

What is Psychological Safety?



An environment of rewarded vulnerability.

Where you have Psychological Safety, you have high performing & inclusive cultures.

The crises of 2020 exposed our weaknesses in preparation and commitment to address the mental and emotional health of employees, but they are also serving as an accelerator to transform workplaces into sanctuaries of psychological safety.

Dr Timothy Clarke , Forbes, Feb 2021

The Accelerating Transformation of Employee Mental Health & Safety

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the need for employers to take more action to support the mental health and psychological safety of their employees, and to consider how to reduce workplace stress and psychosocial risks. The international standard ([ISO 45003](#)) published in June 2021 supports this need to address mental and emotional safety: “Occupational health and safety management—Psychological health and safety at work: managing psychosocial risks”

Psychosocial risk refers to intangible hazards in a workplace that have the potential to cause mental, emotional, or psychological harm. We’re talking about things such as excessive work hours and workloads, poor leadership and culture, bullying, harassment, role clarity, involvement in decisions, and lack of support. It had become the norm to accept entrenched behaviours and practices in the workplace, but these have taken their toll on mental and emotional health.

Poor mental health costs UK employers up to £45bn each year

“Mental health and employers Refreshing the case for investment” Deloitte, Jan 2020

These are strong moral and social drivers for change. In addition, technology, globalization, global health crises, and other factors have increased turbulence in markets. Organisations need to respond and they need to figure out how to adapt and stay competitive.

What Psychological Safety Isn't.

- Psychological Safety isn't about being nice
- It's not about being politically correct
- It's not about coddling people who want to play victim
- It's not about absolving ourselves of accountability in pursuit of not hurting feelings
- It's not about being soft, permissive, and indulgent
- It's not about avoiding healthy conflict and challenge

Rewarded vs. Punished Vulnerability.

Vulnerability: Exposure to potential harm or loss

Punished Vulnerability encourages:

- self-preservation
- loss avoidance
- minimum compliance
- reduced productivity

When our vulnerability is punished, we recoil, retreat, and enter a defensive mode of performance. We enter a mode of self-preservation. We act out of compliance and do the minimum amount necessary to get by. Innovation by definition is a deviation from the status quo. Innovation is fuelled by ideas and risk-taking. Without an environment of rewarded vulnerability, teams will not take risks. Teams that do not take risks or push boundaries will never innovate at rates fast enough to stay relevant in today's turbulent environment.

Acts of Vulnerability

- Asking a question
- Admitting a mistake
- Disagreeing
- Saying "I don't know"
- Sharing an alternate point of view
- Sharing something personal
- Challenging the status quo
- Giving feedback
- Sharing your emotions
- Sharing an idea
- Asking for help
- Doing something you're not good at
- Saying no

Cultures of punished vulnerability can quickly turn hostile. There are significant liabilities and exposure that comes with hostile work environments that organizations can't ignore. Harassment, bullying, public shaming-- these things have become normalized in many organizations and present not only productivity, quality, and innovation risk, but legal risk too.

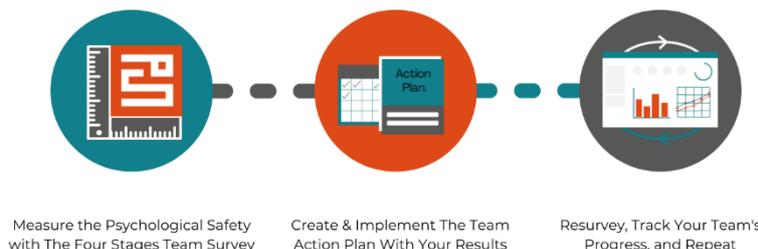


Rewarded Vulnerability encourages:

- discretionary effort
- meaningful contribution
- value creation
- increased productivity

When our vulnerability is rewarded, we engage, contribute meaningfully, and enter an offensive mode of performance. We give of our discretionary effort and spend our time creating value.

Humans yearn for inclusion and belonging. They want to learn, they want to contribute, and they want to make a difference. The LeaderFactor™ 4 Stages of Psychological Safety™ is the roadmap for individuals and organizations to achieve and maintain high levels of psychological safety.



Creating a Psychologically Safe environment

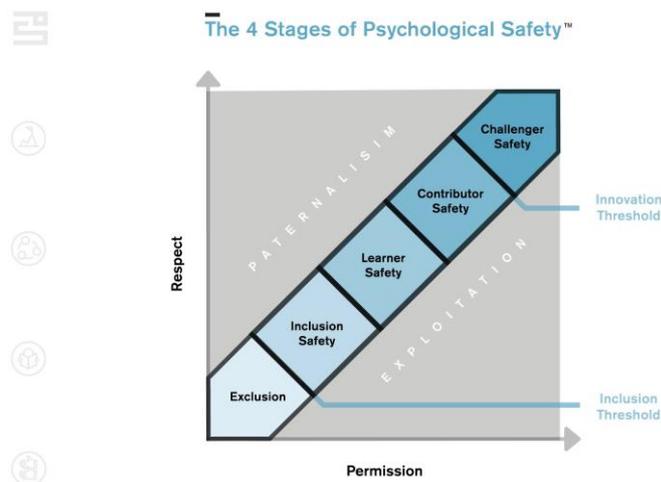
High Performing Teams Need Psychological Safety. If building diverse, innovative, and loyal teams is a priority, psychological safety needs to be your new managerial obsession.



The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety™

Humans yearn for inclusion and belonging. They want to learn, they want to contribute, and they want to make a difference. The [LeaderFactor™ 4 Stages of Psychological Safety™](#) is the roadmap for individuals and organizations to achieve and maintain high levels of psychological safety.

LeaderFactor™ 4 Stages of Psychological Safety™



Align
The 4 Stages Overview



Align your team around a common language and set of principles that turn theory into concrete behaviours. 90-minute live-virtual session led by Nicki Eyre, Accredited LeaderFactor Coach and Trainer

Assess your team's current level of psychological safety using The 4 Stages™ Team Survey. The survey will provide you with both actionable qualitative and quantitative data on your team. Survey results are organized to help you prepare your team's action plan.



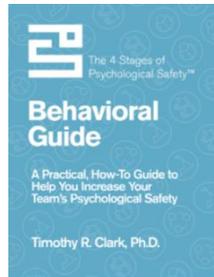
Assess
The 4 Stages Team Survey




AimPeople Leader
Action Planning
Session

Create & Implement the Team Action Plan with Your Results. This session focuses on managers. After all, teams don't outperform their leaders. They reflect them. Using your team survey results, you'll create a personalized action plan for working on each of the 4 Stages. Then you'll select from recommended behaviours based on each stage. It's time to create culture by design, not by default. This Action planning session for all people-leaders is led by an accredited LeaderFactor Coach and Trainer

Put the Plan into practice. Use the Behavioural Guide providing 120+ essential behaviours to help improve psychological safety

**Apply****Accelerate**

Accelerate progress using additional tools including the 4 Stages™ Online Course; internal communications campaigns; coaching and sharing successes and challenges. Support can be provided by your Accredited LeaderFactor Coach and Trainer

Resurvey, Track Your Teams Progress, and Repeat. After completing your personalized team action plan, your team will again be sent the 4 Stages™ Survey. You'll find areas of improvement and some items that still need work. Psychological Safety is perishable. It requires constant effort to build and maintain high levels of psychological safety on your teams.

AccountRetest with The
4 Stages Team
Survey