



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Creates an environment where people can speak up without fear of negative consequences.

LEAD ACTIONS

1. Encourage different ideas & viewpoints:

In meetings, make a deliberate effort to:

- (a) **Be the last to speak:** Ask others to complete their thinking before you state your own, avoiding narrowing the debate or taking up too much airtime.
- (b) **Invite challenge:** Ask “what might we be missing here”, “who has a different perspective”, “how would our dissenters say” to help broaden thinking and generate new ideas. When you have a strong point of view, ask people to challenge you at least one thing that is wrong with your view.

2. Observe psychological safety in your team:

Spend a week being alert to psychological safety in your team. Use the “Sounds of Silence” Tool on the following page to identify signals that team members do/do not feel psychologically safe to voice different ideas/views, ask questions, or raise concerns. Select an area for improvement and then commit to working on that over the next quarter. Repeat the exercise in 3 months.



Creates an environment where team members feel safe to speak up without fear of negative consequences

LEAD ACTIONS

1. Encourage different ideas & viewpoints:

In meetings, make a deliberate effort to:

- (a) **Be the last to speak:** Ask others to contribute their thinking before you state your own, to avoid narrowing the debate or taking up too much airtime.
- (b) **Invite challenge:** Ask “what might we be missing here”, “who has a different perspective” or “what would our dissenters say” to help broaden the thinking and generate new ideas. When you have a strong point of view, ask people to tell you at least one thing that is wrong with your idea.”

2. Observe psychological safety in your team:

Spend a week being alert to psychological safety in your team. Use the Sounds of Silence Tip Sheet on the following page to identify signals that your team members do/do not feel psychologically safe to voice different ideas/views, ask questions or raise concerns. Select an area for improvement, then commit to working on that over the next quarter. Repeat the exercise in 3 months.

3. Re-frame failures & mistakes as learning opportunities:

Adopt the mantra of innovators that “our failures are our growth opportunities”, and actively encourage the team to share failures and mistakes.

For example:

- (a) **Reflect in action:** No matter how busy your team is, dedicate regular periods (once a fortnight or month) to team reflection to demonstrate a learning mindset. i.e. have each member reflect on the period and articulate what did/didn't work: “what did I/we learn from this?” and “what could I/we do better next time?”. Always come prepared to role model your commitment to acknowledging and learning from your mistakes or missteps.

- (b) **Conduct post-mortems:** Schedule time directly after the end of each project—no matter how big or small—to review what worked well, and what could be done differently next time. Frame the session positively as an opportunity to grow and improve. Document the learnings, and share these with other teams who might also find them valuable.

4. Check in one-to-one:

One of the easiest ways to create a psychologically safe environment is to ask your employees what you could be doing better to support them, or to make them feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions. Include a regular agenda item in your 1:1 catch-ups, and ask them whether there is anything they're concerned about in the way that the team is engaging, including anything they'd like you to do differently. Make sure you don't react defensively—instead, see their feedback as your leadership growth opportunity.