

# Future Work Life

**A How-to Guide to Help HR-Managers Create a Climate of Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 for Managers, Teams, and Individuals in Nordic Organisations**



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The background features several abstract geometric shapes. On the left, there are overlapping curved shapes in shades of blue and yellow. On the right, there is a large blue circle with a smaller dark blue circle inside it, a pink triangle pointing towards the center, and a yellow square with a smaller yellow square inside it.

# About the authors



We're a people development company, and we're busy creating a world where people truly understand themselves and others and are inspired to make a positive difference in everything they do. We provide people development solutions that help companies all over the world get the very best from their people at work by helping people increase their self-understanding. The journey begins with **Insights Discovery**. A psychometric tool based on the psychology of Carl Jung, Insights Discovery is built to help people understand themselves, understand others, and make the most of the relationships that affect them in the workplace through their unique Insights Discovery personal profile. The Insights Discovery methodology uses a simple and memorable **four colour model** to help people understand their style, their strengths, and the value they bring to the team. We call these the **colour energies**, and it's the unique mix of Fiery Red, Sunshine Yellow, Earth Green and Cool Blue energies, which determines how and why people behave the way they do.





## learningbank

Our mission is to make people happier by making them better. This philosophy has been the core of everything we do in Learningbank since our start in 2015. People learn all their life and we believe that learning should be something you "want to do" and not something you "have to do". This is why we help companies transform old, corporate learning into modern digital learning shaping the employees of tomorrow.

We're a strong, diverse team of curious, dedicated experts who refuse to create dull learning. We believe it will help us achieve the best outcomes for our customers. Our approach has earned the confidence of leading organisations that use Learningbank to develop the skills of their employees with engaging learning games and our innovative Learning Lifecycle Platform.

# Introduction

Some may call 2020 a write-off. However, we'd prefer to call it a year of pivotal moments. Despite the truly devastating effects of the global pandemic, there have also been some glimmers of positivity to lean into. The last year has made us take another look at current work practices. It's accelerated change and led to shifts in traditional ways of working that may have otherwise taken years or even decades to happen. We are heading into the future work life.

The biggest mistake organisations can make right now is to simply slide back to in-office working, without actually asking their people whether that's the preferred option. It may well be, and there certainly may be

## Well-Being as a Top Priority

According to Gartner Group **Top priorities for HR Leaders 2021** 'improved well-being' is one of the three most important areas for HR leaders to invest into their employee lifecycle for the greatest returns on a hybrid workforce.

discrepancies between age groups, as this **survey** highlights, or even between colour energy preferences (read more about Insights' colour energies and preferences at **page 24**). We must ask what's best for business, yes, but we also have to ask what's best for the people working for that business. We're standing at a pivotal moment right now, and what could make people more motivated and engaged than feeling heard?

This is where you as a HR-manager come into the picture. Investing in your employees' overall well-being will enable organisations to have a more productive and engaged workforce – and to better retain and attract talent – now and in the post pandemic future work life.

## What We Mean by Psychological Well-Being

We believe that focusing on creating a climate of psychological well-being for Managers, Teams, and Individuals in your organisation, it will get us through the toughest challenges post the coronavirus.

Only when you focus on the mental health of your employees, while making sure they have the right skills, and they are placed in the right environment to perform, will they live up to their full potential and be the best versions of themselves in future work life.

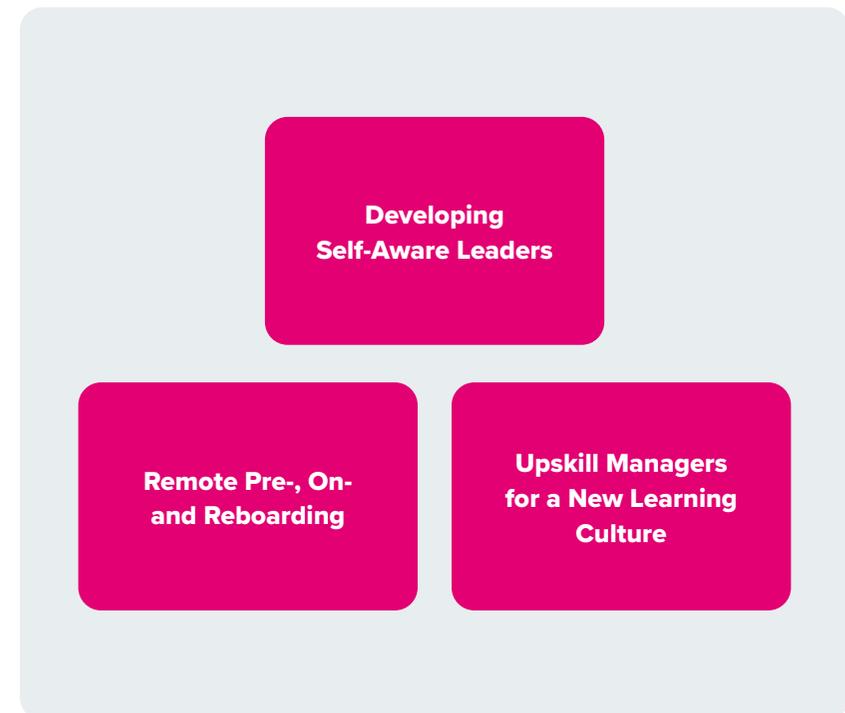
## How to Use this Guide

The reason why we distinguish between three the different employee areas, **'Managers', 'Teams', and 'Individuals'**, is to help you focus on the right area for the greatest returns on a hybrid workforce – maybe it is one of them or maybe it is all three. Also, to help you find what you need we've gathered all top keywords in a register at the end of the guide.

