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Fostering Creativity in the Workplace: Unlocking the Power of Diversity Through Psychological Safety

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Fostering Creativity in the Workplace:
Unlocking the Power of Diversity Through Psychological Safety

by

Samantha Rosario

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creativity and Change Leadership

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2024

Buffalo State University
State University of New York
Department of Creativity and Change Leadership

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

Fostering Creativity in the Workplace:

Unlocking the Power of Diversity Through Psychological Safety

With a growing recognition of the advantages associated with forming culturally and cognitively diverse teams, understanding the crucial role of psychological safety in leveraging diversity for creativity and innovation is paramount. Additionally, since leaders establish the tone of the workplace culture, it's crucial to ensure they possess the necessary expertise to lead inclusively to establish psychological safety. This project aims to meet the demand for skill development by producing a facilitator guide and workshop presentation. These resources are designed to empower workshop leaders with the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to facilitate a workshop with the goal to promote workplace psychological safety. By fostering a culture of psychological safety, diverse teams can harness their collective power to drive creativity and innovation.

Keywords: diversity, facilitator guide, inclusive leadership, psychological safety, workshop.

Samantha Rosario

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April 29, 2024

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April 29, 2024



Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers
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April 29, 2024



Student

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To my friends and family, thank you for your patience and understanding as I navigated the challenges of balancing school and other commitments. Your listening ears and unwavering support have meant the world to me.

Additionally, I need to extend my heartfelt appreciation to my professors and classmates in the Creativity and Change Leadership program. Your insights, encouragement, and shared passion for this subject have kept my enthusiasm alive and fueled countless "aha" moments throughout this journey.

Lastly, in the immortal words of Christopher Wallace, this is dedicated "To all the teachers that told me I'd never amount to nothin'". Your doubt only served to fuel my determination, and I am grateful for the opportunity to prove you wrong.

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SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Purpose, Rationale, and Description of Project

In the ever-evolving, competitive landscape organizations find themselves in today, the need for creativity and innovation has become a strategic imperative for not only growth, but survival (Abimiku, 2016). Although creativity and innovation are closely connected concepts, they are distinct. Creativity involves the generation of novel ideas, whereas innovation involves the implementation of those creative ideas (Amabile, 1996). Applying and embodying both creativity and innovation are essential to increase the probability of survival in an organization.

The Advantage of Diverse Teams

One increasingly recognized catalyst for accomplishing these imperatives, is the diversity of the organization's workforce (Jones et al., 2020). The definition or understanding of diversity may differ depending on the individual or source. However, in my experience, when most people hear the term "diversity", they often associate it with demographic characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, and physical ability. As conversations about this topic continue in the media and organizations increasingly communicate their strategies to broadening diversity, it appears that the interpretation of the term is evolving. For example, researchers de Anca and Aragón (2018) interviewed 180 managers, exploring:

Perceptions of diversity found that depending on who is answering, diversity usually means one of three things: demographic diversity (our gender, race, sexual orientation, and so on), experiential diversity (our affinities, hobbies, and abilities), and cognitive diversity (how we approach problems and think

about things). All three types shape identity — or rather, identities (para. 1).

It is essential to think of diversity extending beyond demographic data, encompassing the unique essence of individual identities. Such recognition underscores the significance of the diverse contributions everyone can offer in the workplace.

Diversity brings a wide range of benefits to an organization, including contributing to high team performance. In fact, studies show that diverse teams perform better than homogeneous groups (Phillips et al., 2008). Teams consisting of individuals with different identities or experiences generate more ideas and offer different angles to solving problems (Van Knippenberg et al., 2020). They offer a more comprehensive viewpoint, sparking creative solutions that consider a broader range of factors.

Diverse teams can learn from one another, build on each other's ideas, and reduce the risk of groupthink. A range of viewpoints challenges the group to consider alternatives reducing the possibility of a narrow view or limited information pool. Furthermore, diverse teams with leaders who acknowledge and support these differences are even more effective in creative tasks than teams with similar cultural identities especially when compared to managers who ignore or suppress differences (Adler, 2002). It is not just about recognizing diversity; it's about honoring and celebrating it. Celebration transforms diversity from a passive acknowledgment into an action, signifying intentional effort by the leader.

Drawing from personal experiences, I have seen the impact of diversity on fostering creative thinking and high team performance. Following my high school graduation, I spent three years in the United States Army as a Logistics Coordinator. My service allowed me the opportunity to work alongside soldiers from diverse

backgrounds, in an environment which frequently required problem-solving in response to dynamic challenges. Despite our differences, we were able to work cohesively as a team to achieve our mission as we were open to listening and learning from one another. In fact, it was because of our differences we were successful. We valued each other's varied experiences, skills, and viewpoints and used them as an asset to creatively tackle problems and overcome barriers.

The idea that diverse teams can lead to better performance is also supported by Maznevski and Di Stefano (2000). They state that teams that go beyond just recognizing diversity at a surface level, communicate more effectively and outperform teams that lack diversity. Understanding the different identities, perspectives, and experiences of each individual team member is the cornerstone of unlocking the full potential of collective creativity (Hoever & van Knippenberg, 2021). This type of recognition can lead to team members feeling appreciated and experiencing a sense of feeling seen and heard, resulting in an empowerment to actively contribute their thoughts and ideas. It is these contributions that allow for creativity to flow and innovation to follow.

Cultivating Psychological Safety in Teams is Vital

While diversity stands as an advantage for organizations seeking to thrive in dynamic landscapes, diversity on its own is not enough. Diversity must be supported by an environment in which team members feel safe to express their unique perspectives and contribute and question freely. Diverse voices should not just be welcomed, but actively sought and valued. Leaders play a critical role in shaping this type of environment. By creating an environment where openness, acceptance, and respect

are the standard, leaders can help foster psychological safety.

According to Dr. Amy Edmondson (2019) “Psychological safety describes a climate where people feel safe enough to take interpersonal risks by speaking up and sharing concerns, questions, or ideas” (p. 22). When team members feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to explore unusual ideas, new possibilities, and embrace challenges. This sense of safety reduces the fear of failure and negative criticism. It allows individuals to think and act freely- establishing an environment that fosters creativity. Let us consider psychological safety when examining the ground rules for diverging during the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process. Steps include deferring judgment, striving for quantity, seeking wild and unusual ideas, and combining and building on other ideas (Miller et al., 2011). If team members fear negative feedback or humiliation, they may withhold ideas or avoid sharing additional thoughts and insight. This can lead to a reduction of ideas which is essential to the CPS process. Withholding ideas or questions may also lead to missed opportunities, the ability to stay attuned to potential threats or recognizing emerging trends, thereby limiting the organization’s capacity for growth.

In the longitudinal research conducted by Google’s People Analytics team, known as Project Aristotle, psychological safety emerged as the foremost factor influencing highly successful teams (Newman et al., 2017). Psychological safety is essential for establishing a positive team culture that enables effective communication and collaboration. The report indicated that teams who reported a culture of psychological safety were found to have higher employee retention rates, they were more inclined to leverage the diverse ideas from the team, they generated more

revenue, and were rated higher in performance by senior leadership (Syed, 2021, pp.100-101). Simply stated, they were more creative, engaged, and successful over teams consisting of highly trained individuals lacking a culture of safety.

My current position as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practitioner has validated these findings. I have participated in and led numerous listening sessions that resulted in team members expressing feeling hesitant or uneasy about voicing their ideas, admitting errors, or questioning their leaders. Some individuals shared concerns about appearing as though they were undermining their leader in a group setting, while others noted that their workplace culture did not encourage the sharing of feedback or opposition. The team members went as far as acknowledging the potential risks associated with this behavior (e.g. groupthink and limited creative thinking) but did not feel the reward outweighed the risk of being labeled as a “troublemaker”, which could negatively impact their career trajectories.

