

# Levelling Up Your Team

## Unlocking High Performance through Effective Managers

*A Guide for Leaders*

*Brought to you by:*



# The Anatomy of a High Performing Team



Sense of belonging;  
people can be  
themselves



Psychological  
Safety



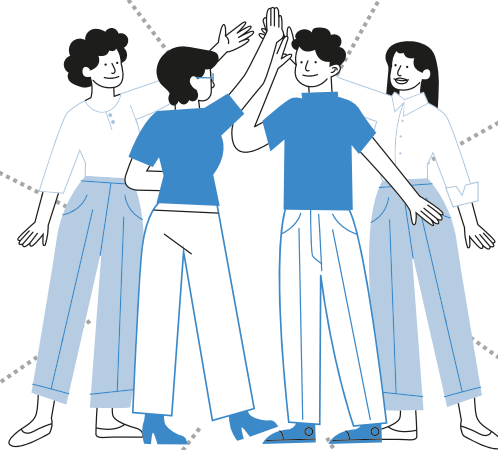
Valuing the  
whole-person



Calculated  
risk-taking



Respect



Human  
Connections

Trust - and the  
ability to fix it if  
it's broken



Fun & Good  
Humor



**And most of all: The belief that together,  
we will achieve amazing things!**

# How to Build and Lead High Performing Teams:

- Understand where your team's strengths are. Their strengths are important when it comes to promotions and maximizing growth.
- Create connection cards that help people understand each other better. These cards indicate working styles, personality, communication preferences, skills you'd like to learn.
- Role clarity and focused job descriptions. It's clear to the individual what they're responsible for.
- Build a compelling company vision to make sure the organization is aligned. Don't be afraid to involve the team when writing it. This will create buy-in, alignment and excitement. When people can see themselves as a part of the vision coming to life, they will likely take ownership of the direction of the organization.



Ask people what the best learning environment is for them. We're all learning to grow in various different ways. And I'd like organizations to think about learning as a strategy, not just the band aid for the solution. It's something intentional that people can carry into any type of environment.

*- Lynette, 15Five Panellist*

- Keep the company core values front of mind. These are the baseline rules on how the team can come together to achieve great results.
- Practice accountability from both leadership and team members.
- Prompt readiness for feedback. Share the broader vision of where the company is headed so that people are more prepared to receive feedback to help meet those company goals. When giving feedback, consider these questions:
  - What would my team need to do?
  - What am I going to be asking of them?
  - How should they be shaping their work?

# How to Empower Different Levels of Management

“Empowerment is the ability for people to make creative decisions and to take risks.”

- Lynette, 15Five Panellist

- Having open conversations that are explicit about what is possible and what managers have the authority to do. Answer these questions:
  - What is the manager's role?
  - What is their decision-making authority?
- Help managers understand their multi-generational work force and how they like to develop and receive information. This will help them build programs that support their team.
  - Gen Z & Millennials enjoy peer learning and having mentors. They prefer formal career development and attending classes
  - Baby Boomers are interested in areas of health and wellness. They enjoy planned activities that they can manage in their schedules
- Cultivate empowerment by giving managers room to make mistakes. We are all human and there will be times when leaders trip up. It's better to coach and redirect behaviours than micro-managing performance. Trust managers to do what's been delegated to them.
- Build a curriculum to help develop leaders. Ask people what skills and areas of knowledge would support their growth. Eg. How to have a difficult conversation, Becoming a better communicator and presenter, Understanding finance.
- Have a mentorship program in place. On a high performing team, managers may be leading someone who's smarter than them with way more domain expertise. Leaders might be struggling with how to adequately support this person.
- Build a workplace that provides psychological safety and encourages leaders to set ambitious goals, take calculated risks, and make creative decisions.

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“When selecting a mentor, it's good to pick someone who did the thing that you want to do, 3-5 years ahead of you. Ideally, they'll also have a playbook on how to get there.”

- Jason, Bucketlist Rewards Panellist

# Building Psychological Safety and Trust when Companies are Downsizing

In a distributed workforce where employees are working remotely, hybrid, or all over the globe, it can be even more challenging to build psychological safety during times of change and uncertainty. People are in different timezones and receiving information at different times in different contexts.

Here are the top 4 ways to build psychological safety when companies are downsizing:

## 1. Transparency and honesty

- Help people understand where the business is at and why these decisions needed to be made
- Share what the company's plan is for moving forward and show people that the situation is being handled.
- Give people an easy way to have their questions answered. Leaders may choose to do personal calls with different departments and groups to help people understand what is happening

## 2. Communication from leadership

- Own the situation, don't blame - It can be helpful to mention external factors (eg. economic) but own as much as you can
- Empathy - Acknowledge that people have lost friends and coworkers
- Vulnerability - Be honest when you don't have the answer to something
- Authenticity - Help people see you as a human too
- No fluff - Don't erase things or sweep it under the rug
- Understand that people will be dealing with these situations differently and will need support in different ways. Some may require 1:1 support, while others may want space.
- It'll take some people longer than others to recover. Don't forget leaders will also need time to recover

# Building Psychological Safety and Trust when Companies are Downsizing

“You don’t have to be the enemy during downsizing.”

- Hakemia, ThinkHuman Panellist

“Our philosophy is to treat people on the way out with as much respect as your new hires.”

- Sarah, Community Member

## 3. Define role clarity

- Be clear about who is doing what now that some team members are gone
- While it’s necessary to give people time to adjust, it’s also important to move forward and get going with the business as quickly as you can
- Things have changed; be agile and able to reprioritize

## 4. Human-centric exit strategy

- Layoffs are hard. And there is the added pressure that everyone is watching and the belief is that what happens now is what will happen to them in the future
- Treat all employees with dignity, grace, honesty, and transparency - especially the ones who are being let go
- Having a good reputation for a human-centric exit strategy leaves space for alumni networks and boomerang employees
- Trust is built in tougher moments.

## Bonus Tips: Leading in High-Stress Situations

- Identify things that are mission critical at the moment and those that are not
- Make sure goals are clear and allow people the opportunity to say “no”
- Give people space to recover. Understand that recovery looks different for everyone
- Some handy questions to get clarity:
  - What are the missing pieces we need to figure out?
  - What do we scrub?
  - What do we reprioritize?