### MANAGERS

Managers, Leaders, Directors, C-level, Executive, Head of... One person or a management team who you are working closely together with in order to be aligned on the overall business strategy, performance and key-challenges which you and your HR-colleagues are here to support.

These are the overall areas which you can work with to create a climate of Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 among Managers:



## TEAMS

It does not matter, if your team consists of 50 or only 2 employees, because the core priority remains the same; they all need to work well together, even if one or perhaps several members are working full- or partly remote. We cannot argue that this can be challenging.

But as a HR-professional there are things you can do to make sure your team trusts each other, shares their knowledge, has a healthy inclusive culture and are excellent at giving and receiving feedback to continually improve themselves and create a better connection and sense of belonging in the team.

These are the overall areas which you can work with to create a climate of Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 in Teams:



## INDIVIDUALS

When we are talking about individuals, we are thinking of the person behind each employee in your organisation. Some may have lost focus, confidence, or faith in the ability of the business to give them the stability and career prospects they previously took for granted, some might fear loneliness and therefore it is crucial to raise motivation and efficiency when we are working full or part time remotely.

These are the overall areas which you can work with to create a climate of Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 with your individual employees.



**Let's get started!**



# Managers

## **Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 among Managers**

As an HR-Manager you can help managers in your organisation stay authentic, resilient, and 'on-point' when it comes to setting up the right team and having the skills needed. You can do that by supporting them in adapting to the changes; something that is an ongoing and essential requirement in companies today.

Doing so, we advise you to focus on three key areas to create a climate of Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 among Managers:

- **Developing Self-Aware Leaders**
- **Remote Pre-, On-, and Reboarding**
- **Upskill Managers for a New Learning Culture**

# Developing Self-Aware Leaders

We're going to need a lot of strong people as we head into the unexplored future work life. Self-aware leaders can be stronger for themselves, and for those around them. That's why self-awareness is one of the most powerful tools you can utilize among your managers.

A self-aware leader is aware of his or her leadership style and is someone who is constantly evaluating, reflecting, and learning from everything they do. It is leaders who know where they lead from, leaders who can change leadership style in relation to the context, and leaders who know what impact they have on others.

Self-aware leaders can:

- Know their strengths and areas of improvement.
- Be aware of blind spots and biases
- Understand their sense of purpose
- Understand their core values, beliefs, and desires
- Recognize and appreciate the impact they may have on others



Before leading anyone else, a leader first must manage themselves.

- Daniel Golemand, psychologist and business writer.

## How to Create more Self-Aware Leaders in your Organisation

The leadership development program "The Self-Aware Leader" is based on the leadership profile of **Insights Discovery** coupled with four manifestations and eight dimensions of leadership.

## The Four Manifestations of Leadership

'The 4 manifestations of leadership' is a way to describe the essence of what you have to deliver as a leader no matter what personal profile and preferences you have. You must be able to deliver on all four of them every day. Depending on the situation you can 'dial up' one of them, but you must be aware of how that affects the other three manifestations. Sometimes you must focus on relationships, other times on results. For example, as a leader you may have experienced being too results driven from time to time (Results Leader) really pushing your team to deliver. Perhaps this is because you have a deadline, or because your own leader is breathing down your neck, but in the end this can come at the expense of your own employee relationships (Relationship Leader).

### Centred Leader

The leader who is centred and grounded in the here and now, demonstrates authenticity and integrity and has a clear sense of purpose.

### Relationship Leader

The leader who fosters relationships, creates community, and cultivates collaboration to release the potential of individuals and groups.

### Results Leader

The leader who produces results, gets things done, and sustains commitment throughout a process of initiation, delivery, and completion.



### Visionary Leader

The leader who envisions possibilities, applies creative foresight to generate options and be a pioneer, and evokes an enthusiastic following through the inspirational communication of a vision.

Knowing about the 4 Manifestations may help you reflect on how you have used The Four Manifestations in action.



**Questions for HR to ask leaders:**

- Recap on how you identify with each of the four manifestations?
- What do I value about how I show up in this manifestation?
- What frustrates me with this manifestation?

**The Eight Dimensions**

Building on the framework of Visionary, Centred, Relationship and Results -leadership, the next level in The Self-Aware Leader program is to discover the Eight Dimensions positioned around the Insights Discovery wheel.

- Agile Thinking: **Engaging different thinking modes**
- Leading from Within **Being yourself and taking a lead in your own life**
- Facilitating Development **Nurturing the growth of self and others**
- Fostering Teamwork **Collaborating to build effective relationships**
- Communicating with Impact **Inspiring and influencing with emotional awareness**
- Creating a Compelling Vision **Determining a winning direction**
- Leading Change **Initiating and directing transitions**
- Delivering Results **Planning and executing for success**

*Pulls on one or two colour energies*

*Requires application of the four colour energies*



*All can master regardless of colour energies*

*Leaders must move around the model*

As a leader you must move around the model the Eight Dimensions of leadership and provide a balanced approach to developing your abilities as a self-aware leader.

### Questions for HR to ask leaders:

Putting the model of the Eight Dimensions into context and try to look at a specific project of yours:

- Which are the most important dimensions you must deliver to be successful?
- What do they mean to you? (By discussing this in a team you will find that everyone has different perceptions and the dialogue around them can create better understanding and cooperation in your team.)
- What are your strengths and weaknesses in these dimensions?
- Which dimension would support your team to be more effective?



