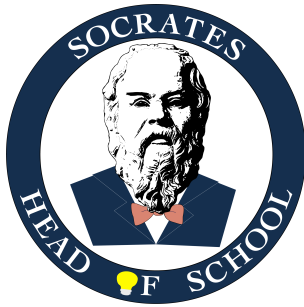


The Fearless Organization by Amy C. Edmondson



Think you might want to read this book?

Why do employees stay silent in the workplace when they know something is wrong? In *The Fearless Organization*, Amy Edmondson explores the idea of psychological safety and argues that establishing a psychologically safe workplace can lead to increased workplace safety, better teamwork, and increased innovations. Readers are given the tools to examine their leadership style and see where they are making their workplace a better place for those who work there and those they serve.

What would Socrates ask?

- How can psychological safety strengthen the work that schools are doing with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What would a school look like where faculty and staff felt like they could share their concerns and ideas freely?
- What can school leaders do to make others feel safe asking questions, raising concerns, and making suggestions?

Research

- Only 3 in 10 employees strongly agree with the statement that their opinions count at work.
- People often hold back even when they believe that what they have to say could be important for the organization, for the customer, and themselves.

Concepts

- It's not enough to hire talented people, the work environment must be psychologically safe for them to fully use their talents.
- Psychological safety is the belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk. A psychologically safe climate is one in which people are comfortable expressing and being themselves.
 - Good teams are willing to report their mistakes to those who can help them learn from them.
 - Fear is an ineffective motivator because fear
 - inhibits learning and cooperation
 - activates the amygdala, the part of our brain responsible for detecting threats
 - consumes physiologic resources diverting them from the parts of the brain responsible for working memory and processing new information which impairs creative insight and problem-solving

- Workplaces should build in opportunities for employees to talk to each other. Talking to others builds employee confidence and confident employees speak up with ideas or when they see problems.
- There are some companies and organizations that are making the fearless workplace a reality. “The fearless organization is something to continually strive toward rather than to achieve once and for all.”
 - Pixar is known for its culture of candor to support the creative process which relies on honest feedback.
 - The Pixar Braintrust has three rules:
 - Feedback must be constructive and focus on the project; the filmmaker cannot be defensive or take the feedback personally. They must be ready to hear the truth.
 - Comments should be treated as suggestions, not prescriptions.
 - Feedback should not feel like a “gotcha” moment, but come from a place of empathy.
 - Praise and appreciation are doled out in heaping measures.
 - Failure must be seen as a natural part of learning and exploration.
- How can we build a psychologically safe workplace?
 - Frame the work
 - Clarify the need for voice
 - Motivate effort
 - Invite participation so that people will respond
 - Practice proactive inquiry
 - Establish rules for discussion that reinforce psychology safety.

Quotes from the author

- “For knowledge work to flourish, the workplace must be one where people feel able to share their knowledge! This means sharing concerns, questions, mistakes, and half-formed ideas.”

Quotes from others

- “Your greatest fear as a CEO is that people aren't telling you the truth.” - Mark Costa, Eastman Chemical Company

Implement tomorrow?

- “Perhaps the best way to experience psychological safety is to act as if you have it already. See what happens! The chances are you'll be creating a safer and more energizing environment for those around you as well.” This is exercising a small act of leadership and leadership can be exercised at all levels.

Organizations/schools working on answers

- [Smith College- Failing Well program](#)

- [Fearless Partners](#)

Gateways to further learning

- [The Unexpected Benefits of Celebrating Failure](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Christina Baldwin and Ann Linnea	<i><u>The Circle Way: A Leader in Every Chair</u></i>
Bob Chapman and Raj Sisodia	<i><u>Everybody Matters: The Extraordinary Power of Caring for Your People Like Family</u></i>
Edgar H. Schein	<i><u>Humble Inquiry</u></i>
Ed Catmull	<i><u>Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration</u></i>

The applicability of this book to education is



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