

Building Psychological Safety

Try some of these small simple practices in your team to help you create a psychologically safe environment - where people feel safe to bring new ideas, be heard, be themselves, and disagree.

Develop trust

To trust you I need to know you... Spend time getting to know each other outside of job titles. Ask colleagues about their family, interests, hobbies, what do they care about? What is important to them? And share your answers too. Showing our whole self and being vulnerable is what helps us develop authentic relationships of trust.

Vulnerability works in loops

Vulnerability requires courage; someone needs to start. If I'm vulnerable, show myself authentically to you, for example, being honest and disclosing how I feel nervous speaking in front of the room, it's more likely that you will notice it and respond by opening up yourself and sharing for example that it makes you nervous too. In that way creating a loop and making vulnerability part of the norms of our relationship. Not always the other person will respond to the invitation right away, don't feel discouraged and keep trying!

Belonging cues

Subtle gestures, mainly non verbal that tells another person, '*you belong here, I care about you, you are part of the team*'. Physical proximity, eye contact and attention when talking, smiles, posture mimicry, turn taking, physical touch, and small gestures of care like offering or bringing cups of tea... Repeated belonging cues tell the amygdala '*you are safe here*' help it to turn from looking for danger to tending to relationships.

Take small risks

Eg, offer a new idea, admit you made a mistake, ask a question, give feedback to others, seek other people's disagreements and name yours... Remember, we learn by modeling and mimicking so by taking small risks you show others that is ok to do so.

Publicly appreciate people that take small risks

Appreciating the behaviours you want to see more of, makes it more likely that the behavior will be repeated and spread to others.