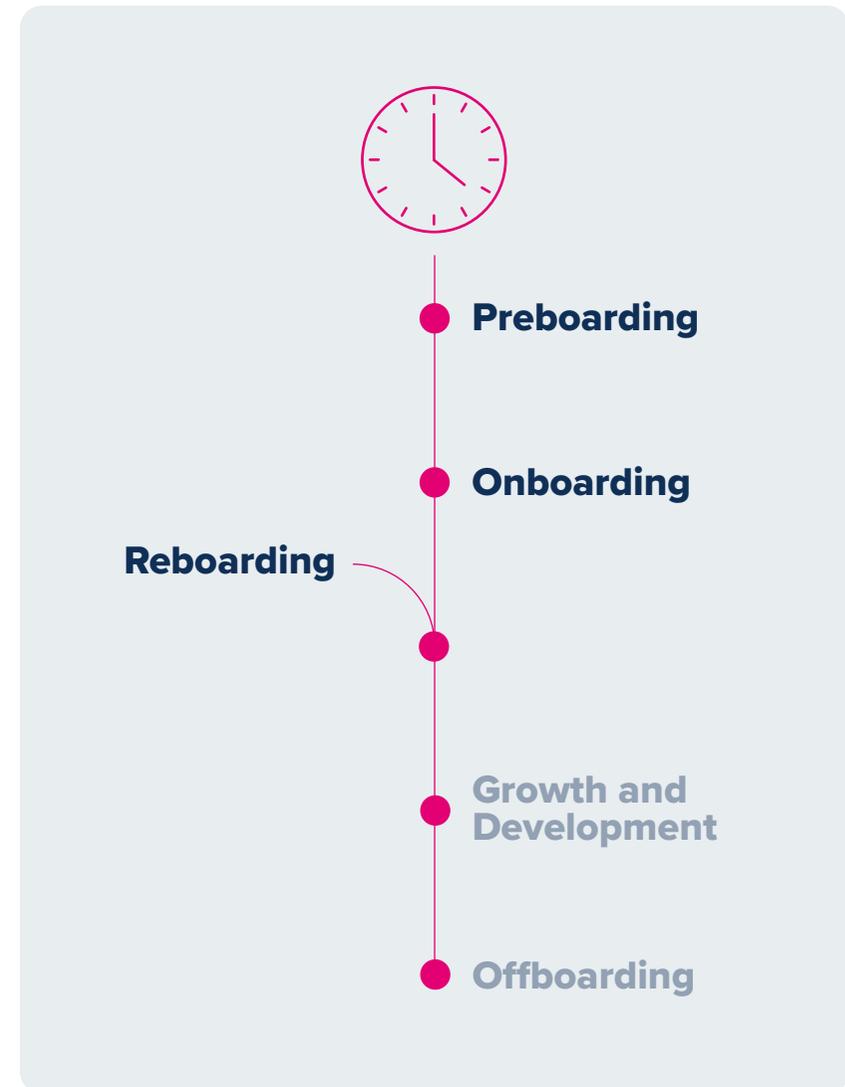
Explore how you can become a transformational leader. Download Insights' free 'Six Steps to Transformational Leadership' eBook

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# Remote Pre-, On-, and Reboarding

## Preboarding

**The employee journey** starts when a potential candidate sees the job post for the first time. There are a lot of emotions and excitement are running high if the candidate gets the job, and now waits to get started. To create a stronger sense of psychological well-being it is important for you as an HR professional to equip managers to focus on a structured preboarding for new hires to feel welcome before the first day arrives. And if the employees starts working remotely, do not forget to make a **remote preboarding** as well.



Preboarding takes place prior to the first day, while onboarding happens from the first day. Today, preboarding is more important than ever, because we saw under COVID-19, that a new hire needs assurance that you are excited to welcome them before they run back to their 'safe base' at their former employer.

Preboarding is all about making a new hire feel they belong at your workplace even before they start, tapping into their thrill about starting, and – of course – removing any nervous thoughts about a new beginning in a completely new job.

This is not just fluff. The numbers speak for themselves:

- Companies are **3 times more willing** to hire remote workers today, making remote preboarding even more important
- **4 % of new hires** quit after a disastrous first day
- The average US employer spends **\$4000 and 24 days** to hire a new worker - a resource wasted if the employee chooses to leave at an early stage. From a Nordic perspective a failed recruitment costs **500.000 DKK**

- **65 % of employers** have experienced being ghosted by new hires and 69 % of employers say this trend started in the last few years
- **Over half of new hires** say they ghosted because they decided the job was not the right fit and 40 % ghosted because they received another job offer
- A negative experience when starting a new job results in new hires being **2X more likely** to look for other opportunities

Preboarding is about getting all the practical stuff in place before an employee starts, which can be ticked off a checklist, like setting up the workstation and providing the new hire with relevant information. But it is also about creating that special connection to make the new hire bond with you as an employer faster.

Here are some tips to create a greater connection - See the tips especially for remote preboarding further below:

- Have a casual lunch with the new hire and let him meet the team or schedule a casual video call if lunch is not possible

- Schedule a tour around the workplace or create a ‘treasure hunt’, so the new hire really gets to know the workplace and the people working here
- Invite the new hire to social events coming up prior to the first day
- Shoot a video of how a typical workday is for the new hire, and do not forget the funny moments
- Send digital preboarding learning content about company history, mission, culture, staff handbook, and welcome videos from teammates and CEO and remember to include the ‘workday’-video
- Order balloons and flowers to set up on the new hire’s desk
- Order breakfast with the team for the first day
- Set up the new hire with a social – and professional buddy

A buddy program is especially a good idea to investigate. The difference between a professional - and social buddy is simple: The professional buddy comes from the new hire’s own team and is responsible for the training of the new hire, so they can learn about the daily tasks. The social buddy comes from outside the new hire’s team and is responsible for inviting the new hire inside the company culture and can invite the new colleague on a walk, a drink, or a coffee, as examples.



