

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY *at Work*

Psychological safety at work occurs when the environment fosters a sense of comfort for individuals and teams. The culture encourages open communication. And employees feel they can express themselves freely without fear of judgment, failure, or retaliation.



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY MATTERS

- It leads to mentally healthier, more productive, and more inclusive teams.
- There's a sense of dependability in one another, role clarity, and an intrinsic incentive to work hard.
- Teams benefit from higher levels of engagement, increased motivation to tackle difficult problems, more learning and development opportunities, and better performance.
- Individuals are free to lean into their best, most creative selves.

4 STAGES OF WORKPLACE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

1

Inclusion Safety:

Fosters inclusivity and has plans in place to combat all forms of prejudice so that employees can show up as themselves without fearing retribution for who they are.

2

Learner Safety:

Ensures individuals feel secure in being active learners. This means asking questions, making mistakes from time to time, brainstorming, and giving and receiving constructive criticism or feedback.

3

Contributor Safety:

Encourages people to fully share their expertise and showcase their skills without the culture becoming competitive. People need to believe that their skills and qualities can make an impact.

4

Challenger Safety:

A safe space for people to air grievances, push back, or be the outlier when it comes to popular opinion.

TIPS

to Build Psychological Safety at Work

TIP Discuss openly the importance of psychological safety.

Consider:

- inclusive communication
- collaborative thinking
- opening opportunities for contribution
- honoring diverse viewpoints
- feeling safe to verbalize potential flaws

▶ **Leader's action:** Share personal examples with your team of when something you did went well, and when it could have gone better.

TIP Acknowledge setbacks to psychological safety.

Recognize:

- worries about rejection or retaliation
- discomfort in challenging something that's not working
- hesitation about being wrong

▶ **Leader's action:** Discuss the barriers that inhibit psychological safety, and what can be done.

TIP Identify strategies to uphold and prioritize psychological safety.

Enable:

- open constructive avenues for honest feedback
- recognize how each employee shares in the effort to make work a better place
- reconsider how "failure" is handled
- find ways to reframe disappointments and what can be learned from them

▶ **Leader's action:** Incorporate this brief practice into quarterly meetings: "Start, Stop, Continue"

Have each employee submit their thoughts on the following:

- What is something we should **start** to do?
- What are some things we need to **stop** or **change**?
- What has been working that we should **continue**?

Show integrity by making appropriate changes.

Leaders take the lead



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY FOR REMOTE AND HYBRID WORKERS



INSPIRE
remote engagement.



FACILITATE
contributions from everyone.



EMBRACE
technology tools to encourage virtual collaboration.



CREATE
space for employees to submit and share new ideas.



ALLOW
for productive conflict.

SOMEONE IN DISTRESS?

Understand how to provide initial support for individuals experiencing mental health concerns.

The Core Components of Psychological First Aid

- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of mental illness
- Know how to approach those in distress with confidence and compassion
- Build active listening skills
- Encourage hope and provide appropriate professional resources for support

If you or someone you know needs emotional support and help, contact your Assistance Program.

Visit allonehealth.com/member-support

Sources:

Natasha Burton, Goalcast article, Oct 26, 2021, *What You Should Know About Psychological Safety in the Workplace*

HBR, Amy C. Edmondson and Mark Mortensen, April 19, 2021, *What Psychological Safety Looks Like in a Hybrid Workplace*

CCL, Leading Effectively Staff, January 15, 2022, *What Is Psychological Safety at Work?*