

Here's how to get started:

1. When a team works hard but doesn't get the desired results, reward the effort and ask what was learned.
2. When a person has a differing view, give their idea attention and respect.
3. Recognize the difference between minor slips and lapses, honest mistakes, and direct violations. While violations should be dealt with, mistakes and lapses should be handled with grace and seen as learning opportunities.

KEEP IN MIND

A psychologically safe environment not only benefits workers, decreases burnout, and increases productivity, it also attracts and retains the strongest candidates. Making your workplace one where employees feel heard and valued is worth the effort.



Psychological Safety in the Workplace-
For Supervisors
Health & Wellness

Psychological Safety in the Workplace-For Supervisors

When employees feel psychologically safe, they speak up and contribute their thoughts and views.

According to expert Dr. Amy Edmondson, psychological safety means “an absence of interpersonal fear” in a work environment. It’s a shared belief among employees that their workplace is safe for risk taking and is a place where they feel included, accepted, and are free to ask, learn, engage, offer ideas, and give and receive feedback.

It’s also important to note what psychological safety is not—an environment that applauds everything, gives permission to whine, or allows untethered emotional expression.

WHY PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY NOW?

Psychological safety decreases stress and increases employee retention and productivity, and that’s more crucial than ever in today’s work climate. A recent report by McKinsey & Company found that 89% of employees believe psychological safety to be essential. Toxic workplaces (where people feel unsafe and undervalued) have been listed as the biggest driver of burnout and intent to leave.

Dr. Amy Edmondson conducted a study where she expected to find that teams with higher productivity made fewer mistakes. What she found was the opposite. The most productive teams made more mistakes and felt free to admit them. Success and productivity depend on innovation and problem-solving. For that to happen, team members need to know their ideas will be welcomed.

IS YOUR WORKPLACE PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE?

A safe environment starts with supervisors and managers. Take this quiz to check the temperature of your workplace.

Do your employees:

- Feel excluded in a social setting?
- Seem afraid to ask questions?
- Refuse to speak up when asked to solve a problem?
- Face retaliation for challenging the status quo?
- Experience public shame for their insights?

Do you as a leader:

- Ignore employee suggestions?
- Ask for feedback without intending to take action?
- Interrupt others during meetings?
- Punish someone for an honest mistake?
- Publicly call someone out for their opinions or mistakes?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may want to rethink whether your workplace is safe and consider making some changes.

3 KEY ELEMENTS TO PROVIDING A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACE

Those in management roles should strive to create cultures where they and their employees feel included, accepted, supported, heard, and connected to one another.