Get the full tickable checklist and preboarding mail template in Learningbank’s Preboarding Guide 2021.

[DOWNLOAD](#)

### Four Tips to the Remote Preboarding

1. Keep the new hire in the mail loop with relevant information. Then they will know what is going on at the office even before they start.
2. Send a digital preboarding path for the new employee two weeks before they start. Remember to bite-size the preboarding or create microlearning, especially, if they still work in their current position, then they can do the preboarding modules in their own time when it is suitable. Make it accessible from any device, whether it is a laptop, smartphone, or tablet.
3. Mission, history, values, culture, and employee-videos are some of the elements you can include in your digital preboarding and remember to tell more than what they can already read on the company website. Furthermore, you should not create a lot of text-on-text modules. Make it interactive to involve the new employee.
4. The social part of preboarding is important too. Let them know the team on a virtual call. Let the team members tell a bit about themselves, their responsibilities, and interests outside the job too. In this way, you create a sense of belonging faster, because the new hire will have a greater idea of who they will be working with, and they can easier see themselves as a part of the team and company.

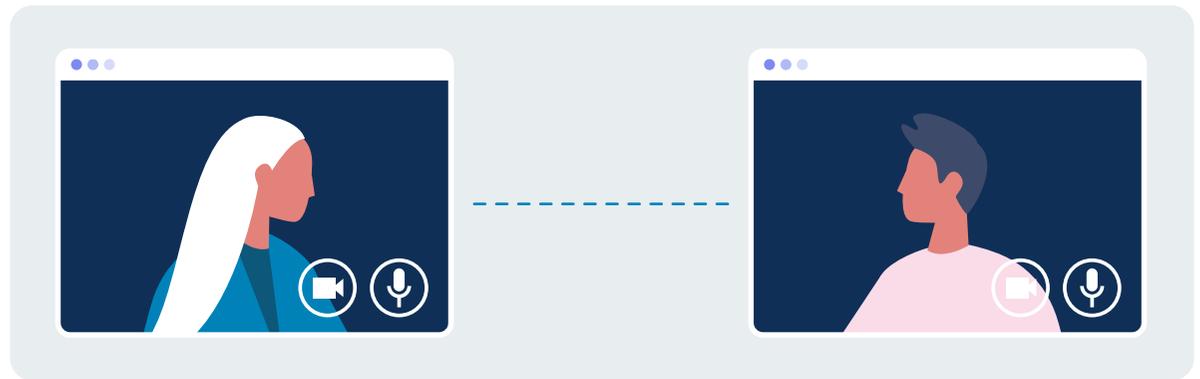


## Onboarding

Onboarding is up next in the employee journey. And unlike preboarding this is something you cannot complete with a checklist only. The onboarding phase takes more resources, and a HR-Manager must tread carefully to make sure that managers have the right tools to onboard their new employees.

To ensure the best onboarding, the first and probably most important takeaway is that onboarding takes time. You cannot just shake the hand of the new hire (or wave digitally) and say: 'Well, let's get you to work.' No. Time is everything, and if you start building a greater onboarding experience for new employees it pays off:

- The risk of an employee leaving the company within the first 12 months is **87 % less** if the employee is engaged
- Efficient onboarding can raise employee engagement with **more than 20 %**
- In more **than 60 % of cases** onboarding programs reduces time to performance
- **58 % of new hires** are more likely to stay at a company for more than three years if they experienced structured onboarding
- **22 % of turnovers** occur within the first 45 days costing at least 3X salary and a lot of time and resources
- **88 % of organisations** do not do a good job when it comes to onboarding - this makes room for a lot of improvement
- **41.3 %** have already made it a top priority to create better onboarding programs in the Nordics



## Remote Onboarding

A new hire is excited to get onboard, and you are ready to welcome them. Virtually. Times are changing, and now, people have the opportunity to work remotely from a sunny palm island or from their kitchen counter at home.

With people working remotely a remote, digital onboarding must be in place too, and now it is time to get it right. Because without the close, social aspect of onboarding in a physical setting, there are a lot of changes that need to be done.

As we already mentioned, a checklist is definitely not the same as a structured onboarding program, and it will never be enough to create the right onboarding feeling. Onboarding is so much more. It is both social, digital, and physical, but with the physical part removed in the remote onboarding process, you will have to tweak and tune in on the two other parts of onboarding to create a satisfying onboarding process.

## Tips for the Remote Onboarding

- Rethink your onboarding plan both in terms of tasks, first day, etc. Translate the physical events of onboarding to digital events. Think: social perspective instead of physical perspective.
- Be structured and create an overview and plan of the first time at the company for the new employee.
- Arrange small digital coffee break sessions with the team - both regular check-ins to see how they are doing or if they need something, and the relaxed coffee breaks too, where they can talk to someone from the team about everything from an avocado's longevity to the all-time high scoring player in basketball.
- And now, when we are talking about it, they should not just talk to their new team only. Buddy programs are great in normal onboarding circumstances, and this is the same case with a remote onboarding. Give the new employee a professional buddy from their own team



to help them through the daily tasks, and do's and don'ts in their new job, but give them a social buddy too from another department, who can help them into the culture of the company, small talk, and ask them about her every day to make them feel welcomed and that she belongs.