Leadership Sets the Tone

Leaders play a vital role in workplace innovation as they mold and shape the environment in which people work. They need to be intentional with their actions ensuring they are actively encouraging and welcoming thoughts and ideas from their team and removing any fear around repercussions if someone does respectfully speak up (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). Although the book highlights more extreme cases, *Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking* (Syed, 2021) illustrates life-and-death scenarios to underscore the danger of hierarchical structures. On the summit of Mount Everest, eight individuals lost their lives because concerns about potential weather patterns and oxygen levels in the tanks required for the climb, were not voiced. When

examining the situation regarding United Airlines Flight 173, ten individuals lost their lives due to an engineer's fear of challenging the pilot, who outranked him. If the individuals with the knowledge had felt safe to speak up and voice their concerns during these events, it might have saved lives. These cases may seem extreme, but they should serve as reminders of the critical significance of psychological safety in high stakes environments. Team members must be able to voice concerns, questions, or respectfully challenge their leader to reduce the impact of negative consequences.

Leaders can create a psychologically safe environment for their team by instilling some core foundational values. They can encourage and create an environment of openness and acceptance, encourage risk and accept mistakes as learning opportunities, and allow team members to have autonomy in their decision-making. Leaders should welcome feedback and effectively communicate especially during times of volatility and change (Zeng et al., 2020). Change often elicits strong emotions from team members due to fear and uncertainty. When leaders communicate openly and transparently, team members may feel better informed and more in control, as if they are actively a part of the transformation, contributing to culture of psychological safety.

Leaders also have a direct impact on workplace culture which can either stifle or encourage creativity. Leaders develop and implement team operating norms, especially as it relates to team communication and collaboration. As mentioned previously, they are also responsible for creating a psychologically safe and inclusive environment which influences if the team will actually engage with those norms. Perry et. al. (2020) suggests that inclusive climates provide team members with a sense of belonging, while still respecting and acknowledging their individualism. Inclusive environments

encourage team members to be their authentic selves, expressing themselves through their distinct perspective. Individual and team authenticity supports a workplace where creativity can flourish, and inclusive environments play a fundamental part in fostering psychological safety within teams.

An effective leadership style that promotes these behaviors and supports this type of environment is inclusive leadership. In fact, Randel et al. (2018, p. 191) proposes that “inclusive leadership enables the effective functioning of diverse work groups in ways that are not sufficiently addressed by other forms of leadership”. It is important to note before moving on, that advocating for inclusive leadership does not imply the sole reliance on the style. Inclusive leadership can complement other leadership approaches. However, for organizations aiming to elevate workplace inclusion and foster creativity and innovation, it is imperative for leaders to actively incorporate the distinctive behaviors associated with inclusive leadership.

Inclusive leadership promotes a shared identity for the team, works to eliminate power imbalances due to role or status, adopts a democratic leadership style by encouraging involvement in decision-making, and appreciates all contributions (Northouse et al., 2022). Inclusive leaders recognize that the diverse backgrounds and perspectives from team members serve as catalysts for innovation, propelling teams beyond typical (i.e. status quo) thinking. By actively seeking and valuing input without judgment through a culture of open communication and active listening, inclusive leadership supports the creative process. This approach not only stimulates the generation of novel ideas but also enhances collaboration, as team members feel empowered to contribute their individual thoughts to the collective pool of ideas.

Inclusive leadership, characterized as a collection of behaviors, suggests that one can acquire and refine these skills through learning and development. To elevate psychological safety, leaders must prioritize the development of inclusive leadership behaviors. As someone who has actively sought and participated in various leadership development courses, I have come to realize a significant gap pertaining to training focused on addressing the crucial topics of diversity, psychological safety, and inclusive leadership. It is evident that organizations must prioritize and expand access to training programs specifically tailored to fostering a deeper understanding of these topics among leaders. By offering such training opportunities, organizations can cultivate more inclusive workplaces, with the goals of fostering creativity and innovation within their diverse teams. With that in mind, my overarching goal for this project is to develop a facilitator guide and workshop focused on equipping workshop leaders (also referred to as facilitators) with the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities to teach participants how to cultivate a culture of psychological safety within their teams. The workshop will be designed to encourage participants to harness diverse perspectives and create an environment where every voice is valued, and creativity thrives to drive innovation.

My specific goals for this project include:

- Formulate the business case for the incorporation of diversity, creativity, and psychological safety into the business framework.
- Gain a better understanding of the tools and practical frameworks that exist in cultivating psychological safety in diverse teams.
- Utilizing insights from my literature review, develop a workshop presentation and facilitator guide with the goal of empowering workshop leaders with a user-

friendly framework and practical tools to teach how to foster psychological safety within teams.

- Enjoy the process of completing this master's project, including embracing the challenges.

SECTION TWO: PERTINENT LITERATURE

Topic Areas for Master's Project Culminating Paper and Project Deliverables

In order to create a facilitator guide and workshop presentation designed to empower workshop leaders with the necessary expertise to coach participants how to cultivate workplace psychological safety in diverse teams to foster creativity, I will conduct research in five key areas: workplace diversity, inclusion, inclusive leadership, strategies for promoting psychological safety, and unconscious bias. Additionally, it will be important to dedicate time reviewing best practices for workshop development to ensure a cohesive and effective learning experience for the facilitators and participants.

Master's Project Culminating Paper: Pertinent Literature

The following resources encompass a diverse range of literature, studies, and expert insights relevant to the subject matter, offering a foundational framework for further inquiry and analysis as I develop my master's project culminating paper.

Abimiku, J. (2016). Creativity and innovation in business. *Journal of Teacher Perspective*, 10(2), 1-10.

de Anca, C., & Aragón, S. (2018, May 24). The 3 types of diversity that shape our identities. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2018/05/the-3-types-of-diversity-that-shape-our-identities>

Grissom, A. R. (2018). Workplace Diversity and Inclusion. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 57(4), 242-247.

- Helbig, K., & Norman, M. (2023). *The psychological safety playbook: Lead more powerfully by being more human*. Page Two.
- Hoever, I. J., & van Knippenberg, D. (2021). How diversity promotes team creativity: two bumpy roads to collective inspiration. *Creative Success in Teams*, 81-99.
- Jones, G., Chirino Chace, B., & Wright, J. (2020). Cultural diversity drives innovation: Empowering teams for success. *International Journal of Science*, 12(3), 323-242. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijis-04-2020-0042>
- Maznevski, M. L., & Di Stefano, J. J. (2000). Creating value with diverse teams in global management. *Organizational dynamics*, 29(1), 45-63.
- Miller, B., Vehar, J., Firestien, R., Thurber, S., & Nielsen, D. (2011). *Creativity unbound. An introduction to the creative process*. FourSight, LLC.
- Newman, A., Donohue, R., & Eva, N. (2017). Psychological safety: A systematic review of the literature. *Human resource management review*, 27(3), 521-535.
- Nembhard, I. M., & Edmondson, A. C. (2006). Making it safe: The effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27(7), 941–966. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.413>
- Northouse, P. G., Chrobot-Mason, D., & Roberson, Q. (2022). *Inclusive leadership. In leadership: Theory and practice* (pp. 322–351). SAGE Publications.

- Perry, E. L., Block, C. J., & Noumair, D. A. (2020). Leading in: Inclusive leadership, inclusive climates, and sexual harassment. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 40(4), 430–447. <https://doi.org/10.1108/edi-04-2019-0120>
- Randel, A. E., Galvin, B. M., Shore, L. M., Ehrhart, K. H., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., & Kedharnath, U. (2018). Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. *Human resource management review*, 28(2), p. 191.
- Van Knippenberg, D., Nishii, L.H., & Dwertmann, D.J. (2020). Synergy from diversity: Managing team diversity to enhance performance. *Behavioral Science & Policy*, 6(2), 75-92. <https://doi.org/10.1353/bsp.2020.0007>
- Zeng, H., Zhao, L., & Zhao, Y. (2020). Inclusive leadership and taking-charge behavior: Roles of psychological safety and thriving at work. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 62. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00062>

Master’s Project Deliverables: Pertinent Literature

The following resources offer a foundational framework for further inquiry and analysis for the deliverables related to the master’s project- the facilitator guide and workshop presentation. To avoid redundancy, I excluded any duplicate sources from the master’s project culminating paper's reference list and this one, although some resources may provide insight in both areas.

- Clark, T. R. (2021). *The 4 stages of psychological safety: Defining the path to inclusion and innovation*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.

Norman, M., & Helbig, K. (2023). *The psychological safety playbook: Lead more powerfully by being more human*. Page Two.

