



UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA




SEI

Weldon Cooper Center
for Public Service
Virginia Institute of Government



LEAD
LEADING EDUCATING
AND DEVELOPING

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA

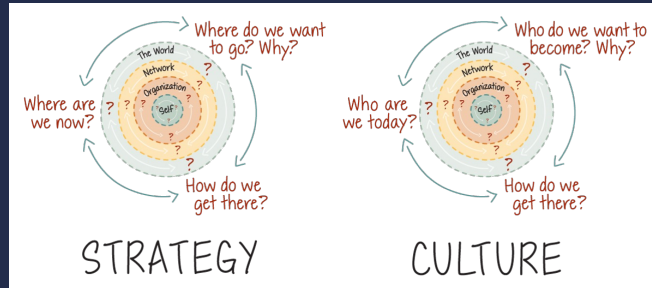
1

LEARNING GOALS

1. UNDERSTAND WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IS AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT IN TODAY'S WORKPLACE
2. EXPLORE THE 4 STAGES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND HOW THEY CREATE ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION
3. LEARN ABOUT DIFFERENT STRATEGIES TO CREATE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN YOUR ORGANIZATIONS
4. CREATE AN ACTION PLAN TO APPLY THE 4 STAGES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER

2

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY and CULTURE



Culture eats strategy for breakfast

-Peter Drucker

HowIgetLeadership.com

3

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY?



4

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Cost\$ of a Breach of Psychological Safety.

- 48% Intentionally decrease their work effort.
- 47% Intentionally decreased time spent at work.
- 38% Intentionally decreased the quality of their work.
- 80% Lost work time worrying about incident.
- 63% Lost time avoiding the offender.
- 66% Said that their performance declined.
- 78% Said that their commitment to the organization declined.
- 12% Said that they left their job because of the uncivil treatment.
- 25% Admitted to taking their frustration out on customers.



5

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?


The Retention and Recruitment Cost\$ of a Breach of Psychological Safety.


75% of the reasons for employee turnover can be prevented.

16% decrease in retention for employees who aren't comfortable giving upward feedback.

Psychological Safety at Work Creates:

- 3.5 times more likely to contribute to fullest potential
- 50% drop in turnover risk
- 75% reduction in sick days
- Stress and burnout reduction
- Equitable workplaces



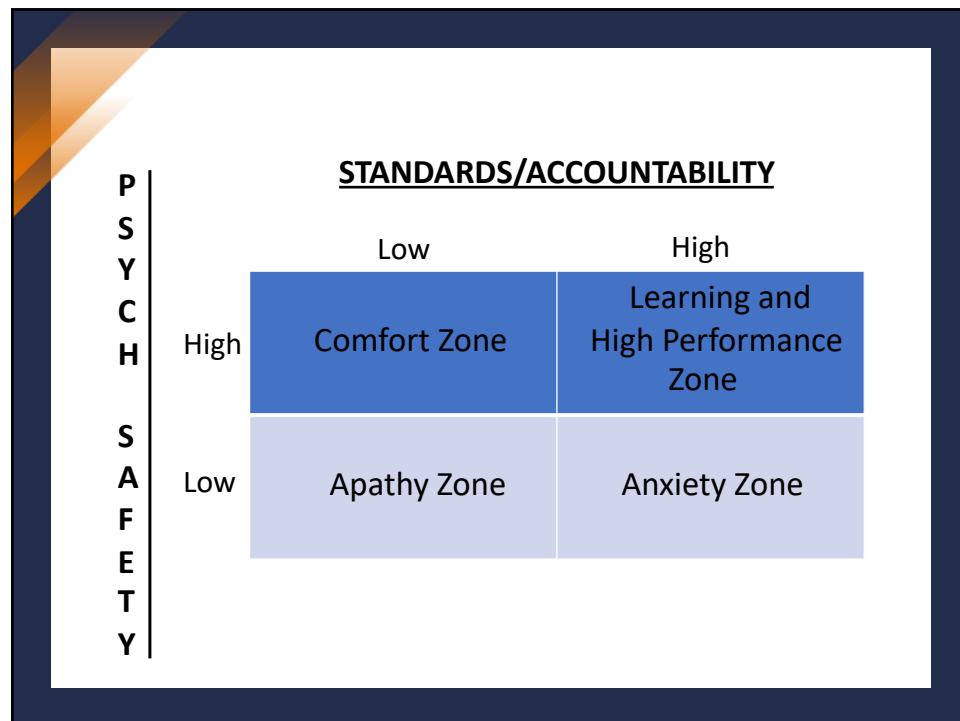


6

WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IS **NOT**

1. Being nice
2. Job security
3. A guarantee that all your ideas will be applauded
4. A license to whine
5. Freedom from conflict
6. Permission to slack off
7. The same as trust
8. It is not **enough** for high performance.
9. It is not **lowering** performance **standards**.

