

### Psychological Safety Survey

These statements are from Dr Edmondson’s original research. The key point is to ensure that you use the language, statements, and practices that have most meaning for your teams and context. Repeat the survey after a period of time (the timescale is up to you) to evaluate any change in the different areas psychological safety and to demonstrate to your team that you’re committed to continuous improvement. These are example statements, you will want to modify and choose the ones most suitable for your team.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>Scale</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.</b> On this team, I understand what is expected of me.					
<b>2.</b> We value outcomes more than outputs or inputs, and nobody needs to “look busy”.					
<b>3.</b> If I make mistake on this team, it is never held against me.					
<b>4.</b> When something goes wrong, we work as a team to find the systemic cause.					
<b>5.</b> All members of this team feel able to bring up problems and tough issues.					
<b>6.</b> Members of this team never reject others for being different and nobody is left out.					
<b>7.</b> It is safe for me to take a risk on this team.					
<b>8.</b> It is easy for me to ask members of this team for help.					
<b>9.</b> Nobody on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.					
<b>10.</b> Working with member of this team my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.					
<b>11.</b> Members of this team raise concerns they have about teams plans or decisions.					

## Taking Action:

**Instructions:** Identify the statements with the **lowest scores**. These are your areas that require action, and are where you can make the largest difference. Read the rationale for each statement below and consider what actions you can take or behaviors you can encourage to raise the scores.

### **1 – On this team, I understand what is expected of me.**

It is essential that team members understand what is expected of them in terms of delivery (speed, quality, cost, and other factors) and behavior (everything from dress code and punctuality to coding standards) to foster psychological safety. Ensure tasks are clear and well defined, behavior expectations are explicit, and negative behaviors are dealt with.

### **2 – We value outcomes more than outputs or inputs, and nobody needs to “look busy”.**

Outcomes (such as revenue generated or satisfied customers) matter more than outputs (emails sent, lines of code written, or meetings attended). If the team focus on what truly matters to the business, they are safe to make decisions that can improve outcomes, even if those decisions reduce output. The ideal is a team that possesses enough psychological safety to decide **not** to do something that could make them look good in the eyes of others, but doesn't deliver outcomes for the business.

### **3 – If I make a mistake on this team, it is never held against me.**

A psychologically safe team will never blame a member of the team for a genuine mistake if their intentions were good. Indeed, by enabling mistakes to be made without a fear of blame, you enable innovation and risk taking that can drive your organization ahead of the competition. Utilize systems thinking and DevOps approaches to prevent mistakes before they happen or mitigate the impact of mistakes when they do.

### **4 – When something goes wrong, we work as a team to find the systemic cause.**

Related to the previous point but important enough to warrant its own question, a system of discovering the root causes of mistakes and failures means that not only do team members feel able to take risks without being blamed, but every single “failure” is an opportunity for learning and improvement. By building psychological safety through these retrospective exercises, everyone on the team gets to learn from mistakes, meaning mistakes are a gift, not a threat.

### **5 – All members of this team feel able to bring up problems and tough issues.**

In a psychologically safe team, all members of the team are able to bring up problems and tough issues, ranging from personal struggles to concerns about other (even senior) members of the team. This psychological safety is crucial for allowing both *vulnerability* to show when you're struggling and need help, and *courage* to raise difficult topics.

**6 – Members of this team never reject others for being different and nobody is left out.**

Evidence shows that diversity in a team results in higher quality products and happier team members, but diversity in itself is not enough: it is crucial that team members are all included in decision making and delivering results. To facilitate psychological safety (and high performance) every member of the team needs to be invested in the decisions made and the outcomes generated. This is particularly crucial for remote and distributed teams, where it is more difficult to see if a team member is becoming disengaged.

**7 – It is safe for me to take a risk on this team.**

Mistakes happen unintentionally, but risks are about taking actions that might not work, or may have unintended consequences. Psychological safety provides the framework for positive risk-taking, enabling innovation and ultimately, competitive advantage.

**8 – It is easy for me to ask other members of this team for help.**

In psychologically unsafe teams, team members try to hide their perceived weaknesses or vulnerabilities, which prevents them from asking for help. In a psychologically safe team, members prioritize the team goals over individual goals. Helping others helps achieve the team goal, and because team members feel safe to ask for that help, psychologically safe teams achieve more of their goals than unsafe teams.

**9 – Nobody on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.**

In an unsafe team, members compete with each other to achieve their individual goals, and may even undermine other team members if it could benefit them or it is perceived that doing so may elevate their “rank” within the team or organization. In a psychologically safe team, that counter-productive competition doesn’t exist, and the success of the team is more important looking good in the eyes of others.

**10 – Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.**

We all bring our own unique experience, skills and knowledge to the teams that we’re in, but we also bring our own prejudices and biases. In a psychologically safe team where members are valued for being their true selves, biases are less likely to manifest. Indeed, team members may feel safe enough to identify, raise, and discuss their own biases or those of other team members. By doing so, we provide space for each individual to maximize their potential from utilizing their own unique skills and talents.