

AUSTRALIA'S HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT STRATEGY

20
32
+



**Psychological Safety:
Creating Environments
Where People Can Thrive**

AIS Leadership and Professionalism

*Short Course
Program Overview*

Background

Why focus on 'Psychological Safety?'

The Australian High Performance 2032+ Sport Strategy's vision is to **win well to inspire Australians**. To achieve this vision we need to build an inclusive and sustainable sporting system that is performance driven, athlete focused, exceptionally led and purposefully collaborative. Sustainable sporting success is dependent on our system being world-leaders at pursuing high performance outcomes, holistically developing our people, continually learning and innovating, working collaboratively and maintaining high accountability for our shared vision of success. To support this ambition, the AIS Leadership and Culture team have designed and is delivering several key programs, one being "*Psychological Safety: Creating Environments Where People Can Thrive*".

What is Psychological Safety?

Psychological safety is a core pillar of sustainable high performance. Psychological safety is the shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. Meaning people feel confident to raise new ideas, go against the status quo, experiment with new approaches, not always have the answers, and learn from mistakes.

Why is this important in high performance sport?

Psychological safety is essential in environments when uncertainty of outcomes and the need to collaborate are high. The high performance sport environment can be highly stressful for all people that operate within it. People are continuously required to prove themselves against high standards set by themselves and others, confront their weaknesses and be open to learn and develop as a group. Additionally, athletes are often expected to work together with the same people they compete against. The high level of challenge and commitment to excellence are fundamental to success in elite environments. However, when combined with ineffective leadership, poor team member interactions and dysfunctional communication, there is a high risk of antagonism, hostility and the erosion of group functioning. This environment can lead to poor wellbeing, heightened stress, burnout, injury, feelings of detachment, and ultimately, sub optimal individual and team performance. This is why it is essential to include psychological safety as a core pillar of team performance.

How can psychological safety enable sustainable high performance?

A psychologically safe environment increases the chances that talent can be unleashed and nurtured. People will feel empowered to speak up, be creative, be expressive and engage in learning opportunities. Psychological safety can improve team performance by enabling group learning behaviours, strengthening team connections, and supporting teams to leverage the diverse skillsets and experiences of team members.



Psychological Safety: Creating Environments Where People Can Thrive

Program approach and learning outcomes

The program will equip participants with an understanding of what psychological safety is and how they can create it in within the HP sport environments that they work in. The program will take participants from the conceptual level through to developing a plan for practical action to enhance psychological safety in their team.

Delivery: Face to face, 2 full day workshop, 2 3-hour extension sessions (virtual), ongoing peer learning.

Target group: Members of the High Performance Sport System who are responsible for leading groups required to collaborate to achieve an outcome (e.g. HP Directors, Pathway Managers, Operations Managers, Performance Support & Coaches).



Understand what psychological safety is and how it enables high performance in sport.

Understand the individual, team, organisational and system factors which influence perceptions of psychological safety in sport.

Practice techniques for building psychologically safe environments.

Develop an action plan for creating psychological safety.

Evaluate and provide feedback on the behaviours which enable or inhibit psychological safety.



Participant Learner Journey

This 12-week program will equip participants with an understanding of what psychological safety is, how they can diagnose the level of psychological safety within their teams, and how they can build and maintain psychological safety.

