

Good Veterinary Workplaces: Taking action

Speaking up and listening up: Creating psychological safety in practice

Thank you for being involved in the most recent 'Good Veterinary Workplaces – Taking Action' webinar.

You are well on your way to knowing how best to approach change in your practice, however big or small. We hope you found the talks useful, inspirational, and interesting.

We want you to be able to take something from each talk and put it into action, even if it is just a slightly different mindset or viewpoint that helps in the future. So, along with the help of the speakers you saw earlier, we have put together some bits and pieces to bookend your experience.

There are some feedback questions too, so [please complete](#) the survey if you would like to see anything done differently next time – these sessions are led by, and created for, the veterinary community, so we value your input.

Takeaways from the talk

Hopefully you got some top tips for creating and maintaining psychological safety in the work place.

Speaker messages and take-home points

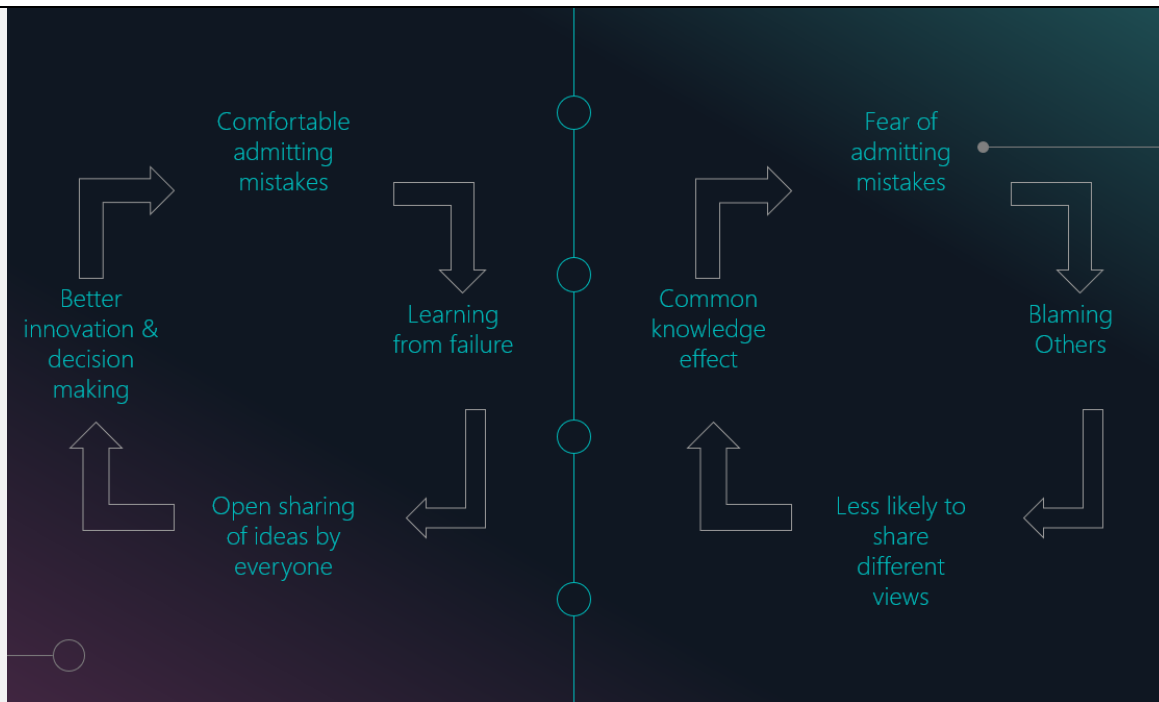
Thoughts from Dr Abosede Ajayi

What is psychological safety?

Psychological safety is where a positive workplace environment is cultivated by not being punished for speaking up (about concerns, mistakes, suggestions etc). It is reliant on the **whole team** being open and free from shame, fear or embarrassment. It is an environment where people are allowed to make mistakes, share feedback, and take risks in work context.

Diagram from my slides below:

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The diagram above indicates shows contrasting features within environments with **good psychological safety** (left hand side) versus **limited psychological safety** (right hand side).

It is important for leaders to not be put on pedestals - leaders don't need to be perfect. In fact, when leaders share flaws and mistakes, it allows their team to do the same and cultivates the above cycle where learning from failure occurs.

When it comes to feedback or meetings, be **strict with time**! Time is detrimental for feedback and handover. If we don't make the time the results are twofold: short term effects include risk to patient safety. Long term risks include burnout and lack of job satisfaction.

So, *how do we craft time*? It needs to be **deliberate**, short and to the point and make sure to stick to timings carved out. Consistency is crucial, keep any catchups/roundups **immovable** - even if shortened. The clarity of content is also vital so that the team knows what to expect, what is appropriate to discuss, and what can be expected of them.

Key Takeaways:

Be brave as a leader - be vulnerable with your team, ask for their input. This will encourage the team to do the same.

Be brave as a non-leader - **ASK** questions, make suggestions, frame things positively e.g. 'could we reconsider...'

Look for opportunities to be authentically you - don't try to fit into a mould, however different and varied that might be.

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Thoughts from Carlyne Crowe

Each workplace needs touch points through the day to check in on the team and tasks. Get out of the 'We're too busy for this'/'I don't have time' mindset as it actually saves, and helps better plan, time.

Following on from the above, **allocate time!** It must be strict and pre-planned. Manage expectations of the morning huddle/debrief so it isn't a free for all where timings easily overrun.

Key Takeaways:

Book some time in. Allocate and set purpose of meetings.

Establish behavioural contracts - what is expected in your workplace. This will shape the culture of psychological safety.

Make any feedback on behaviours, not individuals.

Action: Think about what your morning huddle/debrief currently looks like. Does it work? If not, try different things - change the time if needed. Make it a safe space for people to say what didn't go well in a day, openness and respond to change and learn what you will as a team do differently. What do you want to get out of it?

Once you have this down, you can use that as a template for consistency.

Thoughts from Malcolm Morley

Lots of tips and ideas to take from this. Our Good Veterinary Workplace voluntary code is in massive support of creating this type of working atmosphere.



Thank you for coming along to this month's amazing session, it was great to see so many of you logged in and adding your thoughts to the chat.

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Don't forget, our next Taking Action webinar is at **1pm on Wednesday, April 19** with Julie Gibson on, 'Compassionate Complaints Handling'. [Register here.](#)