

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY QUADRANT

Team reflection template for veterinary practice

Choose a specific situation. Record observable patterns and avoid naming individual colleagues.

DRIVE / EXPECTATIONS LOW → HIGH

Quadrant overview

The four conditions are: Comfort Zone, higher psychological safety and lower standard; Learning, higher psychological safety and higher standards; Apathy Zone, lower psychological safety and lower standard; and Anxiety Zone, lower psychological safety and higher standards.

Use the quadrant from lower to higher drive or expectations and from lower to higher psychological safety.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY LOW ↑ HIGH

Record the team's current focus and one small behaviour to test.

Psychological Safety

Comfort Zone High psychological safety, low standards or expectations	Learning Zone High psychological safety, high standards or expectations
Apathy Zone Low psychological safety, low standards or expectations	Anxiety Zone Low psychological safety, high standards or expectations
Our current focus: _____	One small behaviour we will try: _____

Performance Standards

TEAM DISCUSSION WORKSHEET

Choose one situation, routine or conversation to explore. Focus on team conditions and observable behaviours, not individual personalities.

Describe the situation you want to explore.

1. Situation

Where or when does this show up?

Note the observable signals in the current situation.

2. Current signals

What do people see or hear?

Identify what already helps people speak up and learn.

3. What helps

What already makes speaking or learning easier?

Identify the practical or cultural barriers.

4. What gets in the way

What practical or cultural factors make it harder?

Choose one small behaviour the team can test.

5. Small behaviour to test

What would increase safety while keeping standards clear?

Agree where the behaviour will be tried, who will support it and when it will be reviewed.

6. Review

Where will it be tried, who will support it, and when will it be reviewed?

FACILITATOR NOTES

Purpose: Explore how psychological safety and drive or expectations interact, then agree one practical behaviour that supports voice and high standards.

Before you begin

- Allow around 20–30 minutes, or use one quadrant as a shorter prompt.
- Use a neutral facilitator where possible. Active conflict, grievance or fear of retaliation may require independent support.
- Explain that the model describes situations and team conditions. It is not a test, diagnosis or individual score.

Running the discussion

- Explain the two axes and the four possible team conditions.
- Ask participants to choose a specific setting, such as handovers, case discussions, meetings or busy shifts.
- Give private writing time before inviting patterns and examples.
- Keep discussion on observable behaviours, routines and systems.
- Choose one small experiment and set a review point.

Facilitator safeguards

- Do not identify “difficult”, “unsafe” or “low-performing” people.
- Do not assume silence means agreement. Offer writing, paired discussion or anonymous input.
- Acknowledge specific incidents without investigating them in the group. Use the appropriate clinical, safeguarding, grievance, whistleblowing or HR route.
- Record themes and agreed actions, not personal disclosures or speculation.

Suggested introduction

Use or adapt the following wording to introduce the discussion.

“This model helps us consider how safe it feels to speak up alongside how clear or demanding expectations are. We are not labelling the team. We are identifying what helps people contribute, learn and challenge while maintaining high standards.”

Closing question

“What is one small change we can make at the next opportunity that will help someone speak up while keeping standards clear?”

USE AND ADAPTATION NOTES

This original developmental worksheet uses the familiar two-axis concept of psychological safety and standards or expectations. It does not reproduce the illustrations or graphic design of source materials.

Responsible use

Use the tool for team reflection and behavioural experiments. It is not a validated diagnostic instrument and should not be used to assess, rank or compare individual colleagues, managers, practices or departments.