Ross, H. J. (2014). *Everyday bias: Identifying and navigating unconscious judgments in our daily lives*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Syed, M. (2021). *Rebel ideas: The power of diverse thinking*. Flatiron Books.

Wilkins, L. (2021). *Leading below the surface: How to build real (and psychologically safe) relationships with people who are different from you*. PYP Academy Press.

SECTION THREE: PROCESS PLAN

Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes

The primary deliverable for this project is the development of a facilitator guide and workshop presentation. These resources will function as transformative tools aimed at providing workshop leaders with the essential frameworks to teach participants how to nurture psychological safety within their teams, thus promoting a culture conducive to creativity and innovation. The workshop will engage participants in a didactic segment, interactive activities, and role-playing exercises to deepen their understanding of psychological safety and enhance their leadership skills. Furthermore, both the facilitator guide and the workshop will feature a resource section comprising of pertinent literature and resources to support both the facilitator and participant in strengthening their knowledge. Through this multifaceted approach, the goal is to empower facilitators and participants to create inclusive environments where team members feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and ideas, ultimately driving innovation and organizational success.

Project Timeline

To achieve my overall project goal, I plan to follow the project timeline and action plan present in Table 1, below.

Table 1

Project Timeline and Action Plan

Action	Deadline	Hours to Complete	Support Needed
Concept Paper Development and Submission	February 11, 2024	8-10	Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers

Research and Literature Review	February 24, 204	24	
Facilitator Guide Development	March 2, 2024	6	Peer Reviewer
Section 1-3 Submission	March 18, 2024		Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers
Workshop Presentation Development	April 12, 2024	25	Peer Reviewer
Create Scripting for Slides	April 15, 2024	6	Peer Reviewer
Section 4-6 Submission	April 21, 2024		Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers
Final Project Submission	April 29, 2024		
Final Project Submission to Digital Commons	May 6, 2024		Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers
Master's Project Presentation	May 15, 2024	6	Dr. Susan Keller-Mathers

Evaluation Plan

To assess the achievement of my project goal, I have created Table 2, outlining the different elements of the facilitator guide and workshop presentation along with their respective deliverables to ensure fulfillment.

Table 2

Key Evaluation Assessments Towards Deliverables Development

Section	Deliverables
Draft Facilitator Guide	Draft Facilitator Guide Outline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title page

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop overview • Facilitator best practices • Insights on workshop activities • References and resources
Workshop Presentation	<p>Draft Workshop Presentation Outline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions and icebreaker • Learning objectives • Introduction to key terminology • Business case for key areas of focus (diversity, creativity, psychological safety) • Team dynamics and role of leader • Self-assessment activity • Practical strategies and tools- psychological safety and unconscious bias • Case studies and/or group activities (role playing) • Closing and next steps

SECTION FOUR: OUTCOMES

Project Deliverables Overview: Facilitator Guide and Workshop Presentation

The primary goal of this master's project was to develop a 90-minute workshop along with a facilitator guide titled "Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace." This goal was motivated by my own experience of observing the profound impact of a safe and inclusive work environment, especially as it relates to enhancing creative problem-solving. As I explored this topic further in my studies, I found consistent evidence in the literature supporting my belief that psychological safety and inclusion are essential for unlocking the benefits of workplace diversity leading to innovation. In recognizing the pivotal role we each hold in shaping the culture of our workplace, I felt compelled to take action. My workshop was created with the intention of empowering participants with the essential skills, knowledge and abilities needed to foster a culture where psychological safety thrives.

Before deciding to pursue both deliverables, my initial intention was solely to create a PowerPoint presentation tailored for my current organization to facilitate a workshop at the corporate university. After discussing my project with a colleague, I decided to create a facilitator guide to compliment the presentation to potentially extend the workshop's utility to other Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practitioners within my organization or beyond. With this potential future opportunity in mind, I incorporated scripting into the presentation slides to ensure the workshop's seamless and standardized delivery. Furthermore, I provided notes for each section requiring customization by the facilitator. For instance, it would be important to customize the workshop presentation to reflect the organization's unique details, such as key

terminology. This tailoring ensures that participants can relate the content directly to their workplace context, enhancing engagement and applicability. Below is an in-depth breakdown of the components included in each of the resources.

Deliverable One: Facilitator Guide

The purpose of the facilitator guide is to help prepare the workshop leader (facilitator) by giving clear instructions and valuable insights for leading a successful session. Essentially, the role of the facilitator, is to guide participants through a structured learning experience, ensuring that the objectives of the workshop are met effectively. Aligned with the content of the workshop, facilitators are responsible for creating a supportive and inclusive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing ideas, engaging in discussions, and participating in activities. Facilitators should thoroughly review the entire guide and explore the recommended resources before moving forward with conducting their own workshop. The guide details the pre-workshop preparation steps, provides insights and recommendations for each section of the workshop, and includes references and recommended reading for further exploration.

The guide is broken up into several sections: 1. Workshop overview and preparation; 2. Introduction and key concepts; 3. Strategies and practice; 4. Next steps, resources, and session conclusion and 5. Appendix: Reference list and participant workbook. Below, you'll find an overview of each section along with corresponding figures illustrating the facilitator guide. Please note that the guide presented below is not the final version. It will be further designed to ensure visual appeal.

Section one offers information on the workshop's overview, objectives, and preparedness procedures, as depicted in Figure 1 below. Its aim is to build confidence

in the facilitator by ensuring they are familiar with the essential workshop information. It communicates the ideal structure for both virtual and in person settings and encourages workshop leaders to proactively collect accommodation requests during the registration process to ensure an inclusive learning environment for all. Facilitators will find valuable guidance, including helpful facilitator prompting questions, in this section to ensure a smooth start to the workshop.

Figure 1

Preliminary Facilitator Guide: Section One- Workshop Overview and Preparation

Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace: Facilitator Guide

Welcome Message:

Welcome to the Facilitator Guide for "Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace." Recognized as a cornerstone of high-performing teams, psychological safety plays a pivotal role in fostering creativity and innovation. This guide is designed to provide you with the necessary tools, resources, and insights to effectively facilitate the workshop focused on fostering psychological safety in the workplace, enhancing team members' skills, knowledge, and abilities. By creating a safe and supportive environment, you will empower participants to engage in open dialogue and share their perspectives, maximizing their learning and growth potential.

Workshop Background and Overview:

The "Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace" workshop and facilitator guide was created by an experienced Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Practitioner with expertise in Learning and Development, as well as Creativity and Change Leadership. It incorporates insights from various experts in the field, including luminaries like Dr.

Amy Edmondson, Dr. Timothy Clark, Karolin Helbig, Minette Norman, and numerous others. Their research and expertise have been instrumental in shaping the content and strategies shared in the workshop, ensuring its effectiveness in fostering psychological safety in the workplace.

In this 90-minute interactive session, participants will explore the importance of psychological safety and its impact on team performance, creativity, and innovation. Through discussions, activities, and practical strategies, participants will learn how to cultivate psychological safety to create an environment where team members feel safe to express their ideas, share diverse perspectives, and take risks without fear of judgment or reprisal.

Session Objectives:

After participation in the session, participants should be able to:

- Understand the concept of psychological safety and its significance in fostering a creative and innovative work environment.
- Identify key inclusive behaviors and communication strategies that contribute to building psychological safety within teams.
- Develop practical skills and knowledge to promote psychological safety in the workplace and enhance team creativity and innovation.

Session Preparation:

This guide includes facilitator notes to assist you in preparing for the session. Additionally, you will receive a customizable PowerPoint template, along with a script in the slide notes, to guide you through facilitating the 90-minute workshop. It is recommended you follow the scripting provided, and review the references provided

in the appendix. Preparation is crucial for effectively delivering this course. While you are encouraged to facilitate in your unique style, make sure to accurately communicate the concepts.

As a facilitator, be sure to adopt the role of both a leader and fellow learner alongside your participants. Embrace vulnerability and practice humility. It is okay to admit if you are uncertain about something. Focus on sharing your insights openly and encouraging others to do the same. Your main role is to create a safe environment where participants can explore and discover insights on their own.

Materials:

- Pens: In-person only.
- Fillable Participant workbook: Printed for in-person sessions; emailed ahead of time for virtual session.

