

Why Psychological Safety Matters at Work - Heather R Younger

CMI Speakers
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Today I want to talk about psychological safety, what it is and the impact on your organization now into the very near future. As we think about psychological safety and the great resignation, team members are walking out the door in droves and it's hard to bring new people in. One of the things that's a driving factor that is a sense of being able to be yourself at work. To pipe up the dissenting opinions. To say things that are counter to the mainstream and to be comfortable and safe in doing so. That is psychological safety and team members who feel that they can be that person in all avenues of their work are those who are more likely to stay whether they stay virtually or they stay on site at your organization.

So what are the five ways I recommend that you can actually drive psychological safety. Well the first one is to make every space a safe space, and that means that you maybe executive leaders, you normalize what this means. You normalize how people Make Every Space a Safe Space speak up. You normalize by asking them to speak up with a counter view. Make sure that they're challenging you in meetings and then make sure that in everything you do, you support this concept. Whether it's people walking down hallways, whether it's in one-on-one meetings between a manager and a team member, whether it's co-workers that sense of safety and the freedom to speak up and share new ideas, should always be present.

The second thing is to make sure that organizational listening is at the front of your organization or at the top of your organization where the organization from top down at the executive level HR, they are listening to the voices of team members always trying to find the pulse of what might be happening inside. Recognizing the unsaid and the unsaid signs that are happening and then acting upon them in very clear ways.

The third Training Your People way is training your people internally on the things not to say or do. So, what are those words or triggers. What are the things that could be offensive to others? What are the things that when people are in meetings if we say this thing it could stop another person from sharing their truth, which by the way might help us innovate more or help us basically overcome any roadblocks or obstacles that could be headed our way.

The fourth thing is making sure that we are supporting and enforcing our organization's norms and values. Making sure that the norms and values just aren't words on a paper on a wall but we actually see them acted out at the highest levels. And when we don't we have mechanisms in place to make sure we enforce good or bad behavior, behavior that's counter to psychological safety, behavior that blocks voices from being heard, behavior that makes only one type of voice be the one that's elevated and Encourage Courage.

The last thing we want to do is we want to encourage the courage that it takes for someone to speak the truth. Maybe there are rewards. Maybe if you're at the executive level and you're in meetings you actually clap for them. When you ask them to pipe up and they do you show a lot of positive support in the moment and you encourage other people around the table to also.

Support that in any way shape or form. If you take these five steps, and there are many others to ensure that your environment is psychologically safe, you then more solidify people's desire to stay with you. So as we think about the great resignation coming full circle, this is one of the things that can stop people from walking out the door but the very opposite can drive them away that much faster. I want you to have fun making safe spaces at work. Be well.