

Fostering Psychological Safety

Instructions: For each phase of your effort to build psychological safety (Set the Stage, Invite Participation, Respond Productively), enter your talking points/approach for communicating with the team or individuals. See the example on p. 2 and use the questions on pp. 3-4 as a guide. Remember: If team members do not feel safe in a group, they are likely to keep ideas to themselves and avoid speaking up, even about risks to care quality or safety. So, to promote psychological safety, empower staff to share their feelings/thoughts; identify solutions and update ways of working; and support individuals as they practise new behaviours.

1. Set the Stage	2. Invite Participation	3. Respond Productively
<i>Frame the Work</i>	<i>Demonstrate Humility</i>	<i>Express Appreciation</i>
Set expectations	Acknowledge gaps	Listen, acknowledge & thank all involved
<i>Emphasise Purpose</i>	<i>Practice Enquiry</i>	<i>Destigmatise Failure</i>
Express the WHY	Ask good questions & listen	Find the learning & offer support
	<i>Set Up Structures and Processes</i>	<i>Sanction Clear Violations</i>
	Create forums for input & guide discussions	Specify what's OK and what's not OK

1. Set the Stage	2. Invite Participation	3. Respond Productively	<p>On this team, we can all influence our ward environment. My aspiration is for everyone to feel they can speak up and share mistakes openly so we can continuously improve care quality, safety and our patients' and team members' experience. This is important because safe, high-quality care is what our patients expect and deserve. And all of us want to work in an environment where we can contribute our unique strengths, learn, and grow to reach our potential.</p> <p>We have new players on this team, and I have a lot to learn about how you like to collaborate. You may notice me asking a lot of questions to hear about your experiences. Feel free to ask me questions, too. I truly hope our conversations will help us gain a better understanding of where we are and where we want to go. We will have regular one-on-one supervisions, staff meetings and patient gatherings. You can also email me or post an idea on our idea board, and I will follow up with you.</p> <p>Thank you all for your efforts to build a culture where everyone can thrive. Feeling safe to speak up means that we need to be vulnerable with each other. I trust that we will treat everyone respectfully and value others' ideas. If I stumble (and secretly, I hope I do, because mistakes are often where the most learning takes place) I know you'll help me recover well, and I will do the same for you. If they occur, we will discuss clear policy violations respectfully, with civil and considerate dialogue, so we can address them, learn, and move forward together. The opposite is not OK.</p>
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	<p>Set Up Structures and Processes</p> <p>Create forums for input & guide discussion</p> <p>We will have regular one-on-one supervisions, staff meetings, and patient gatherings. You can also email me or post an idea on our idea board, and I will follow up with you.</p>	<p>Sanction Clear Violations</p> <p>Specify what's OK and not OK</p> <p>If they occur, we will discuss clear policy violations respectfully, with civil and considerate dialogue, so we can address them, learn, and move forward together. The opposite is not OK.</p>	

Psychological safety is: “The belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk taking.”

I. Set the Stage

- **Frame the Work: *Clarity***
 - Have I clarified the nature of the work?
 - To what extent is the work complex and interdependent?
 - How much uncertainty do we face?
 - How often do I refer to these aspects of the work?
 - How well do I assess shared understanding of these features?
- **Frame the Work: *Failure***
 - Have I spoken of failures in a relevant and accessible way, given the people involved and the nature of the work?
 - Do I point out that small failures can lead to subsequent improvement?
 - Do I emphasise that it is not always possible to get something brand new “right the first time?”
- **Reaffirm Purpose**
 - Have I articulated clearly why our work matters, why it makes a difference, and for whom?
 - Even if it seems obvious given the type of work we do, how often do I talk about what’s at stake for our patients, carers, and staff?

II. Invite Participation

- **Situational Humility**
 - Have I made sure that people know that I don’t think I have all the answers?
 - Have I emphasised that we can always learn more?
 - Have I been clear that the situation we’re in requires everyone to be humble and curious about what’s going to happen next?

- **Proactive Enquiry**
 - How often do I ask questions of others first, rather than expressing my perspective?
 - Are my questions open-ended, from a place of curiosity, rather than rhetorical?
 - Do I ask an appropriate mix of questions -- some that encourage broad thinking and some that deepen the focus on a particular issue?
- **Systems and Structures**
 - Have I created structures (standing meetings, idea boards, etc.) to systematically elicit ideas and concerns and follow up with the team once they raise them?
 - Are these communication channels well designed to ensure a safe environment for open dialogue?

III. Respond Productively

- **Express Appreciation**
 - Have I listened thoughtfully? Am I reflecting to others that what they are expressing matters?
 - Do I acknowledge or thank everyone for bringing ideas or questions to me?
- **Destigmatise Failure**
 - When someone comes to me with bad news, how do I make sure it's a positive experience? (i.e., how do I encourage people through the situation, thank them for sharing the news, and support them in identifying a way forward)
 - What more can I do to celebrate intelligent failures (i.e., when someone has tried something that didn't work, though they and the team learned something from the effort, and updated the approach so the next iteration can be more successful)
 - Do I offer help or support to guide the next steps with a question such as, "What support would be most helpful right now?"
- **Sanction Clear Violations**
 - Have I clarified the boundaries regarding what's OK and what's not OK?
 - Have I confirmed that people know what behavior is considered blameworthy in our organization? (i.e., a clear violation of conduct or policy)