



WIG

The Whitehall & Industry Group  
connecting the sectors



## 'People' Series Creating a culture of psychological safety

### Expert Insight

We were joined by Alexandra Chesterfield, Head of Behavioural Risk at RBS and Anna Koczwara, Head of Behavioural Science at NatWest Group, to discuss the development of a culture of psychological safety. They touched upon points including:



- Psychological safety is a workplace culture without fear, where people aren't trying to cover their tracks to avoid being punished or embarrassed.
- Workplaces with psychological safety allow people to be more curious, open-minded, self-motivated, innovative and resilient. It allows for greater trust and collaboration, increased learning behaviour, higher performance and a greater likelihood of partaking in knowledge-sharing activities.
- Building psychological safety on an organisational level can be achieved through: behavioural expectations, channels for speaking up, and culture measurement.
- On an individual level, psychological safety can be created by re-framing conversations to encourage seeing failure as a way to learn, inviting participation, and responding productively when people do speak up.

### Cross-sector Opinion

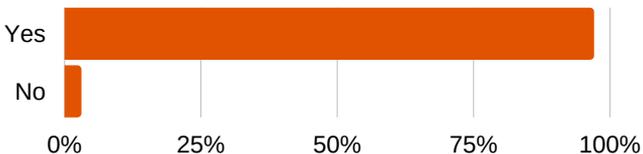
Over 100 attendees from the breadth of our cross-sector membership listened in, we asked them:

Have you ever experienced any of the scenarios described in these statements?

Have you ever...

- Wanted to speak up in a meeting but didn't because you were worried about the consequences?
- Voiced a concern or idea and was made to feel stupid or embarrassed for doing so?
- Been part of a team where it's not acceptable to make mistakes?

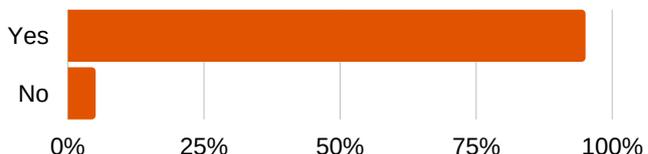
i.e. A psychologically unsafe environment



Have you ever...

- Been in a team where mistakes are consistently seen in the spirit of 'gotta break eggs to make omelettes'?
- Been in an environment where it's OK to be wrong and not know something?
- Spoken up with a different point of view and not been rejected or punished?

i.e. A psychologically safe environment



### Our members' questions

Our members raised some challenging questions to be answered, some of the big issues raised included:

- The role of leaders in creating an environment of psychological safety and how best to support them
- A team's responsibility in maintaining psychological safety
- Dealing with people who perceive a psychologically unsafe situation due to previous experiences and applying it when colleagues' productivity is impacted on by these experiences
- The link between inclusion and psychological safety

WIG members can listen to Alex's and Anna's presentation [here](#)  
To see our full programme of webinars, visit [www.wig.co.uk](http://www.wig.co.uk)