

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

Purpose

Evaluate and improve trust conditions that enable team members to take interpersonal risks.

Instructions

Complete this assessment to gauge psychological safety levels within your team and identify improvement opportunities.

Part 1: Safety Behaviors Observation

Rate how frequently these behaviors occur in your team (1 = Rarely/Never, 5 = Consistently/Always)

Vulnerability and Authenticity

Behavior	Rating	Evidence/Examples	Improvement Ideas
Team members admit mistakes openly			
People acknowledge gaps in their knowledge			
Team members show appropriate vulnerability			
People bring up personal constraints when relevant			
Individuals express authentic reactions			

Voice and Dissent

Behavior	Rating	Evidence/Examples	Improvement Ideas
Team members speak up with concerns			
People offer ideas that challenge status quo			
Different perspectives are actively sought			
Minority opinions are respected			
Disagreement is expressed constructively			

Learning Orientation

Behavior	Rating	Evidence/Examples	Improvement Ideas
Questions are welcomed and encouraged			
Failures are discussed for learning			
Experimentation is supported			
Feedback flows in all directions			

People ask for help when needed			
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Mutual Support

Behavior	Rating	Evidence/Examples	Improvement Ideas
Team members offer help proactively			
People defend each other when appropriate			
Successes are celebrated collectively			
Credit is shared generously			
Individuals show care for each other's wellbeing			

Part 2: Safety Inhibitors Assessment

Evaluate factors that might undermine psychological safety in your team:

Leadership Behavior

Potential Inhibitor	Presence (H/M/L)	Examples	Mitigation Approaches
Punitive responses to mistakes			
Dismissal of concerns or ideas			

Emotional unpredictability			
Credit-taking or blame-shifting			
Lack of appropriate vulnerability			

Team Dynamics

Potential Inhibitor	Presence (H/M/L)	Examples	Mitigation Approaches
Dominance by few voices			
Cliques or exclusionary behavior			
Competitive rather than collaborative mindset			
Negative reactions to new ideas			
Gossip or behind-the-back criticism			

Structural Factors

Potential Inhibitor	Presence (H/M/L)	Examples	Mitigation Approaches
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Unclear or changing expectations			
Perceived job insecurity			
Resource scarcity creating competition			
Metrics that discourage collaboration			
Lack of forums for open discussion			

Part 3: Individual Experience Inquiry

To gain deeper insight, consider asking team members these questions individually:

(Note: Anonymous input may yield more honest responses)

1. How comfortable do you feel taking risks on this team?

2. What happens when someone makes a mistake on our team?

3. How easy or difficult is it to ask for help from teammates?

4. What happens when someone raises a concern or disagreement?

5. Do you feel your unique perspective is valued by the team?

6. What makes you hesitant to speak up or be fully authentic?

7. What would make you feel safer to take interpersonal risks?

Part 4: Safety Patterns Analysis

Based on the previous sections, identify:

Safety Strengths

Areas where psychological safety is strongest:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What contributes to these strengths?

Safety Weaknesses

Areas where psychological safety is most lacking:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What contributes to these weaknesses?

Situational Variations

When does psychological safety increase or decrease?

Circumstances that enhance safety:

Circumstances that diminish safety:

Part 5: Psychological Safety Enhancement Plan

Based on this assessment, create a specific plan to improve safety:

Immediate Safety Builders (Next 30 Days)

1. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____
2. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____
3. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____

Medium-Term Safety Cultivation (2-4 Months)

1. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____
2. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____
3. Action: _____ Who's responsible: _____
Success measures: _____

Your Personal Safety Leadership Commitments

How you'll model psychological safety:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How you'll respond when safety is threatened:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Part 6: Progress Monitoring

How will you track psychological safety improvements?

Observable behavior changes to monitor:

Feedback mechanisms to implement:

Review schedule and process:

Adjustment approach if progress stalls:

Additional Context:

Psychological safety is the foundation for team effectiveness. Research by Google and others consistently shows it's the single most important factor in high-performing teams. Remember:

- **Safety is not the absence of challenge** - Psychologically safe teams can have high standards and tough conversations
- **Safety is built in moments of vulnerability** - How you respond when someone takes a risk determines whether others will take risks in the future

- **Leadership behavior has disproportionate impact** - Your reactions as a manager carry more weight than peer reactions
- **Safety can be enhanced deliberately** - While it develops organically over time, specific practices can accelerate its development
- **Repairing safety breaches is essential** - Acknowledge when safety has been damaged and take explicit steps to restore it
- **Cultural differences affect safety expressions** - What constitutes "speaking up" varies across cultural backgrounds

The most effective teams combine psychological safety with accountability—creating environments where people feel safe to take risks while maintaining high standards for results and growth.

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