- Break up written instructions to smaller parts and pass them over time. Too many written instructions can seem overwhelming with all the other impressions in a new job. Bite-size it like the digital preboarding and share the written instructions in a digital learning setting in for example a learning platform. If you have the time, you should 'jazz up' the written instructions and add more interactive and visual elements to make it easier for the new employee to comprehend.
- You cannot communicate too much. This might seem odd as you should not overload the new employee with information in the preboarding phase. However, in remote onboarding, communication is key. Now, the new employee focuses completely on their new position in your company, and this is why you do not have to hesitate

about communication. They will probably be eager and ready to get the information.

- Create digital learning modules that relate to the new employee's new position, and make sure to make them available at all devices like the preboarding. Add 'Me Time' in her calendar for them to explore the learning content at their own pace. Be sure that the preboarding learning path is available too for them to retake the modules if they need a brush-up. If possible, add a social element to the digital learning, where they can interact with their co-workers about the learning.
- Remember also to include digital learning modules in compliance training, if you have certain rules you must comply with. It can be legal rules, like how the GDPR regulation fit into your work environment, but it can also be an internal set of rules like IT security or ethical guidelines (Code of Conduct).

- Do not clutter the learning content, but bite-size it and stretch it over time, to avoid that the new employee gets overloaded and overwhelmed by the vast amount of learning content
- The new employee might be eager to show off their skills in their new job, and they should be able to do so. Create onboarding tasks suited for the new employee to get them started, but do not make the tasks too grand, so they can complete them at their own pace. All the new impressions can seem overwhelming, and with a large-scale task as well, stress looms just around the corner. This should not be the case.
- One of the most important takeaways for the remote onboarding, as well as a regular structured onboarding process, is that you must commit to 90 days of onboarding and not just one week or a day with a checklist.
- Evaluate your onboarding process after the 90 days. What went well? And what could be even better?

**Onboarding-guiden**  
 Tips til færdigste onboarding, der fastholder og aktiverer nyansatte

learningbank

**18%**  
 18% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job uden at have gennemført en onboarding-proces.

**90.3%**  
 90.3% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job med en onboarding-proces.

**58%**  
 58% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job med en onboarding-proces, der varer mere end 90 dage.

**2.6%**  
 2.6% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job med en onboarding-proces, der varer mere end 90 dage.

**10%**  
 10% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job med en onboarding-proces, der varer mere end 90 dage.

**60%**  
 60% af nyansatte i Danmark starter deres nye job med en onboarding-proces, der varer mere end 90 dage.

**DOWNLOAD**



## Reboarding

Reboarding shares some of the same elements as onboarding. It is about getting the employees onboard - again.

Usually, reboarding is brought to life when an employee returns from paternity leave, sick leave or is starting in another function in the same company. You get re-boarded in the company culture, your work tasks, and so on once again, and you might get new info about what happened while you were away. Reboarding is about ensuring that employees who are either starting in a new function or back at work after a period of absence are given the optimal opportunities to perform and execute. And this is extremely relevant in our new world post COVID-19

### Experienced Employee in a New Reality

Reboarding can be an effective tool to create more psychological safety - and letting them know that they are appreciated in a time, where they have had so much space to reflect on their job and career. This is why it can be a very good idea to equip managers with tips and tools for a reboarding process to retain employees and keep them up to date.

### First up: Knowledge, Priorities, and Responsibilities

Before going straight to the reboarding how-to's it is important to make these three areas clear and answer all the questions regarding each area.

**Knowledge:** Does the employee have the knowledge available to perform his or her tasks? Whether or not the position in the employee's absence has changed formally or not, they need to be updated on all that has happened. And if the employee enters an entire new role in the company, there will almost always be a lot of silent knowledge in the team they enter, which they must have in order to do their job properly.

**Priorities:** It often happens that tasks change order - it can be because of a strategic change, the market's development, or something else (and sometimes there is a little of it all). This is not a problem, but it is crucial that you create a direction, so the employee know in advance which tasks are the most important and have the highest priority.

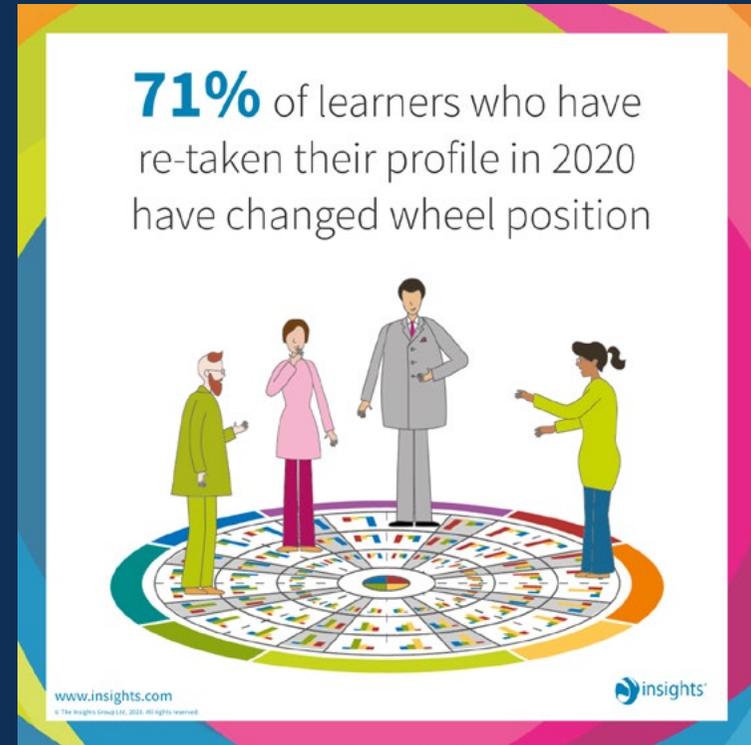
**Responsibilities:** Who does what? And who has the main responsibility to reboard the employee who is coming back or who is about to start in a new role? Is it the manager or is it someone else? While this may seem straightforward, it is important that you have made it clear. Otherwise, you risk ending up in a situation where you are pointing fingers at each other because there was doubt about the responsibilities. In addition, it is also nice for the employee that they know who to go to if they have questions about their reboarding, their new work assignments, the new strategy, or something else.