7



8

9

9

STAGE 4
Challenger Safety.
DEFINITION: Challenger safety satisfies the basic human need to make things better. You feel safe to speak up and challenge the status quo when you think there's an opportunity to change or improve.
SOCIAL EXCHANGE: Air cover in exchange for candor.

STAGE 3
Contributor Safety.
DEFINITION: Contributor safety satisfies the basic human need to make a difference. You feel safe to use your skills and abilities to make a meaningful contribution.
SOCIAL EXCHANGE: Autonomy and accountability in exchange for results.

STAGE 2
Learner Safety.
DEFINITION: Learner safety satisfies the basic human need to learn and grow. You feel safe to engage in the learning process—asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, experimenting, and even making mistakes.
SOCIAL EXCHANGE: Encouragement to learn in exchange for engagement to learn.

STAGE 1
Inclusion Safety.
DEFINITION: Inclusion safety satisfies the basic human need to connect and belong. You feel safe to be yourself and are accepted for who you are, including your unique attributes and defining characteristics.
SOCIAL EXCHANGE: Inclusion in exchange for human status and the absence of harm.

(Source: Timothy R. Clark, The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety: Defining the Path to Inclusion and Innovation (Berrett-Koehler 2020).)

10

10

INCLUSION SAFETY

**Worth
Precedes
Worthiness.**



11



11

WHAT BEHAVIORS CREATE INCLUSION SAFETY?

ask

- Ask
- Invite
- Share

1. Pick a partner. Use the behavioral guide.
2. Each person picks 1 behavior to improve or start.
3. Discuss how to put the behavior into practice at work.
4. Be ready to report out on your conversation.




12



12

LEARNER SAFETY





**THINK
SAFETY**
it couldn't hurt


Encouragement to
learn in exchange for
engagement to learn.

Learning is intellectual & emotional.

- **Model**
- **Encourage**
- **Protect**

Thinking Brain  +  **Feeling Brain**

A defensive emotional state causes cognitive impairment.


13


13

WHAT BEHAVIORS CREATE LEARNER SAFETY?

1. Same partner. Use the behavioral guide.
2. Each person picks 1 behavior to improve or start.
3. Discuss how to put the behavior into practice at work.
4. Be ready to report out on your conversation.

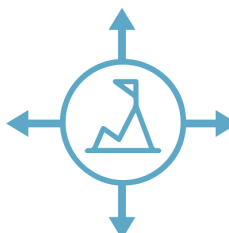
- **Model**
- **Encourage**
- **Protect**

14


14


CHALLENGER SAFETY

Divergent Thinking




Creative Abrasion Constructive Dissent

Tolerance For Candor

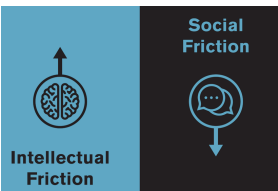


Air cover in exchange for candor.


17


17

WHAT BEHAVIORS CREATE CHALLENGER SAFETY?



1. Same partner. Use the behavioral guide.
2. Each person picks 1 behavior to improve or start.
3. Discuss how to put the behavior into practice at work.
4. Need 2 volunteers to demonstrate a behavior.

18


18

**4 STAGES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY
WRAP-UP**

**Be the cultural architect
of your workplace.**

- A pattern of thought or behavior in a person is a habit
- A pattern of thought or behavior in a team is a norm
- A collection of norms in an organization is a culture

**The single most important
factor in culture formation
is the modeling behavior
of the leader.**

19 

19

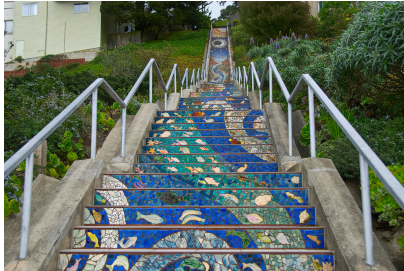
QUESTIONS




20

FINAL EXERCISE

**WHAT STEPS/ACTIONS WILL YOU TAKE
TO CREATE MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?**



21



21



Molly Harlow
mjh3a@virginia.edu
434-987-0331



Weldon Cooper Center
for Public Service
Virginia Institute of Government



[SEI website](#)

[LEAD website](#)



22