

Set the Stage

**Reframe failure and uncertainty.** Changing words changes assumptions. If we see accidents as “someone screwing up” we will act differently than if we think that systems shape (mis)behavior. Stress how the complexity, uncertainty and interdependence of the work make it necessary to speak up. **Connect it to a higher purpose** such as “making someone’s day” or “saving lives”.

-> Shared expectations & meaning

# How to build Psychological Safety

**Make it safe to speak up about problems and mistakes**

**Model situational humility:** Acknowledge gaps in your knowledge, welcome questions and listen intently. **Invite participation with carefully framed questions**, such as asking “Was everything as safe as you would like it to have been this week with your patients?” (instead of “Did you see lots of mistakes and harm?”). Phrase the question respectful and concrete. Be genuinely curious about the answer.

Invite Participation

Know how and when you will receive feedback: **Create regular opportunities for people to voice concerns.** Provide guidelines for discussion.

-> Establish confidence that voice is welcome

Setting the Stage and Inviting Participation prepare the ground for Psychological Safety. Responding Productively keeps it alive. It's crucial to react well, when people dare to speak.

**Appreciate input by listening, acknowledging and thanking** the messenger (even if it is a low quality opinion). **Destigmatize failure** by establishing blameless reporting. Look forward, offer help and brainstorm next steps. Follow up on the input. There are different kinds of failure (preventable, complex and intelligent) that need different kinds of follow up.

If there's a clear **violation of rules you have to sanction** it.

-> Set out on the path to continuous learning

& Enable Learning

Respond Productively

“The courage it takes to speak up must receive the mini-reward of thanks.”

Amy Edmondson