#### Preparation and Planning

Keep track of all the hands-on-stuff - make sure that the workstation - either at the office or at home - is ready with relevant things like computer, phone and so on. Also, remember all the little details that can make a workday either very easy or rather difficult, keys, passwords, relevant software and the like. Everyone can spare some time if you take care of it before the employee sits in their chair with nothing to do, and it sends a good signal that you take them seriously.

#### Give the Employee A (Remote) Buddy

As we mentioned in the **Onboarding process**, we recommend that you give the new employee a social buddy and a professional buddy.



#### Rediscover yourself post COVID-19

Insight's research shows that 71% of Insights learners who have retaken their personal Insights Discovery profile since March 2020 have changed wheel position, compared to 43% previously. This indicates that many of us might have changed our preferences during COVID-19.

**Read more** about how individual change might affect the whole team and how you work together.

## Discover yourself with colour!

Play Insights' fun colour game to find out if you could lead with Cool Blue, Fiery Red, Sunshine Yellow or Earth Green - and what this means to you!

PLAY NOW

The Insights language about 'changing wheel position' means you have changed your unique 'colour mix' of the four-color energies: **Cool Blue**, **Fiery Red**, **Sunshine Yellow** and **Earth Green** which affects where you sit within each of the 72 segments on the Insights Discovery wheel.

If you switch wheel position it means you'll have shifted preferences for instance on how you prefer to be communicated with, your strengths, how your 'ideal work environment' looks like, your personal motivation and leadership style and other parts which are described in your Insights Discovery Personal Profile.

By understanding the impact of change, you can help guide your employees through their own journey of Rediscovery. Rediscovering who you are post COVID-19 is a very important part of returning to work and to build a more resilient workforce with an ability to recover faster from challenges and cope with the ever changing circumstances that surround us which the current pandemic is an obvious example of.

Read more in the blog post: **Building resilience through tough times, using the language of colour**

Re-taking personal profiles as a part of your reboarding program for team(s):

- 1) Increased self-awareness by the individual team member making them more resilient
- 2) Re-connecting and re-motivating your teams with a Rediscovery session
- 2) Help you as a HR-Manager understand what your team needs from you now



“We’re all most resilient when we do the stuff that we’re good at, when we can lean into our strengths and utilize our personal communication style.”

- Tony Denton,  
Client Practitioner Experience Manager at Insights.

#### **Tips to Remote or Digital Reboarding**

Create a digital reboarding path for your employees when they get back - whether it is in the home office or at the workplace, including, for example:

- Video-greeting from CEO
- Former digital pre - and onboarding paths
- Do’s and don’ts in the office
- Videos illustrating do’s and don’ts, for example how to greet each other
- Content about what has happened in the company
- Content about any new features, processes, strategy, etc.
- Be creative and use videos, sound bites, gamified elements, etc.

Send the digital reboarding-module no later than a week before the job start. Afterwards, the manager can consider advising the employee to go through one or more of the tests and learning modules again. Some people like to have the opportunity to revisit or dig deeper into a topic that they either find difficult or find particularly exciting. Have an open dialogue about what topics could be interesting to explore - both for the employee to get fully up to speed, but also for her further development in the company.

## Upskill Managers for a New Learning Culture

You probably already know why learning culture is important. But you need to let the managers understand this too. A quick brush-up before we dig deeper: A thriving learning culture at your workplace is important because it leads to constant growth for the individual employee, and this fact visualizes itself as growth at the company bottom line too. However, developing a learning culture can be tricky, because, here, we are talking about a change management exercise, where new ways of doing things should be implemented. With the right mindset and great pointers for management, the process might be easier to implement than you think.

Creating a greater learning culture can give a boost to the business economy after a period with red numbers in the budgets by building a strong workforce with the right skills and a culture of knowledge sharing. At the same time, learning new skills and using them can rocket launch morale and motivation to new heights. And this is most needed in a time post COVID-19 to create a greater sense of wellbeing. More about this in the chapter of **'Upskilling and Reskilling Individuals'**





## What is Learning Culture?

Learning culture means that you see learning as important and essential for your company. The learning culture can include both formal training, for example, physical and digital events/courses, but also informal learning from constructive feedback, and much more. When your company grows a strong learning culture it is known that it is valuable to adopt new knowledge, strengthen skills and get a boost to job performance - both for individuals and the company.

The end-goal of creating a better learning culture is, therefore, to boost job-performance, attract and retain talent, create innovation and to question how stuff is done, and whether it can be improved.

## How to Kill your Company in 3 steps with no Learning Culture

Maybe it can seem a bit 'fluffy' for some to invest in creating a strong learning culture. But without a learning culture, that creates innovation and keeps the company attractive for new talent, you will get stuck and can potentially kill your own business. Here are three typical mistakes that stop a growing learning culture.

### 1) "Training is just something we need to get over with".

If you just deliver employee training once or twice a year, and your focus is on delivering the training rather than the content of the training, it is very rare that employees get any good takeaways from the training and learn something constructive.