Room Set-up:

- Recommended Group Size: 16-20 participants.
- In-person Classroom Setup: Small table groups.
- Activities include pair shares and role playing, so encourage tables of even numbers for in-person sessions.

Virtual Set-up:

- Recommended Group Size: 16-20 participants.
- Utilize a platform with the ability to initiate breakout rooms (e.g., Zoom).
- Participants are encouraged to:
 - Turn on their cameras.

- Remain on mute until prompted otherwise, to reduce background noise.
- Utilize the "raise your hand" feature for questions or comments during activities.

Accessibility:

It is important to recognize and accommodate the diverse needs of team members to ensure their full participation. For instance, providing captioning for virtual settings or coordinating interpreter services. Make sure to include a section in the registration process where team members can specify their accommodation requests. By identifying and implementing such accommodations, we create an environment where all team members can engage effectively, contribute their perspectives, and benefit from the shared learning experience.

Helpful Facilitator Prompting Questions:

- Can you say a little more about that?
- Would you be willing to share your thoughts behind that?
- What were the specific behaviors you noticed/observed?
- Does anyone else want to build off of _____'s comments?
- That's great feedback, I want to make sure we have enough time to hear from everyone, would anyone like to add to _____'s thoughts?
- I see we only have 5 more minutes; we'll need to keep comments brief so we can hear from everyone.

Section two offers detailed information and insights into the workshop presentation, outlining the duration of each slide and the content to be covered, as illustrated in Figure 2 below. The purpose of structuring the guide in this manner was to

provide the facilitator with a deeper understanding of the slide flow and content before starting the session, thereby enhancing their preparation and confidence.

Figure 2

Preliminary Facilitator Guide: Section Two- Introduction and Key Concepts

Introductions and Key Concepts	
Total Time: 37 min.	
Corresponding Presentation Workshop Slides: Slides: 1-11	
Slide/Duration	Slide Content and Insights
1 1 min.	Workshop Title Slide Welcome participants and share the conditions of success, also referred to as ground rules. These principles are essential for establishing a respectful and safe environment during the workshop.
2 2 min.	Facilitator Introduction Introduce yourself in your role as the facilitator. Share details about your professional and/or personal experiences, highlighting your passion and expertise in this subject matter.
3 10 min.	Participant Introduction and Icebreaker Activity Explain that each person will introduce themselves by sharing their name, pronouns, and one cultural fact that is important to them. The cultural fact can be related to their heritage, traditions, language, or any aspect of their culture. Before beginning, remind everyone that we committed to creating a safe environment where we listen and respect each other's identities and experiences.

	Encourage participants to keep their sharing brief to ensure everyone gets a chance to participate. Thank everyone once all participants have the opportunity to share.
4 1 min.	Review Learning Objectives Read aloud each learning objective. This ensures clarity on the session's purpose and goals, guiding both the facilitator and participants towards a focused and productive learning experience.
5 3 min.	Review of Key Terminology* Review the session's relevant terminology: diversity, inclusion, workplace psychological safety and unconscious bias. This ensures that all participants share a common understanding of each term, laying a solid foundation for exploring how these concepts interconnect throughout the session. *Please note: The definitions of key terminology should match those used within your organization. The definitions provided in the PowerPoint align with the organization of the course creator; adjust them accordingly to fit your organization's terminology.
6 1 min.	Unlocking the Power of Diversity, Inclusion, and Psychological Safety to Enhance Workplace Innovation Discuss how the key terms are interconnected to achieve organizational outcomes, including enhancing creativity, and innovation. Highlighting the business case serves as a motivator for participants to

	<p>engage with the lesson. When participants understand the benefits and implications for the organization, such as increased innovation and team performance, they may be more inclined to actively participate and internalize the concepts being presented. This connection to outcomes fosters a sense of relevance and urgency, driving greater investment and commitment from participants in cultivating psychological safety within their teams and workplaces.</p>
<p>7 & 8 10 min.</p>	<p>Individual and Group Reflection Activity</p> <p>Invite participants to take 2 minutes to individually reflect on their professional experiences and write down a scenario, in their participant workbook, in which they felt comfortable expressing their thoughts/ideas or acknowledging an error.</p> <p>Then break them into groups of 4 (depending on number of participants) and invite participants to take turns sharing one of their moments of psychological safety. Encourage them to describe the situation, what factors- whether environmental, cultural, or interpersonal- that contributed to their sense of safety and comfort in the given situation. What exactly made them feel safe, and what was the impact it had on them, the workplace and/or team.</p> <p>After about 5 minutes, ask that participants conclude their discussions, and ask each group to some share key takeaways from the positive experiences with the larger group.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Dangers of Lacking Psychological Safety</p>

1 min.	<p>Discuss the potential consequences of a workplace environment lacking psychological safety, highlighting the impact its absence overall performance, retention, safety, wellness.</p> <p>Fostering a culture of psychological safety is vital for promoting innovation and maintaining a competitive edge in today's dynamic landscape. Without an environment where team members feel secure in taking risks, sharing ideas, and challenging the status quo, organizations risk stagnation and being left behind by more innovative competitors.</p>
<p>10 & 11</p> <p>8 min.</p>	<p>Individual and Group Reflection Activity</p> <p>Invite participants to take 2 minutes to individually reflect on their professional experiences and write down a scenario, in their participant workbook, in which they felt uncomfortable speaking up to share ideas, challenge the status quo, or to admit a mistake in the workplace.</p> <p>Then break them into groups of 4 (depending on number of participants) and invite participants to take turns sharing their experiences. Prompt participants to reflect on the emotions they experienced during these situations. After about 5 minutes, ask each group to share the key takeaways discussed with the larger group.</p> <p>Emphasize the importance of fostering a workplace culture to reduce the possibility of other team members experiencing the negative emotions discussed during this activity.</p>

Section three is structured similarly to section two, as seen in Figure 3 below.

This section is crucial as it outlines the strategies essential for empowering participants with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to cultivate psychological safety in the workplace, aligning with my overarching goal. Workshop leaders who have reviewed the recommended reading will feel more equipped to lead this section successfully.

Figure 3

Preliminary Facilitator Guide: Section Three- Strategies and Practice

Strategies and Practice Total Time: ~37 minutes Corresponding Workshop Presentation Slides: 12-18	
Slide/Duration	Title
12 2 min.	Strategies to Foster Psychological Safety: Inclusive Leadership Introduce the concept of Inclusive Leadership as a foundational way to drive psychological safety in a workplace. Inclusive Leadership is about fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. Leaders set the tone for an inclusive workplace. They lead by example, embodying behaviors that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion, and inspiring others to do the same. Emphasize that everyone has the capacity to be a leader in promoting inclusivity, regardless of their official position.
13-15 15 min.	Strategies to Foster Psychological Safety Discuss each of the following practical strategies that can be applied

	<p>to foster a psychologically safe workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlocking Authentic Communication: Embracing Vulnerability, Humility, and Acceptance. • Mastering the Art of Active Listening: Cultivating Presence and Intentionality. • Fostering Inclusive Team Dialogue: Honoring Every Voice with Gratitude. <p>At the end of each slide, create space for participants to add their ideas and thoughts on practical application. Inform participants that this list is by no means exhaustive. There are many other strategies that exist, but due to time limitations we have chosen only a few. Encourage them to continue to learn about psychological safety and choose strategies that feel most authentic to them.</p>
<p>16 5 min.</p>	<p>Mitigation Strategies</p> <p>Review the importance of implementing mitigation strategies for addressing unconscious bias. As discussed earlier, unconscious bias is the inclination to judge without our intention or control. Although it is not inherently negative, unconscious bias can lead to unfair treatment, exclusion, and a lack of diversity, all of which undermine psychological safety.</p> <p>Strategies to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reflection and critique • Challenging your judgments and assumptions

