

Psychological Safety Checklist

Psychological safety is the foundation of effective teamwork. It allows people to speak up, share ideas, and admit mistakes without fear of judgement or punishment. This checklist helps leaders and teams assess and strengthen the sense of safety within their working environment.

1. Purpose of This Tool

- ☐ Assess the current level of psychological safety in your team.
- ☐ Identify barriers that prevent open communication and trust.
- ☐ Encourage inclusive behaviours and respectful dialogue.
- ☐ Provide guidance for improving team confidence and collaboration.
- ☐ Build a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

Tip: Teams with strong psychological safety learn faster, adapt better, and perform higher.

2. Understanding Psychological Safety

Element	Description
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Respect	Everyone feels valued, regardless of role or opinion.
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Trust	Team members believe they can rely on each other.
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Inclusion	Diverse perspectives are welcomed and encouraged.
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Learning	Mistakes are treated as opportunities for improvement.
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Courage	People speak up about problems or ideas without fear.
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- ☐ Review these elements to understand what psychological safety looks like in action.

Tip: A safe team culture starts with consistent leadership behaviour.

3. Team Self-Assessment (Rate 1–5)

Category	Statement	Rating (1–5)
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Respect	Everyone is treated politely, regardless of status.	
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	Feedback is given constructively, not personally.	
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Trust	Team members keep their promises and commitments.	
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	We can rely on one another to deliver.	
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Inclusion	Everyone feels comfortable contributing in meetings.	
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	Different views are listened to and considered seriously.	
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Learning	We discuss and learn from mistakes openly.	
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	Experimentation and curiosity are encouraged.	
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Courage	People can challenge decisions respectfully.	
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	I feel safe admitting when I don't know something.	
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☐ Complete individually or as a team, then discuss the results openly.

Tip: Differences in perception reveal valuable insight into hidden team dynamics.

4. Results Summary

Category	Average Score	Strength / Development Area
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Respect		
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Trust		
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Inclusion		
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Learning		
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Courage		
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☐ Use this table to identify which dimensions of safety are strongest or weakest.

Tip: Consistency across all five categories indicates a balanced and healthy team culture.

5. Common Barriers to Psychological Safety

Barrier	Description	Example
Fear of Judgement	People worry about appearing incompetent or wrong.	Avoiding questions during meetings.
Hierarchical Behaviour	Leaders dominate discussions.	Junior staff rarely contribute ideas.
Blame Culture	Mistakes result in criticism instead of learning.	Finger-pointing after errors.
Lack of Follow-Through	Feedback is collected but never acted on.	Employees stop offering suggestions.

☐ Identify which barriers apply to your team.

Tip: A single act of unfair treatment can undo months of trust-building.

6. Positive Behaviours to Encourage

Behaviour	Description
Active listening	Pay attention, show empathy, and summarise others' views.
Inclusive questioning	Ask quieter voices for input.
Appreciation	Acknowledge contributions publicly.
Constructive feedback	Focus on improvement, not criticism.
Learning mindset	Share lessons from both success and failure.

☐ Reinforce these behaviours through meetings, feedback, and recognition.

Tip: Psychological safety is built one small behaviour at a time.

Notes

7. Leadership Actions Checklist

- ☐ Model vulnerability - admit when you make mistakes.
- ☐ Invite input from all levels before making decisions.
- ☐ Reward risk-taking and creative thinking.
- ☐ Intervene when disrespectful behaviour occurs.
- ☐ Create space for reflection after every project.

Tip: Leaders set the tone. If they act with openness, the team will follow.

8. Team Discussion Prompts

Question

Reflection

What behaviours make our team feel safe to speak up?

When was the last time we learned from a mistake together?

Who finds it hardest to contribute in meetings, and why?

What would improve our sense of trust and inclusion?

- ☐ Use these questions to facilitate open and honest conversation.

Tip: Listen to understand, not to defend or justify.

9. Action Plan for Improvement

Focus Area Specific Action Owner Target Date Progress

Respect

Trust

Inclusion

Learning

Courage

- ☐ Commit to two or three visible actions and review progress monthly.

Tip: Small, consistent improvements build long-term trust.

10. Monitoring and Review

Review Date Changes Observed Remaining Gaps Next Steps

- ☐ Review every quarter to assess whether improvements are sustained.

Tip: Track improvements in engagement, retention, and innovation as indirect indicators of safety.

How to Use This Checklist

Use this checklist as part of team reviews or leadership development sessions. Discuss the findings collectively and agree on clear actions. Combine it with the Team Dynamics Assessment and Conflict Resolution Framework to create a psychologically safe and high-performing culture.

Notes