bridge

SAFE-SEEN

LEADERSHIP IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Feedback That Builds Trust. Not Threat.

Most feedback models focus on what to say. SAFE-SEEN starts somewhere different.

Before feedback can create growth, people must feel psychologically **safe** enough to receive it.

When feedback feels like threat, people protect themselves.

When feedback feels safe, people can **listen**, **reflect**, **learn** and **grow**.

THE JOURNEY

THREAT
The nervous system feels unsafe. We see danger, not opportunity.

SAFETY
Conditions are right. People feel secure enough to engage and listen.

UNDERSTANDING
The conversation creates clarity, perspective and mutual understanding.

GROWTH
Insight leads to action. Action leads to development and stronger performance.

THREE CORE PRINCIPLES

SAFETY BEFORE PERFORMANCE
Psychological safety is the foundation that makes honest conversations possible.

CONNECTION BEFORE CORRECTION
People don't resist feedback when they feel respected, valued and understood.

GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING
When people feel safe and seen, they are open to learn, change and contribute.

Want to go deeper?
Scan to access the full SAFE-SEEN Guide, resources and leadership tools.

Safety before performance. | Connection before correction. | Growth through understanding.

APPLYING SAFE-SEEN

Use this model every time you plan to give feedback.
Create the right conditions first, then have the right conversation.

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LAYER 1

SAFE

THE CONDITIONS CHECK

S — SETTING
Right time. Right place. Right moment.
- Is this the right time for this conversation?
- Is the environment private and free from distraction?
- Do we both have the headspace to engage well?

A — ATTACHMENT
Do they believe you're on their side?
- Do they trust my intentions?
- Have I shown I care about them as a person?
- Do they know I want the best for them and the team?

F — FRAMING
Lead with your intent, not the issue.
- What is my intention for this conversation?
- How will I frame this so they stay open?
- How will I invite their perspective from the start?

E — EMOTIONAL STATE
Are they (and you) regulated?
- Are emotions calm and manageable?
- Is there stress, overwhelm or reactivity in the room?
- If not, pause and return when ready.

LAYER 2

SEEN

THE CONVERSATION

S — SPECIFIC
Be clear about what you're referring to.
- Describe the behaviour, not the person.
- Focus on what was observed and the impact it had.
- Avoid assumptions and generalisations.

E — EXPLORE
Listen to their perspective with curiosity.
- Ask open questions.
- Listen deeply and without interrupting.
- Seek to understand their context, not just their response.

E — EMPOWER
Co-create solutions and actions.
- What could they do next?
- What support or resources do they need?
- Collaborate on options that build confidence and capability.

N — NEXT
Agree on the next step and follow up.
- What is the agreed action?
- By when and how will we check in?
- Close the loop. Reinforce commitment and follow through.

LEADERSHIP SELF-CHECK

Before you start any feedback conversation, ask yourself:

- ☐ Is this the right time?
- ☐ Is this the right environment?
- ☐ Do they know I am on their side?
- ☐ Have I created the conditions for trust?
- ☐ Are we both in a regulated state?
- ☐ Am I being specific?
- ☐ Have I explored their perspective?
- ☐ Are we creating solutions together?
- ☐ Is the next step clear?
- ☐ Have I agreed on follow up?

REMEMBER

People cannot process feedback when they are busy surviving it.

SAFE creates the safety.
SEEN creates the connection.
Together they create growth.

Great feedback isn't about what you say. It's about how safe it feels to hear it.