



Leading for Resilience

Visualisation and Questions

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As a leader, whether you like it or not, you have a significant influence on the resilience of your team.

The power implicitly assigned to your management role provides the opportunity to shape others' behaviour, without even trying.

It also helps define unwritten rules around how the team operates – its culture.

To promote resilience within the team(s) that you lead, you need to think about how you:

1.

Overtly role model personal resilience

2.

Create space for discussion and planning with the team around resilience

3.

Determine what you need to do personally, as the leader, to support the resilience of your team.

Role Modelling Resilience

Before you focus on supporting your team you need to get your own house in order.

If you encourage your staff to go home on time but consistently stay back late yourself, the message is mixed. The unsaid communication is more likely to be that you need to routinely work after hours to get ahead in the organisation. If you are a team leader who readily offers support but does not seek it, or take it when offered, the unwritten message is that you cope on your own, therefore so should others.



Creating Resilience in the Teams You Lead

Being resilient at work is about creating sustainable success rather than coping over the short-term. Within a team it involves the capacity to:

Create a climate which promotes cohesion and allows members to manage pressures of work while staying physically and mentally healthy

Adapt to change and collectively respond and learn from unexpected setbacks such as changes in job role, workload or working arrangements

Be proactive and anticipate and position for future challenges together.

Each team member needs to take responsibility for personal resilience as each person has an impact on the team's overall dynamic and performance. However, investing in the resilience of individual members alone will not guarantee a resilient team. We also need to align our actions with those we work with.



T1 Robust

Having shared purpose, meaning and goals. Being adaptable to change and proactive when issues arise for the team.



T2 Resourceful

Harnessing team member strengths and resources and building a culture of continuous improvement. Developing effective team processes that enable a clear focus on priorities.



T3 Perseverance

Persisting in the face of obstacles and having a solution, rather than problem, focus.



T4 Self-care

Promoting and deploying good stress management routines and being alert to overload in members. Supporting life-work balance.



T5 Capability

Continually building capacity through accessing networks and supports. Seeking feedback and building on what works well.



T6 Connected

Being co-operative and supportive with each other.



T7 Alignment

Aligning to create desired outcomes. Being optimistic, noticing progress and celebrating success.



A Robust Team

Imagine, in your mind's eye, your team being aligned in their purpose and goals, as well as being quick to adapt to change and able to work through setbacks. Observe:

The words they use and the passion and energy they show when they talk about what is to be done and why.

The way in which they interact and the respect and trust they demonstrate for each other.

How they work together to address issues promptly.

Picture this happening in everyday interactions - at meetings, in private conversations and in communication with others. What does this look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

How well do I link our activities to the 'why'?

What do I do to support the team to address problems that arise?

What do I do to promote adaptability to change?

What are the values that underlie the culture we want in our team and what am I doing to communicate these and help the team to live them?

How proactive am I in addressing behaviours not aligned with what we expect?

How well do I facilitate joint goal setting?

How well am I demonstrating the values I want from others?



A Resourceful Team

Imagine that a miracle has happened overnight, and you arrive at work to see a fully resourceful team that is energised by change and fully using every resource they have available. Notice how they:

Galvanise their personal strengths to full advantage

Share everything available to them in order to meet their goals

Easily adapt to shifting priorities

Are each accountable for their behaviours and contribution

Thrive on looking at ways to do things better.

Picture this happening in everyday interactions – when planning work, when budgets are cut and when change is needed. What does this look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

How well am I promoting the best use of the resources we have?

Are my team members conversant with each other's strengths and are these being used to maximum advantage?

Have I created processes that allow us to regroup and ensure we are focussing energy on the priorities?

What am I doing to create an environment where we regularly explore how we can better perform our job?

How well do I manage a lack of accountability by members?

What gets in the way of sharing resources?



A Team with Perseverance

Close your eyes and visualise your team persisting optimistically during a challenging time. Notice how they:

Re-group and look for solutions together

Take turns in energising the team

Use language around option-generation not problems.

Picture this happening in everyday interactions – when setbacks occur, when persistence is needed and when negativity is the easiest option. What does this look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

To what extent do I demonstrate and create positive energy in my team?

What sort of language do I use in relation to problems?

How do I engender a solution-focussed approach to problems we are facing?

Where does the energy come from in my team for persistence? How can I foster sharing this between members?



A Team Culture of Self-Care

Picture your team working through a very busy period while still taking care of their well-being. Notice how they are:

Checking in with each other to make sure they are okay

Taking breaks, eating properly and ensuring there are opportunities to de-stress, share the load or debrief

Mindful of working hours and the impact on their personal lives.

Imagine this happening in everyday interactions – when deadlines are tight, the workload is high and home demands are competing. What does caring for personal well-being look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

How well do I look after my own well-being and role model this in my team?

How alert am I to symptoms of overload in my staff and what do I do about it? What do I encourage others to do about it?

Have I worked with my team on techniques to manage the stress we experience and boundaries we need to put in place for life-work balance?



A Team Building its Capability

Visualise your team continually building its capability to meet shifting demands. Observe how people are:

Responsive to the changing needs of stakeholders.

Building relationships with people outside of the team who can add value to the group's work.

Sharing, valuing and building each other's skills and knowledge.

Picture a team that is well connected, links well into other resources and continually builds its capacity to do its job. Observe who are they talking to, how this is initiated and when they do this. What does it look, sound and feel like if your team is building capability? What exists already, and what is missing in order to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

How do I work with my team to identify and develop the external relationships and support we need?

What else can we do to make sure we get the feedback we need, to make sure we stay on track and meet the needs of our stakeholders?

How well do I demonstrate the need to connect strategically with people outside of our team?

What am I doing to ensure team members' skills and knowledge are valued and shared?



A Connected Team

Picture a team where members care for and support each other; where it's acceptable to be vulnerable and seek assistance; and where people feel they belong and that they matter. Observe how they:

Help each other without needing to be asked

Readily ask when they require assistance

Encourage a feeling of belonging within the group

Know and care about each other on a personal level.

Imagine someone joining the team. Notice what team members do and say to make this person feel welcome. How do they ensure they are supported and valued? How is this typical of everyday team interactions?

What does a connected team look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

What am I doing to encourage belonging within our team, and within the organisation as a whole?

How do I encourage mutual support within my team? What could I do, and what connections could I facilitate?

How do we get to know each other on a personal level? How well do I know my staff?

How do I instil an environment where it is okay, or even expected, to ask for help?

How do I support others, and could I do this better?



An Aligned Team

Visualise your team being fully aligned in their effort, acknowledging individual contributions and celebrating success. Picture team members who:

Are optimistic and have a shared vision of how they are adding value.

Recognise individual effort and celebrate success together.

Picture this happening when there are few good news stories and when there is potential for competition and conflict.

What does an aligned team look, sound and feel like? What exists already, and what is missing in your team to achieve this vision?

Questions to Ask Yourself

How well do I assess progress in our work and how do I communicate and highlight this?

What does success look like for us and how do we celebrate our achievements?

How do I instil optimism?

In what ways do I recognize effort?





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