Instead, you should create meaningful learning experiences for the employees. At the same time, training must be an integral part of the workday, where you learn in a flow, for example by adopting new knowledge and getting constructive feedback. The training activity should not only be separated from the work in the shape of external courses. Training must instead be interactive and involve challenges, that relates to the individual's workday.

### 2) "Our company attracts and retains talent in other ways"

Yes, a good pay check is important, and yes employee benefits can also be wonderful for the individual. But top talent and **the future workforce** want learning and development. If you cannot offer it, maybe the competitor can? And here, you lose the opportunity to grow with talented people, who might apply at your company if the situation was different. Make sure to make development opportunities visible and

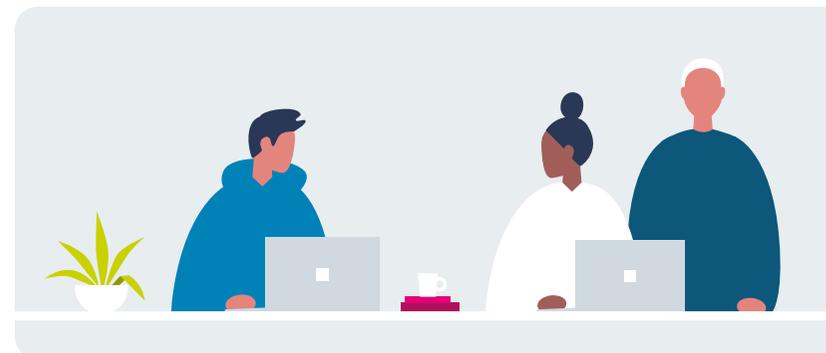
offer as many options as possible to learn - both with physical courses/ events and digital learning content. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge the employees own learning efforts to gain new knowledge. Your employees want to learn, and they want new skills and knowledge. Create a culture, where they have the opportunity to do so.

### 3) “Innovation? It will come eventually”

The world is in a thriving development, and the competitors will easily overtake your market shares, if you are hung up on old fashioned ways of doing the work, and do not want to learn about the new ways. Companies with a strong learning culture share and seek out knowledge to a higher degree. They give and receive feedback, they interpret and understand better, and then they more often develop and launch new products and services.

Without a learning culture and without values that encourage exploration and experimentation, companies will have a hard time gathering, understanding, and using information to innovate effectively.

Meaningful training, the possibility of attracting talent, and innovation - these are the three factors that drive success in organisations today. And it all starts with growing a strong learning culture.



## 5 Tips for Managers to Create Learning Culture

Employers like **Google** and American Express have already made learning an integral part of their company. And research shows that companies that effectively care for their workforce and their longing for learning will be **30 percent** more likely to be **market leaders** in their industry.

Additionally, in **a recent publication from BCG** it is stated that the winners of tomorrow will be those that can accelerate their rate of learning. This is especially related to the need for digital transformation with the global pandemic in hindsight. And if you must dive into digital transformation, a thriving learning culture is a must to grow new skills and new learning paths emerge too. Here's 5 tips to the Manager who wants to create a strong learning culture:

### 1. Reward employees for learning

It is not just about praising the employees who spend time on learning and development. It is also about creating a working environment that values critical thinking, and where authorities are challenged, and people speak their minds. Encourage the employees and remember to create time and space for them, so they can grow and learn something new.

## 2. Give constructive feedback

Do not be afraid to tell the employees if they are doing something wrong. It must only be shared in a constructive way, so they learn from their mistakes. It is often difficult to criticize other people, and that is why managers more often give positive than negative feedback. But this is problematic, if you do not want to create a curiosity to learn, because the best way to kickstart curiosity is to show a knowledge gap. People often do not know where they lack knowledge and do not see their own limitations. That is why it is super important that a manager can guide them and give them feedback, so they can improve.

## 3. Practice what you preach

The manager's behaviour has a huge impact on how their team behaves. Do not ask your employees to do something if you do not even do it yourself. If you want people to read more about this area, then read more about it yourself - and share your new knowledge with the team. If you want them to challenge themselves, then you must challenge yourself. For example, by participating in a project where your skills can come into play in a new way. In this way, you will show your team that with a little bit of curiosity and discipline you can get better - and this is inspiring for others.

## 4. Hire curious people

It is easier to set a curious person on a path to learn, than someone who is not - it simply goes against their nature. If you on the other hand hire people that are naturally curious and see the resemblance between their interests and the role they must fit in the company, you should not worry too much about their willingness to learn. Their motivation to learn will, by the way, not be the only thing that increases, but their general job performance too.

## 5. Create positive learning experiences and use the right technology

Make learning playful and create positive learning experiences for the individual. Give the employee the opportunity to take care for their own learning - and let them use the technology or device that suits them. Do they have a need to complete digital learning on the go? Then make sure the learning is available on their smartphone. Make the learning accessible to all in an **LMS (Learning Management System)** or learning platform and share learning content that fits their role. If you make the right learning content accessible to them, they will not get swamped with an ocean of content on the internet from a simple Google search, where it is hard to see what works and what doesn't.