<p>17-18</p> <p>15 min.</p>	<p>Role-play Activity</p> <p>Participants are now invited to put their newfound knowledge into practice. During this segment, they will break into groups of 2 or 3 and engage in a role-playing activity to implement the strategies discussed. There are three different scenarios for this activity. Ask the groups to practice at least two scenarios, switching between the roles of leader and team member.</p> <p>Scenario 1: Encouraging Participation in Brainstorming Meetings</p> <p>Scenario Overview: During a brainstorming session, the leader notices that only one or two team members are actively participating in generating ideas, while others seem hesitant or disengaged. The goal is for the leader to discuss strategies that can be implemented during and after the brainstorming session to increase participation from everyone.</p> <p>Scenario 2: Active Listening and Understanding</p> <p>Scenario Overview: During a 1:1, a team member shares feedback about feeling unhappy. The leader's role is to engage in active listening by summarizing and reflecting on the feedback without interrupting or passing judgment. The goal is to implement strategies to create environment where the team member feels valued, understood, and empowered to collaborate on finding solutions to address their concerns.</p> <p>Scenario 3: Transforming Errors into Opportunities</p>
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	<p>Scenario Overview: During a team meeting, a team member shares they made a mistake, leading to confusion and delays. The leader's role is to employ strategies to reassure the team member while fostering a culture where mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process and viewed as opportunities for growth.</p>
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Section four is structured similarly to sections two and three, as seen in Figure 4 below. This section focuses on concluding the workshop. Participants will be asked to commit to the strategies they've learned and share them with the group, if time permits. This was important to include as people who articulate their commitments are more likely to uphold them. Since this is an introductory workshop on psychological safety, it will be crucial for the facilitator to encourage participants to explore the recommended reading list and resources further.

Figure 4

Preliminary Facilitator Guide: Section Four- Next Steps, Resources, and Conclusion

Next Steps, Resources, and Session Conclusion	
Total Time: ~12 min. Corresponding presentation workshop slides: 19 - 22	
Slide/Duration	Title
19 3 min.	<p>Recap of Key Takeaways</p> <p>Review each of strategies presented during the session. Include any other ideas shared from the individual and group activities.</p> <p>By revisiting and reinforcing the strategies and key takeaways from our workshop, participants can solidify their understanding of</p>

	psychological safety and take meaningful steps toward fostering inclusive and collaborative work environments.
20 7 min.	A Commitment to Cultivating Psychological Safety Have participants write down at least 2-3 strategies that are committed to implementing to foster psychological safety in their workplace. If time permits, invite a few individuals to share their ideas.
21 1 min.	Resources and Support Available for Continued Growth Highlight the resources and encourage participants to explore them, empowering them in their journey toward establishing inclusive and supportive work environments.
22 1 min.	Session Conclusion Express gratitude for the participants' engagement and valuable contributions during the session. Emphasize that fostering psychological safety is not a one-time effort, but rather an ongoing journey that requires dedication and commitment from all of us.

Section five is the appendix and is broken into two parts. First, the reference list serves as a compilation of all the books used during the development of both the workshop and facilitator guide. By providing transparency regarding the sources used, this section allows facilitators to access additional information and delve deeper into the topics covered during the workshop. The second part is the draft participant workbook. The purpose of the workbook is to provide participants space to write down their responses to the two individual and group activities, and their commitment to cultivating psychological safety. While this version offers an overview of what will be included, it is

still undergoing further development. It will be available for printing as a standalone document or for download as a fillable PDF.

Figure 5

Preliminary Facilitator Guide: Section Five- Appendix

References and Recommended Readings

Clark, T. R. (2020). *The 4 stages of psychological safety: Defining the path to inclusion and innovation*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Norman, M., & Helbig, K. (2023). *The psychological safety playbook: Lead more powerfully by being more human*. Page Two.

Ross, H. J. (2014). *Everyday bias: Identifying and navigating unconscious judgments in our daily lives*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Syed, M. (2021). *Rebel ideas: The power of diverse thinking*. Flat Iron Books.

Wilkins, L. (2021). *Leading below the surface: How to build real (and psychologically safe) relationships with people who are different from you*. PYP Academy Press.

Participant Workbook/Link to Fillable PDF

Participant Name:

Individual And Group Reflection #1

Reflect on your professional experiences. Write down a scenario in which you felt comfortable expressing your thoughts, ideas, or acknowledging an error.

[Space for writing]

Individual And Group Reflection #2

Reflect on a time when you felt uncomfortable speaking up to share ideas, challenge the status quo, or to admit a mistake in the workplace.

- What feelings or reactions are coming up for you when you think about this memory?
- Can you remember how you felt either emotional or even physically?

[Space for writing]

Commitment To Cultivating Psychological Safety

- How might you apply the strategies learned today?
- Which strategies will you commit to employing to foster psychological safety in your workplace?

[Space for writing]

Deliverable Two: Workshop Presentation

The workshop presentation was crafted to prioritize empowering participants with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to fostering psychological safety in the workplace.

Every detail, from the selection of visuals to the organization of content, was thoughtfully considered to enhance learning and effectiveness. To that point, the organization of how the content would be delivered, and (hopefully) received, held significant importance for me. After introductions, I provided information on the

foundational elements such as workshop objectives and defining key terms. Following that, I illustrated the interconnectedness of those key terms and their ultimate impact on organizational and team creativity and innovation, providing a clear business case. Finally, I highlighted the risks associated with an unsafe environment, showing its potential impacts on team member retention, engagement, and overall wellness. My goal was to establish a fundamental understanding of the topics discussed in the workshop.

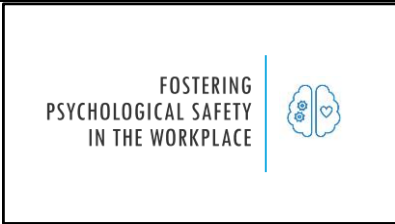
The interactive activities embedded within the workshop serve as tools to actively engage participants in the learning process by digging deeper into the material and exploring its relevance to their own experiences. Right from the start, participants were asked to share their pronouns and an important part of their cultural identity as it provided an opportunity for everyone to recognize the diverse backgrounds within the group, thereby fostering an inclusive environment from the outset. From there, through group discussions, reflective tasks, and role-playing, participants are encouraged to apply the concepts introduced in the workshop to real-life scenarios. This active engagement not only enhances comprehension but also facilitates a deeper understanding of how psychological safety principles can be implemented in various workplace settings.

The core focus of the workshop revolved around strategies for inclusive leadership, fostering psychological safety, and addressing unconscious bias. I sought to share best practices while also encouraging participants to contribute their own insight and approaches for promoting safety within their teams. As mentioned earlier in my overview of section four of the facilitator guide, since the list of strategies was by no

means exhaustive, I ended with recommended reading for the participants to further their learning. One additional recommendation I would encourage workshop leaders to consider is incorporating their organization's specific resources for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. I chose not to include these resources to maintain confidentiality regarding my organization. To experience the essence of the workshop as I envisioned it, see Figure 6 below, for the full workshop presentation, including the speaker scripting.

Figure 6

Workshop Presentation with Scripting



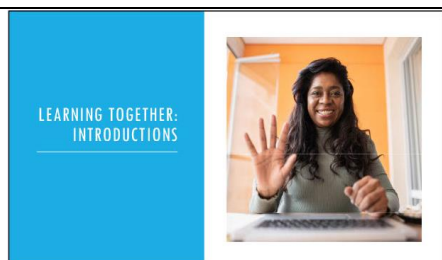
Duration: 1 minute

Say: Hello everyone, and welcome to the workshop titled “Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace”. Before we get started, I would like to set some conditions for success. I request everyone make a commitment to:

- Creating a safe space for everyone here today- anything that is shared should be treated as confidential.
- Respecting each others’ perspectives, valuing everyone's different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints.
- Listening actively without interrupting or judging. Participate with an open mindset.
- And lastly, be compassionate to yourself and to the other participants in the room.

By adhering to these principles, we can foster an atmosphere where everyone here

feels safe to share freely. Together, let's create a space where we can learn, grow, and support each other on our journey towards building psychological safety in the workplace. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Customization required: Update image with your photo and personal information.

Duration: 1-2 minutes

Say: My name is [Name], my pronouns are [], and I'm excited to be your guide today as we explore this important topic together.

Do: Provide a brief background about yourself relevant to the workshop, such as your experience in facilitation or expertise. You can also provide personal information as you see appropriate.

