



Creating Psychological Safety:

An ICO Workshop



WE ARE THE UNCOMMON.

Welcome!

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Agenda

Part 1: Intro to Psychological Safety

- What is it and why does it matter?
- Case studies

Part 2: Your role in Psychological Safety

- 3 behaviors that promote PS
- Practice

Part 1: Intro to Psychological Safety





A Tale of Two Stories

Story 1:

Think of a time when you were asked to take an action at work that *did not align with your values*, and you **spoke up** to resolve it.

Were you satisfied?

What made it easier?

What made it harder?

What did you do that enabled speaking up?

What did others do that enabled speaking up?

Story 2:

Now, think of a time when you were asked to take an action at work that *did not align with your values*, and you **did not speak up** to resolve it.

Were you satisfied?

What made it easier?

What made it harder?

What did you do that did not enable speaking up?

What did others do that did not enable speaking up?

How do you build psychological safety?



VCU

Psychological Safety is NOT:

- Just “being nice” to everyone
- Immunity from consequences

It all began with a hypothesis.

Edmondson's Hypothesis: The highest performing teams make the fewest mistakes.

Q: Why did the highest performing hospital teams have the *highest error rates*?

A: Because the highest performing teams *reported their errors!*



Case Studies

Case Study 1-2-3

1. Read the case study.
2. Discuss it with your partner(s).
 - a) Was psychological safety present?
 - b) How do you know?
3. Pick a spokesperson to explain the scenario and what you discussed.

5 Trends

in Psychological Safety Research

1. There's an "Epidemic of Silence"
2. When psychological safety exists, so does "learning behavior"
3. Psychological safety matters for performance
4. Psychologically safe employees are engaged employees
5. Psychological safety is the extra ingredient

**What that
looks like
in our
world
(ICO)**

There's an "Epidemic of Silence"

During investigations, we learn:

Conformity bias is prevalent
(employees **don't speak up** due to **deferment to hierarchy**).

Employees didn't speak up sooner
because they were **afraid of**
retaliation.

Why Silence Wins in the Voice-Silence Calculation

	WHO BENEFITS	WHEN BENEFIT OCCURS	CERTAINTY OF BENEFIT
VOICE	The organization and/or its customers	After some delay	Low
SILENCE	Oneself ✓	Immediately ✓	High ✓

Pop Quiz!

85%

Pop Quiz!

30%





10 Minute Break



Welcome Back



Part 2: What's Your Role in Psychological Safety?



It's about self awareness. How do you come across to your colleagues/teammates/customers/vendors?



