement and culture survey – establish the current reality**

### > Key business benefits

- Identify gaps and/or contradictions in your policies, processes and practices.
- Provide an opportunity to align and update all these elements and limit business risks.

- Use the baseline results as a basis for the ER strategy design.
- Survey results as an objective tool to assess employee perceptions and inform engagement topics.



### ER strategy development

**Design a comprehensive employee relations strategy using your business goals, scorecards and baseline measurement results as a starting point.**

Key components include:

- Alignment with business strategy and structure.
- Thorough and accurate policies that meet all legal requirements.
- Processes and practices that underpin the strategy.
- The organisation's approach to labour relations and a performance culture.
- The required leadership skills and knowledge to implement the ER strategy.
- Suitable human resources, knowledge and skillsets
- to support business goals.
- Strategy implementation.
- Employee buy-in and shared understanding of the main ER elements.
- Management-union partnerships.
- Management-employee engagement.
- Team engagement.
- Executive management ownership of the strategy and implementation accountability.
- The alignment and integration of all the above elements.

### > Key business benefits

- A comprehensive and integrated strategy addressing all ER domains in a proactive way.
- Clear ER focus areas.
- Internal capacity to implement the strategy.

- The translation of ER strategy into action plans with support processes and implementation tools.
- Alignment to business goals.





Once the ER strategy has been designed, it is cascaded to all organisational levels and areas. The first step is the alignment of business structures and the design of engagement forums.

- Align ER business structure, roles and responsibilities by clarifying and adding to job descriptions where applicable.
- Design appropriate engagement forums:
  - Establish a Workplace Prosperity Partnership Forum for regular engagement among management, employees and union representatives (eg monthly, quarterly or bi-annually).
  - Design structures for regular functional/team engagement – INVOCOMS® (eg daily, weekly or monthly).
  - Construct a management-union forum in line with the new ER strategy.
  - Set up statutory and other engagement forums (eg employment equity, skills development and safety committees).

### > Key business benefits

- Provide management with effective engagement forums.
- Provide line managers with structured forums to discuss operational, organisational and conduct-related matters with teams.

- Provide employees with platforms for constructive interaction with the employer.
- Compliance with statutory regulations.



### Equip leaders and prepare the climate

- Equip the following appointed and elected leaders with the required knowledge and skills for effective ER strategy implementation
  - | Line managers | ER and IR partners | Shop stewards
- Train members of the Workplace Prosperity Partnership Forum, focusing on their roles and responsibilities.
- Train line managers to conduct regular team engagement sessions (INVOCOMS®).
- Train line managers, ER/IR practitioners and shop stewards in the proper handling of the disciplinary process.

### > Key business benefits

- Leaders and key stakeholders with a common understanding of the business and ER realities and challenges.

- Greater willingness to work together.
- Leaders who are better equipped to engage teams on a range of ER topics.





## Stakeholder engagement

- Conduct workshops with all staff members to deepen their understanding of business goals and principles as well as ER policies, procedures and practices.
- Implement team forums (INVOCOMS®) where functional managers regularly engage with team members in a structured way. Topics include operational goals, obstacles and problem solving, team conduct, innovation, organisational policies and practices.
- Implement the Workplace Prosperity Partnership Forum (WPPF) for engagement with employees.
- Implement a management-union structure based on the proper application of ER principles.



### > Key business benefits

- Employees with a common understanding of policies, procedures and practices.
- Employees and shop stewards with a better sense of the business realities facing the organisation.
- Employees and shop stewards who are continuously engaged about business performance, challenges, values and ER practices.



## Continuous improvement and optimisation

- Continuously identify improvements to the strategy, climate, operations and practices and launch special employee relations projects to encourage ongoing improvements. The projects are informed by several aspects of the ER strategy, including the culture and baseline survey results and outcomes of the engagement forums. These may include targeting absenteeism throughout the organisation, improvements in the functioning of the employment equity committee and informing staff about new ER regulations.
- OIM provides ongoing project consultation and/or facilitation as required.



### > Key business benefits

- Targeted approach to ER challenges.
- Access to specialist advisory services.
- Focused implementation of ER strategy and new policies, procedures and practices.
- Improved functioning of engagement structures.





## Measure performance and progress

- Measure strategy outcomes through comparative statistics on aspects such as number of disciplinary incidences, attendance figures and safety data.
- Conduct another culture survey to gauge perceptions post implementation and training.



### > Key business benefits

- Progress dashboard.
- Sound information for proactive use.
- Use results to improve your ER strategy.

## Conflict resolution

**Conflict is an inevitable part of any relationship.**

The South African landscape lends itself to many facets of conflict and invariably many of these spill over into the workplace. Even though some of these facets are beyond the control of the employer, it is imperative to manage those you can.

Establishing the right climate for employee relations is essential to “immunise” the business against possible conflict in the workplace. Even so, conflict may erupt at any time under any circumstances. It is important to intervene as soon as possible and not wait until conflict develops into a more serious situation.

With a track record dating back to 1985, OIM has developed a proven approach to conflict resolution and gained experience in tailoring the approach to various situations.

Depending on the nature of the conflict and degree of hostility, the approach can include a series of bilateral meetings between OIM and the individual parties to determine the reasons for and areas of conflict. This is often followed by multilateral meetings to agree on the principles that will guide the process of finding collective, sustainable solutions. All stakeholders are involved in arriving at the agreed course of action and instituting monitoring mechanisms to supervise the implementation of solutions.



### > Key business benefits

- A constructive foundation and agreed principles for the conflict resolution process.
- Monitoring mechanisms to oversee the implementation of solutions.



## THE OIM DIFFERENCE

- OIM offers an integrated solution, targeting all key ER areas and focusing on both legal and human aspects.
- This comprehensive strategy is aligned to your business goals and integrates all ER practices.
- Our approach offers long-term results, not short-term tactics.
- The elements of the integrated offering are also available as stand-alone interventions.
- We follow a practical, no-nonsense approach when designing the intervention.
- OIM is not in the business of consultant dependency. We build internal capacity through the transfer of skills and knowledge and the establishment of regular engagement forums.
- Our stakeholder training, especially

management-union relations, focuses on the intent, not the letter of the law. This approach deepens people's understanding of and ability to interpret and apply legislation.

- The offering is aligned with OIM's proven performance cycle and offers seamless integration with other OIM interventions.
- If required, clients also benefit from the expertise embedded in all OIM's core business areas, such as people management, operational optimisation and organisational performance improvement. Other services include strategy and scorecard development, business reviews, leadership development and continuous operational improvement.

### CORE PRODUCTS ASSOCIATED WITH OUR INTEGRATED APPROACH

- **ER strategy development**
- **Surveys and assessments**
  - Baseline measurement
  - Culture survey
- **Policy development and compliance**
- **Training**
  - **ER effectiveness:** train line managers, IR/ER practitioners and shop stewards in proper employee relations
  - **IR effectiveness:** training in the disciplinary process for line managers, ER/IR practitioners and shop stewards
  - **Management-employee engagement forum:** train members of the WPPF
  - **Team engagement** – train leaders in INVOCOM® effectiveness

- **Other engagement forums:** train members of the various stakeholder engagement structures
- **Climate preparation for strategy implementation:** foster greater understanding of business and ER principles among all employees
- **Conflict resolution**
- The design and establishment of **stakeholder engagement forums**
- **Consultation services** on a range of ER projects