Say: Throughout our time together, I'll be here to support and facilitate our discussions and activities. But remember, this workshop is about all of us collectively exploring and understanding psychological safety, so your active participation and insights are crucial.

[Advance to the next slide]

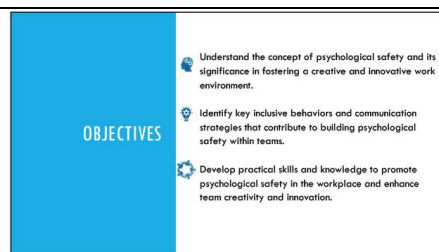


Duration: 10 minutes

**Depends on group size; each participant should be able to share in about 30 seconds. **

Say: Now, let's take a few minutes to get to know each other. Going around the room, I ask that you please share your name, pronouns, and one part of your cultural identity that's meaningful to you. This could be related to your heritage, traditions, language, or any aspect of your culture. Remember, we committed to creating a safe space, so I ask everyone to actively listen and honor each other's identities and experiences. To make sure everyone has a chance to participate, please keep your sharing brief.

Do: Thank everyone for sharing. *[Advance to the next slide]*

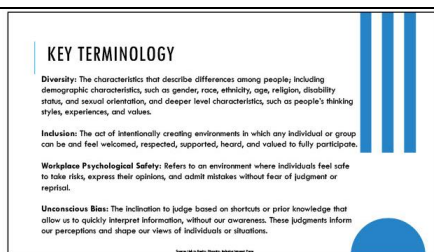


Duration: 1 minute

Say: Before we dive in, let's review the learning objectives. By the end of this workshop, you should all be able to:

- Understand the concept of psychological safety and its significance in fostering a creative and innovative work environment.
- Identify key inclusive behaviors and communication strategies that contribute to building psychological safety within teams.
- Develop practical skills and knowledge to promote psychological safety in the workplace and enhance team creativity and innovation.

[Advance to the next slide]



Customization required: Include your organization's definitions of key terminology and include link in slide for reference

Duration: 2-3 minutes

Say: Since it is crucial that we all share a common understanding of the terminology used in today's workshop, let's review them together.

- Diversity refers to characteristics that describe differences among people; they include demographic characteristics, such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, disability status, and sexual orientation, and deeper level characteristics, such as people's thinking styles, experiences, and values. Diversity is essential as it unites individuals with varied backgrounds and perspectives. Collaboration among diverse teams sparks innovative problem-solving by leveraging unique insights and ideas, fostering creativity and innovation.
- Inclusion is the act of intentionally creating environments in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, heard, and valued to fully participate. When team members experience a deep sense of connection, it fuels a positive environment where overall team performance thrives.
- Workplace psychological safety refers to an environment where individuals feel safe to take risks, express their opinions, and admit mistakes without fear of judgment or reprisal. This fosters a culture of experimentation, collaboration, and innovation, as

team members are encouraged to contribute their diverse perspectives.

- And lastly, unconscious bias is the inclination to judge based on shortcuts or prior knowledge that allow us to quickly interpret information, without our awareness. These judgments inform our perceptions and shape our views of individuals or situations. This can cause us to overlook valuable ideas and limit the diversity of thought within a team. We'll delve deeper into this concept later in today's session.

[Advance to the next slide]



Duration: 1 minute

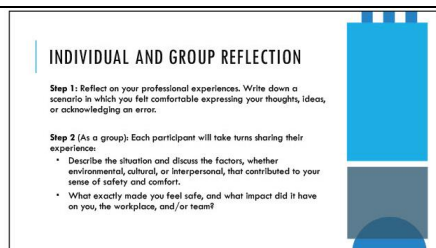
Say: Let's examine how these concepts are interconnected and influence the journey of unlocking the power of diversity, inclusion, and psychological safety to increase creativity and innovation.

The initial step toward success is disrupting unconscious bias, which paves the way for increasing diversity across all aspects of an organization. However, diversity alone is not enough. Organizations must establish an inclusive and psychologically safe infrastructure to effectively leverage diversity.

As we mentioned in the previous slide, when employees feel included and psychologically safe, they are more inclined to share ideas, take risks, and collaborate, fostering greater creativity and innovation. In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, creativity and innovation are essential for companies to not only thrive, but

survive, and meet the demands of changing markets and customers.

Towards the bottom of the slide, you'll find various approaches for putting these strategies into action within an organization, starting with leadership commitment. Keep in mind, this list isn't exhaustive, and leaders should regularly evaluate their effectiveness to achieve positive results. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 10 minutes

**Duration and group number depends on group size. **

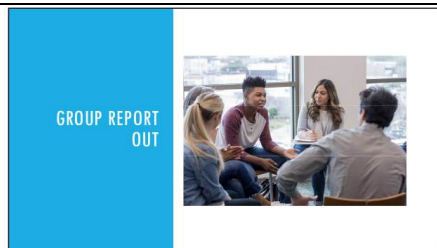
Materials required (in person only): Pens and participant workbook.

Say: It's time for our first individual and group reflection. First, please take 2 minutes to individually reflect on your professional experiences. Write down a scenario, in your workbook, in which you felt comfortable expressing your thoughts, ideas, or acknowledging an error.

Once you've completed your individual reflections, we'll break into groups of 4. Each participant will take turns sharing their moment of psychological safety. Describe the situation and discuss the factors, whether environmental, cultural, or interpersonal, that contributed to your sense of safety. Let's focus on specifics- what exactly made you feel safe, and what impact did it have on you, the workplace, and/or team?

After about 5 minutes, we'll conclude the group discussions. Each group will have the opportunity to share some key takeaways from their discussions. Let's begin! *[Keep this*

slide up during the activity. Only advance to the next slide once the group comes back together.]



Say (once all groups participated): Thank you all for sharing! *[Advance to the next slide]*



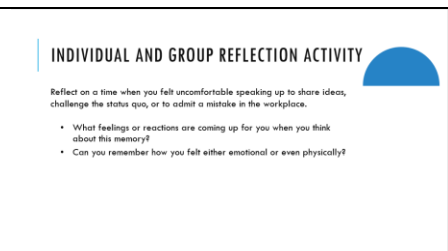
Duration: 1 minute

Say: Let's delve into the critical topic of the dangers associated with lacking psychological safety in the workplace. When psychological safety is absent in a work environment, it can lead to various negative outcomes that affect both individuals and the organization.

Without psychological safety, team members may feel hesitant or fearful of speaking up, sharing their ideas, or expressing concerns. This reluctance to communicate openly can stifle collaboration, hinder innovation and can even lead to safety concerns.

Secondly, a lack of psychological safety can contribute to increased stress and anxiety among employees. When individuals feel unsupported or judged in their work environment, it can negatively impact their well-being, leading to decreased engagement and satisfaction.

Furthermore, without psychological safety, organizations may experience higher rates of turnover and talent loss. Employees who do not feel psychologically safe are more likely to seek opportunities elsewhere, resulting in a loss of valuable talent and continuity within the organization. *[Advance to the next slide]*



INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Reflect on a time when you felt uncomfortable speaking up to share ideas, challenge the status quo, or to admit a mistake in the workplace.

- What feelings or reactions are coming up for you when you think about this memory?
- Can you remember how you felt either emotional or even physically?

Duration: 8 minutes

**Duration and group number depends on group size. **

Materials required (in person only): Pens and participant workbook.

Say: It's time for another individual and group reflection activity. First, please take 2 minutes to individually reflect on your professional experiences. Write down a scenario, in your workbook, in which you felt uncomfortable speaking up to share ideas, challenge the status quo, or to admit a mistake in the workplace. I want you to reflect on your emotions and the feelings you experienced during these situations.

Once you've completed your individual reflections, we'll break into groups of 4. Each participant will take turns sharing their experience. After about 5 minutes, we'll conclude the group discussions. Each group will have the opportunity to share some key takeaways from their discussions. Let's begin! *[Keep this slide up during the activity.*

Only advance to the next slide once the group comes back together.]

GROUP REPORT
OUT



Say (once all groups participated): Thank you all for sharing! Fostering an inclusive and psychologically safe culture aims to minimize the likelihood of other team members encountering the negative emotions just discussed in this activity. *[Advance to the next slide]*

STRATEGIES TO FOSTER PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY: INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Inclusive leadership means taking conscious steps to break down barriers for people at risk of being excluded from society.
Inclusive leaders embody an approach that honors and celebrates diversity and invites and welcomes everyone's individual contribution.