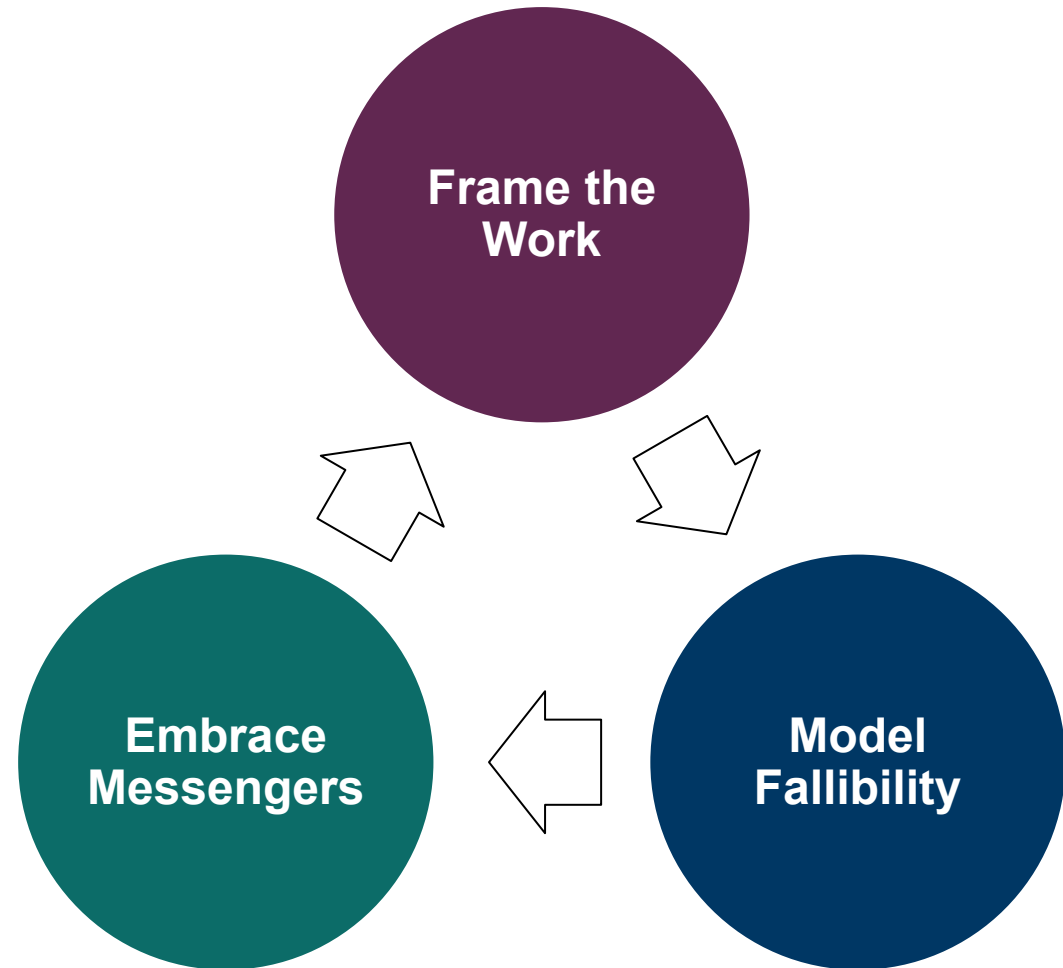
“Psychological safety is a key factor in healthy teams. A **leader’s job**—whether at the top of an organization or somewhere in the middle—is **to create a safe space for people to speak up, make mistakes, and bring their full selves to work.**”

Amy Edmondson, LinkedIn



The **first step**
to creating PS:

**Add some new
behaviors** into
your
interactions with
employees and
colleagues.





Frame the Work

Leader behaviors:

Emphasize the Purpose

- Identify what's at stake, why it matters, and for whom it matters

Set the Stage

- Set expectations, address uncertainty, give permission to fail

Goal for all:

Shared expectations and meaning

Frame the Work

Questions to ask yourself

- Have I clarified the nature of the work we do?
- **Even if it seems obvious, how often do I talk about what's at stake?**
- How often do I assess shared understanding of this?
- **How much uncertainty do we face?**
- **Do I point out that small failures often lead to improvement?**

The complete list of questions from the Leadership Self Assessment has been provided in your take-home materials.

Model Fallibility

Leader behaviors:

Demonstrate Humility

- Acknowledge your own gaps
 - Say “I don’t know, I could use your help”
- Admit you don’t have all the answers

Solicit Feedback

- Ask for input
- Ask “What am I missing?"/Say “Tell me more.”
- Create ways for employees to give input
 - Establish guidelines for sharing

Goal for all:

Confidence that all voices are welcome (We need everyone’s knowledge and input)



Model Fallibility

Questions to ask yourself

- Have I made sure that **people know that I don't think I have all the answers?**
- Have I emphasized that we can always learn more?
- **How often do I ask questions** of others, rather than just expressing my perspective?
- **Have I created forums people can use to share** ideas and concerns?



Embrace Messengers

Leader behaviors:

Express Appreciation

- Acknowledge and thank
- Really listen

Destigmatize Failure

- Look forward
- Offer help
- Discuss, consider, and brainstorm next steps

Sanction Clear Violations

Goal for all:

