

# 5 Behaviors That Foster Learner Safety.

Learner Safety satisfies the basic human need to learn and grow. It allows us to feel safe as we engage in all aspects of the learning process—asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, experimenting, and even making mistakes, not if but when we make them. When we sense learner safety, we're more willing to be vulnerable, take risks, and develop resilience in the learning process. Here are five behaviors that will help you foster an environment of learner safety.

**1. Share what you are learning.** One of the most powerful ways to encourage others to learn is to share what you are learning. Share the topic, the insights, and most importantly the joy and satisfaction you have gained in the learning process. Your optimism and enthusiasm for learning is contagious.

**2. Frame Problems Before You Solve Problems.** Teach your team to frame problems before they solve problems. When we don't do that, we often end up solving the wrong problem. Find a problem and say, "I'd like you to help me frame this problem, not solve it. I want to make sure I'm defining the problem correctly before I try to solve it."

**3. Share what you unlearn.** In a dynamic environment, our knowledge, skills, and experience can become obsolete. Identify the times when you see this happening to you. Point it out to others. Acknowledge that you are in a cycle of unlearning and relearning.

**4. Dedicate Time and Resources to Learning.** If you talk about the importance of learning but don't dedicate any time or resources to it, it's really not a priority. Formally allocate some budget and dedicate some time to learning. It might be online learning, collaborative team learning, on-the-job learning, individual or team learning. There's no perfect approach. Just make sure that you do it consistently.

**5. Share Past Mistakes.** It's hard to learn from mistakes if a team has a culture that hides its mistakes. Take the opportunity to mention some of your mistakes, laugh at them, and share what you learned from them. This will encourage others to be more comfortable sharing their mistakes and trying to learn from them. Talking about failure and showing vulnerability is crucial to encouraging others to learn.