Demonstrate Bravery
-Take Ownership
-Speak Up
-Take Risks


Be An Ally
-Amplify Unrepresented Voices
-Interrupt Bias
-Advocate for Equity & Justice

Duration: 2 minutes

Say: We are now moving into the section dedicated to discussing strategies for fostering psychological safety in the workplace. The initial approach is adopting an inclusive leadership style. Although I am using the terms leader/leadership, I don't want you to associate it with the official title of people leader. Leadership goes beyond a title or formal responsibility- it's about action and inspiration. Each one of us have an opportunity to be an inclusive leader.

Inclusive leadership means taking conscious steps to break down barriers, such as bias and discrimination. Inclusive leaders embody a leadership approach that honors and celebrates diversity and welcomes everyone's individual contribution.

Inclusive leaders should role model the behaviors they expect from their team. Two

such behaviors are demonstrating bravery and becoming an ally. Leaders can demonstrate bravery by taking ownership for their mistakes, speaking out against unfair treatment, and taking risks to do the right thing, even when it's challenging.

Furthermore, inclusive leaders should be allies, especially for people at risk of being excluded or marginalized. They can demonstrate this by amplifying unrepresented voices, calling out biased behaviors and mitigating it personally for themselves, and advocating for equity and justice.

Before moving on, I'd like to emphasize that while inclusive leadership is effective for nurturing psychological safety, it's not the only approach. There are various leadership styles to consider, and I encourage you to integrate inclusive leadership principles regardless of your chosen approach. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 5 minutes

Say: In this next section, we'll explore the power of vulnerability, humility, and acceptance in unlocking authentication communication.

Vulnerability is often seen as a weakness, but it is actually a strength. When we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, we invite others to do the same, creating deeper connections and trust. It's about being honest and transparent about our thoughts, feelings, and experiences, even if it feels uncomfortable.

Humility is another essential ingredient in authentic communication. It's about

recognizing that we don't have all the answers and being open to learning from others.

Humble leaders inspire trust and collaboration, as they are not afraid to admit when they're wrong or seek input from others.

Finally, acceptance is about embracing diversity and respecting different perspectives.

When we accept others for who they are, we create an inclusive environment where everyone feels seen. It's about letting go of judgment and truly listening to understand.

Additionally, it means refraining from reacting negatively when errors occur, recognizing that mistakes are inherent in the process of innovation.

Do: Invite the group to provide specific examples of how they apply these strategies in their work environment. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 5 minutes

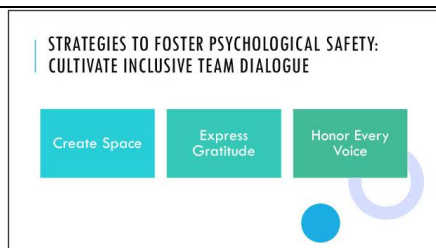
Say: In this next section, we'll explore mastering the art of active listening.

Active listening goes beyond simply hearing words; it involves fully engaging with the speaker and understanding their message on a deeper level. You can do this by checking your understanding by paraphrasing or summarizing. For example, "What I heard you say....:"

Presence is about being fully present in the moment, free from distractions and preconceptions. It means giving our undivided attention to the speaker, both verbally and non-verbally, and being attuned to their emotions and body language as well.

Intentionality, on the other hand, involves approaching listening with purpose. It's about actively seeking to understand the speaker's perspective, asking clarifying questions, and refraining from jumping to conclusions or offering unsolicited advice.

Do: Invite the group to provide specific examples of how they apply these strategies in their work environment. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 5 minutes

Say: This last section, we'll explore cultivating inclusive dialogue- a key component of collaboration within teams.

Fostering inclusive team dialogue entails establishing an environment where all voices are actively sought, embraced, and valued. It's crucial to provide opportunities for everyone to engage authentically, whether through speaking up during meetings or expressing themselves in one-on-one discussions afterward.

Express genuine gratitude for all input, perspectives, and even dissent shared by team members. For example, "Thank you for speaking up" or "Thank you for bringing that different perspective". Gratitude not only acknowledges the value of each contribution but also encourages continued participation and engagement.

And finally, every voice should be treated with equal importance, fostering an environment where interruptions are not tolerated. This ensures that each individual feels empowered to express their thoughts and ideas without fear of being cut off or

dismissed.

Do: Invite the group to provide specific examples of how they apply these strategies in their work environment. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 5 minutes

Say: Unconscious bias can disrupt psychological safety by affecting how people perceive and treat others, which can exclude or undervalue individuals without them realizing it, ultimately damaging trust and inclusivity at work. Let's explore two effective strategies for mitigating unconscious bias in the workplace.

The first strategy is to engage in self-reflection and critique. One way to start this process is by taking the Implicit Association Test (IAT). This test helps us uncover biases that may influence our thoughts and actions. Additionally, regularly reflecting on your own identity and experiences can provide valuable insights into how you perceive others and the world around you. Lastly, asking for regular feedback from colleagues can help you identify blind spots and areas for growth.

Moving on to challenging judgments and assumptions. It's essential to seek out diverse perspectives to challenge our own assumptions. By actively seeking out different viewpoints, we can broaden our understanding. Empathy involves putting yourself in others' shoes. When we practice empathy, we strive to see the world from different angles, acknowledging that everyone's experiences are unique, and allowing us to

approach situations with greater understanding and compassion.

Additionally, incorporating a pause before making judgments allows us to critically evaluate our initial thoughts, consider alternative interpretations of situations, and avoid jumping to conclusions.

Do: Invite the group to provide specific examples of how they apply these strategies in their work environment. *[Advance to the next slide]*

ROLE-PLAY ACTIVITY

Scenario 1: Encouraging Participation
Scenario Overview: During a brainstorming session, the leader notices that only one or two team members are actively participating in generating ideas, while others seem hesitant or disengaged. The goal is for the leader to discuss strategies that can be implemented during and after the brainstorming session to increase participation from everyone.

Scenario 2: Active Listening and Understanding
Scenario Overview: During a 1:1, a team member shares feedback about feeling unheard. The leader's role is to engage in active listening by summarizing and reflecting on the feedback without interrupting or passing judgment. The goal is to implement strategies to create an environment where the team member feels valued, understood, and empowered to collaborate on finding solutions to address their concerns.

Scenario 3: Transforming Errors into Opportunities
Scenario Overview: During a meeting, a team member shares they made a mistake, leading to confusion and delays. The leader's role is to employ strategies to reassure the team member while fostering a culture where mistakes are accepted as part of the learning process and viewed as opportunities for growth.

Duration: 15 minutes

Say: Now that we've explored the strategies for fostering psychological safety, it's time to put them into action with a role-play activity. In this activity, you'll have the opportunity to practice implementing the strategies discussed in the workshop.

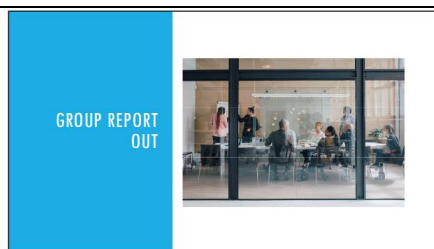
You'll break into groups of 2 or 3 and engage in role-playing scenarios. Each group will practice at least two scenarios, taking turns playing the roles of both leader and team member. Let's take a look at the three scenarios you'll be working with:

- **Scenario 1:** In this scenario, you'll encounter a situation where only one or two team members are actively participating in a brainstorming session. How would you, as the leader, encourage participation and foster psychological safety within the team?
- **Scenario 2:** In this scenario, you'll find yourself in a situation where a team member expresses dissatisfaction with their role during a one-on-one meeting. How would you, as the leader, create a safe and supportive environment for the team member

to share their concerns and collaboratively identify solutions?

- Scenario 3: This scenario involves a team member admitting a mistake during a team meeting, that led to confusion and delays. How would you, as the leader, respond to this situation in a way that fosters psychological safety?
- Remember, the goal of these role-playing activities is to practice implementing the strategies we've discussed and to develop your skills.