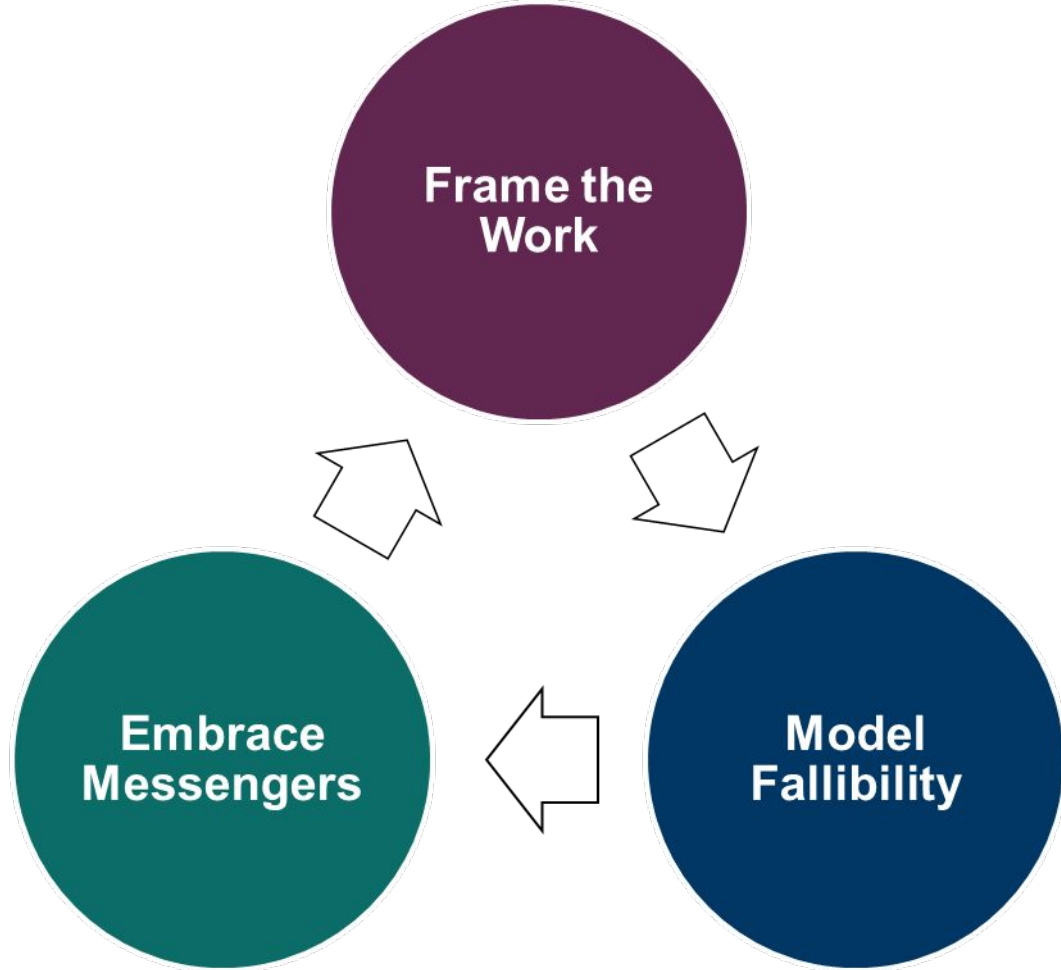
A mindset of continuous learning



Embrace Messengers

Questions to ask yourself

- **Have I acknowledged or thanked the speaker** for bringing the idea or question to me?
- **Have I really listened**, showing that I think what they're telling me matters?
- **Have I done what I can to destigmatize failure?**
- **What more can I do to celebrate intelligent failures?**



*By adopting these behaviors and using them “**repeatedly in interactive, learning-oriented ways**”*

*...you will be on the path to **creating and sustaining psychological safety for your teams.***

Let's Try It!

For each scenario, work with your partner to **practice using any of the 3 behaviors** (Frame the Work, Model Fallibility, Embrace the Messenger) **that might help the situation.**

- 1) Read and discuss the scenario.
- 2) Decide which behavior(s) might work best.
- 3) Role play a conversation where you try using the behavior(s).
- 4) Be ready to share the role play or discuss what happened.



Questions?

Thank you!

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To provide feedback via survey:



Psychological Safety Resources:

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<https://www.aamc.org/news/future-health-care-conversation-dr-atul-gawande>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbLjdFqrUNs> Edmondson on 3 ways to create PS in healthcare

