



The Peer Learning Institute The LEARNING Environment Assessment (LEARN)© Tool

Background Note

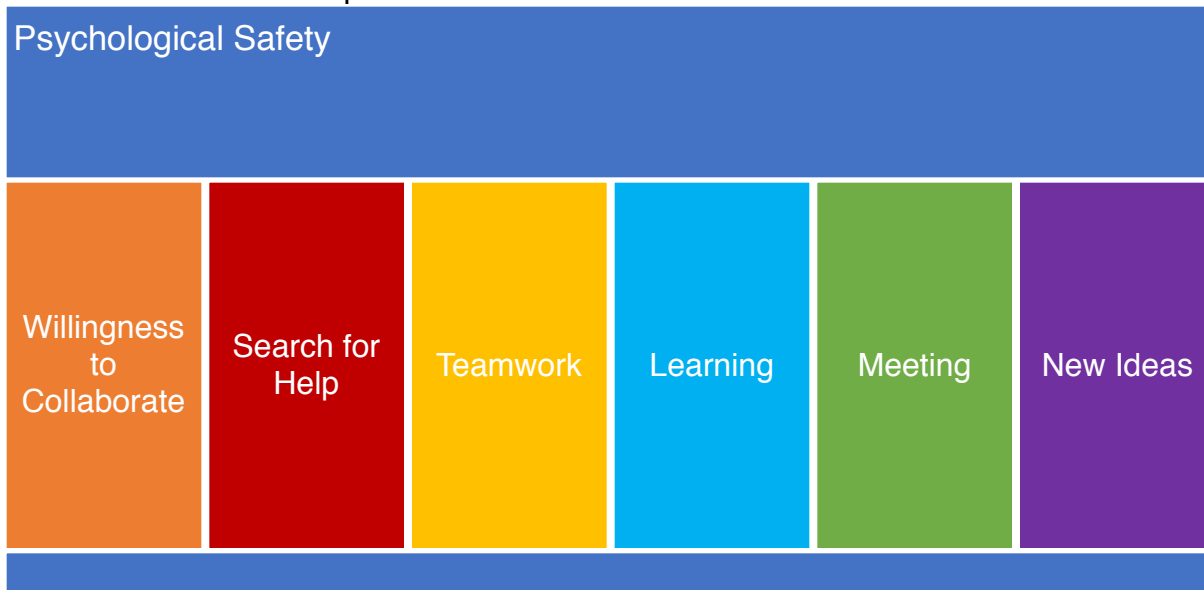
The LEARNING Environment Assessment (LEARN)© tool is designed to help you assess the style of collaboration and learning among your managers.

Factors Influencing Collaboration and Learning

The survey contains seven sections, each containing four questions, so there are 28 questions in all. The sections are as follows:

1. Psychological safety
2. Willingness to collaborate
3. Search for help from others
4. Teamwork and teaming
5. Openness to novel ideas
6. Quality of meetings
7. Attitude toward learning

All these dimensions define and contribute to the collaborative and learning environment in the workplace.



Psychological safety is the key factor related to learning and collaboration in the workplace. It can be defined as "being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career"¹. Psychological safety is a shared belief that the individuals within a team are safe to take interpersonal risks by expressing their views and ideas. It plays a vital role in workplace effectiveness. The degree of psychological safety indicates how willing people are to work and communicate openly with each other.

Other factors include collaboration, teamwork, search for help from others and openness to novel ideas. Each of these factors captures a different aspect of psychological safety, supporting and encouraging a willingness and ability to collaborate within a given organizational culture. The remaining two dimensions – learning and meeting – capture the organization’s attitude toward learning and face-to-face interactions as crucial factors that facilitate team cooperation.

Taken together, your assessment of these seven dimensions will give you an idea of the nature of the learning and collaborative culture you find in your organization. We distinguish between three types of Management Learning Together Styles as shown in the following table (based on the assessment using the MLT Survey tool):

MLT Style	OBSERVATIONS
Avoiding	Little cooperation between managers; people are expected to work and learn on their own; and the culture may not be supportive of learning, productive teamwork or open collaboration among the managers.
Accepting	Managers work and learn together to an acceptable degree, but there are areas that could be improved; the organization may be selectively supportive of learning and collaboration; or the managers may not be willing or able to take advantage of learning opportunities.
Embracing	Managers work and learn together on a regular basis, and they use collaborative methods to achieve their goals and to innovate.

It should be emphasized that the tool is intended to provide an indication of the prevailing style, and it should not be used as a diagnostic tool, nor as the basis for judgment of your managers and your organization. Rather, it provides background information as to what aspects of collaboration among your managers may be supportive or challenging when introducing collaborative learning methods such as the Peer Learning Group Model[®].

¹ Kahn, William A. (1990-12-01). [*"Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work"*](#). *Academy of Management Journal*. **33** (4): 692–724

The survey results can be summarized and averaged across each group of responders, and all responders together, to produce a company average. The results should be treated as diagnostic and indicative, rather than a judgment or criticism of your managers or your organization.