Take your time to discuss and practice each scenario. I'll be circulating to provide guidance and support as needed. Let's get started! *[Keep this slide up during the activity. Only advance to the next slide once the group comes back together.]*



Do: Encourage each group to share their insights and key learnings from the activity with the larger group. Allow time for reflection and discussion, ensuring that each group has the opportunity to voice their thoughts.

Say: Thank you all for sharing! *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 3 minutes

Say: As we conclude our workshop, let's recap the key takeaways and strategies we've

discussed today:

- **Adopt Inclusive Leadership Behaviors:** Lead by example and integrate bravery and allyship.
- **Mitigate Unconscious Bias:** Be aware of your biases and take proactive steps to challenge and mitigate them.
- **Mastering the Art of Active Listening:** Cultivate presence and intentionality in your communication. Practice active listening by fully engaging with others and seeking to understand different viewpoints without judgment.
- **Cultivate Inclusive Team Dialogue:** Create a culture of open communication and collaboration within your team. Honor every voice, encourage diverse perspectives, and ensure that all team members feel valued and heard.
- **Unlocking Authentic Communication:** Embrace vulnerability, humility, and acceptance in your interactions. Foster an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing themselves authentically and sharing their ideas without fear of judgment.

By implementing these strategies, we can foster psychological safety, promote inclusivity, and drive positive change in our workplaces. Let's commit to applying these principles in our daily interactions and continuing to cultivate a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration. *[Advance to the next slide]*

COMMITMENT TO FOSTERING PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Take a moment to write down at least 2-3 strategies that you're committed to implementing to foster psychological safety in our workplace.

These could be based on what we've discussed today or any other ideas you have in mind.

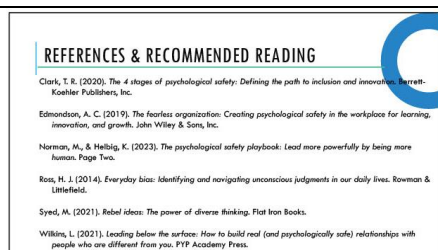


Duration: 7 minutes

Materials required (in person only): Pens and participant workbook.

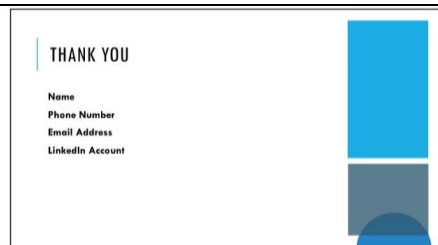
Say: Using your participant workbook and write down at least 2-3 strategies that you're committed to implementing. These could be based on what we've discussed today or any other ideas you have in mind.

[If time permits] Once you've written them down, we'll take a few minutes for those who feel comfortable to share their strategies with the group. Remember, these strategies should reflect what feels achievable and authentic to you. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Duration: 1 minute

Say: As we wrap up our session, I'd like to share with you the list of resources that informed the development of this workshop. I strongly encourage you to explore these recommended readings to delve deeper into the topics and strategies we've discussed today. *[Advance to the next slide]*



Customization required: Update with your personal information.

Duration: 1 minute

Say: Thank you for your participation, and I wish you success on your journey towards creating a psychologically safe and thriving work environment!

Creating the workshop presentation and scripting was not only the most enjoyable aspect of this project but also the most fulfilling. Despite the challenges, the result of this effort fills me with immense pride. I firmly believe that this workshop has the potential to catalyze positive change, not only within the confines of my organization but also in broader personal and professional realms. My hope is it resonates with both the facilitators and participants and provides them with practical strategies to foster psychological safety and inclusivity in their respective environments.

SECTION FIVE: KEY LEARNINGS

The Obvious Journey

Since the start of my master's program in creativity and change leadership, I've been captivated by the concept of psychological safety. It sparked a curiosity within me as I wondered how creativity and innovation could ever thrive in an environment where individuals feel unsafe to voice their ideas, experiment with new approaches, and challenge the status quo. It appeared so straightforward: for creativity to flourish, both leaders and team members must dismantle the barriers of bias, judgment, and fear. As I explored this concept further, it became evident that fostering psychological safety isn't merely about creating a comfortable space for sharing ideas; it's about fundamentally reshaping the dynamics of interaction, fostering a culture of inclusion and respect where every voice is valued and heard. With time and building passion, it became increasingly clear, that psychological safety would become the focus of my culminating master's project in some capacity.

Overcoming Challenges Along the Way

As someone naturally inclined to turn challenges into learning experiences, I wanted to emphasize the obstacles I encountered during the journey. Developing the facilitator guide and workshop presentation was an enriching journey that provided me with invaluable insights and personal growth. One of the most significant challenges I encountered was finding the time to spend reading the books I purchased on psychological safety. While the resources were interesting, balancing the demands of my schedule with the need for thorough research proved to be daunting. However, this

challenge underscored the importance of effective time management and prioritization in managing multiple commitments.

Another hurdle I faced was synthesizing the information from my reading into a cohesive and well-researched workshop presentation. Transforming my newly acquired knowledge into a format that was both informative and engaging required time and attention to detail. After going through multiple iterations, I came to the realization that if I didn't make the decision to finalize the deliverables, I could spend another three months polishing them. Despite the challenge, this process honed my skills in information synthesis and presentation design, allowing me to effectively convey complex concepts in a digestible format.

Additionally, throughout the development process, I grappled with imposter syndrome. Doubts about my own capabilities and concerns about how my work would be perceived crept in. Overcoming these internal barriers required a lot of self-reflection. Essentially, I needed to cultivate my own internal psychological safety, eliminating the fear of judgment in my own process. I had to set aside my ego and confront these insecurities which allowed me to recognize my strengths and grow in confidence. This experience served as a powerful lesson in self-belief, letting go, and the importance of pushing beyond one's comfort zone to achieve personal and professional growth.

Embrace the Journey: It's About the Ride, Not Just the Destination

In a recent conversation with my peers, I found myself caught up in discussing the sheer amount of work required to complete my project deliverables. At the end of my longwinded rant, one person in the group gently encouraged me to pause and challenge my approach. They reminded me that this project isn't just about the end

results, but also about the journey itself. They prompted me to reflect on what I could learn, how I could grow, and how I could use this experience for positive change. It was a valuable reminder to adopt a learner's mindset, to shift my focus towards the transformative journey rather than just the outcomes.

In the end, what I've learned most from this journey is the importance of faith. It's not just trusting yourself, but also in the collective potential of individuals and the transformative power of the process itself. Faith serves as the driving force to push us forward, even when faced with challenges or uncertainty. It is the firm belief in one's ability to overcome obstacles and emerge stronger on the other side. It is also a reminder that we are part of something bigger than ourselves and that is why we must foster inclusive environments. By embracing principles of inclusion and psychological safety, we acknowledge our shared responsibility to create spaces where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives.

SECTION SIX: CONCLUSION

The Journey Continues

The process of creating the facilitator guide and workshop presentation for "Fostering Psychological Safety in the Workplace" has been an enlightening and transformative journey. This project has reinforced the importance of creating inclusive environments where all voices are heard, respected, and valued. As I navigate the final stages of this master's project, I am filled with a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to contribute to the conversation surrounding workplace inclusion and psychological safety. Moving forward, I am committed to applying the insights gained from this project to foster positive change within my organization and beyond. By championing principles of psychological safety and inclusion, I aspire to create workplaces where individuals can thrive, innovate, and collaborate with confidence and authenticity.

The Next Destination

My next immediate step involves designing the facilitator guide and participant workbook. My goal is to enhance the professionalism and user-friendliness of my products, ensuring they meet the needs of both facilitators and participants effectively. From there, I am very eager to step into the role of workshop leader, so the next phase of my journey involves facilitating the workshop in a safe environment, where I can gather valuable feedback for potential improvements. While I have received some insights from a professional peer, I have yet to deliver the workshop in its entirety. I am interested to see how participants respond to the content and engage in the interactive activities. Additionally, I am committed to deepening my knowledge and expertise in the areas of inclusion, workplace psychological safety, unconscious bias, and course

development. My final thought and commitment are to embody these principles daily, setting an example that inspires positive change within my sphere of influence.

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April 29, 2024