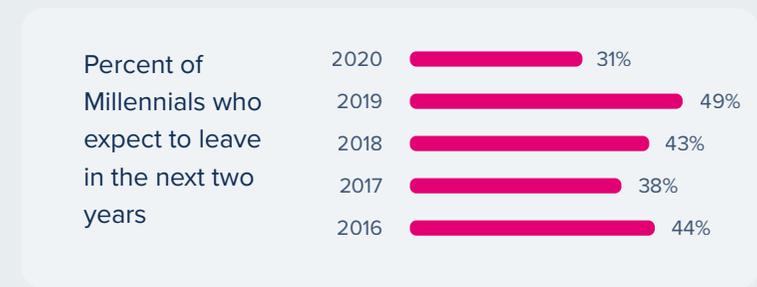
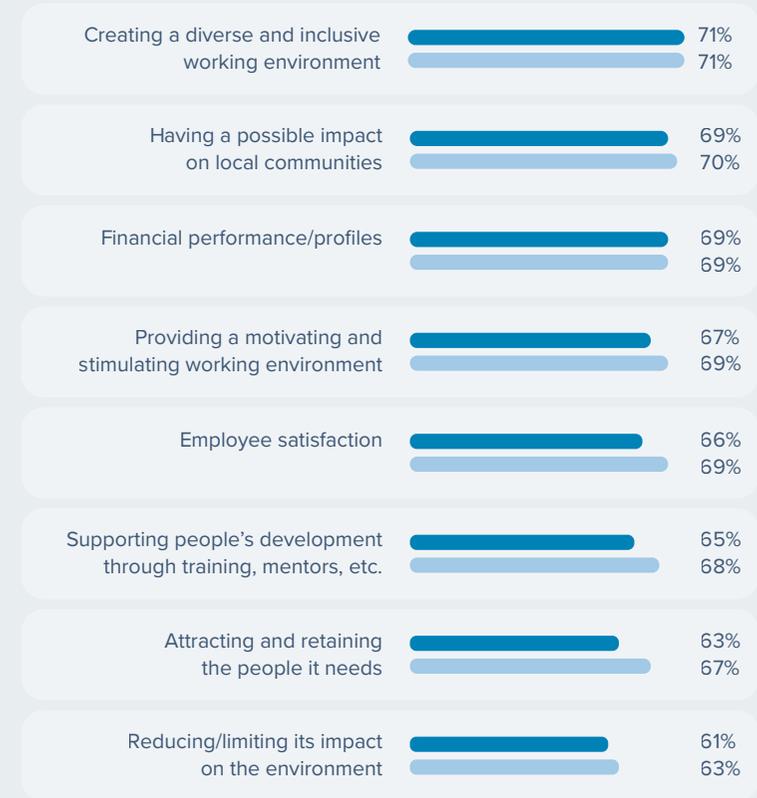
### Upskilling Managers

When you start building a strong learning culture, it is important that managers get the right skills to help build the new culture. Furthermore, the modern manager needs new and more skills to handle future work life. They need to learn to adapt, and they need to learn more than just the regular hard skills.

### Managers Need Soft Skills and a Positive Attitude

Sympathy, empathy, and personality. Those are characteristics that future managers need to have, if you ask **the digital generations** - millennials and Generation Z. Furthermore, **almost half of millennials and Generation Z** say that they are stressed most or all the time after the COVID-19 pandemic entered the global scene. And they need, now, more than ever, empathetic, human managers who can guide them during this time. In general, it is important that employers and managers bring in a more sympathetic and empathic attitude towards their millennial and Generation Z employees, because it has shown to pay-off during the pandemic:

### Employers doing more to align with Millenials and Gen Zs interests (% in selecting performing fairly well/very well)



Another reason for focusing on upskilling soft skills for managers is, that if you only focus on optimizing hard skills, there is a chance that those competencies will be **automated tomorrow**. We are not saying that some hard skills aren't important, but soft skills are here to stay and are needed to a high degree post COVID-19 to get the company and workforce back on track in a positive manner.

### Soft skills are more than 'likeability'

According to **Lia Garvin**, Diversity & Inclusion Program Manager at Google AR/VR, soft skills are categorized as interpersonal and communicative competencies that lie within our emotional intelligence (EQ). It might sound fluffy as a start that you need skills that have something to do with emotional intelligence and soft skills, but it is actually one of the key elements to make **better managers**.

Soft skills are not only about being a likeable manager. Managers also need to have the skills to give difficult feedback to employees, be brave when it comes to making changes, be creative and think outside of the box.

SELF-AWARENESS	SELF-MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL AWARENESS	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
Emotional self-awareness	Emotional self-control	Empathy	Influence
	Adaptability		Coach and mentor
	Achievement orientation	Organizational awareness	Conflict Management
	Positive outlook		Teamwork
			Organizational awareness

There are four areas within EQ: Self-awareness, Self-management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management, and within those four areas there are 12 soft skills one can upskill as a manager (see the table above).

If a person is strong in 'Conflict Management', it means he/she is good at giving hard feedback, and if someone is good at 'Inspirational Leadership', then he/she is good at creating and completing change within the organisation.

By taking a closer look at the 12 soft skills, you will notice where a manager is strong, and where a manager needs to optimize and **develop your skillset**.

## Upskilling with Virtual Reality (VR)

There are thousands of courses that teach how to enhance soft skills. Still, we see that soft skills are dependent on the culture we work in. Soft skills develop from experience rather than from reading.

That is why it makes sense to learn about soft skills in closed training environments, where a person can encounter specific scenarios and create their own experiences. An example could be to wear a pair of VR glasses and get absorbed into a virtual world, where there are no consequences of the actions one takes. It is also important that you get feedback on the choices made in the virtual reality training to be better prepared when facing a critical conflict in the real world. It could, for example, be in a customer service situation.

If we think about the skills people must pull out at every stage of their career, it's those key human skills: Communicating, listening, collaborating, negotiating, and problem solving. These are the interpersonal skills that everyone needs to be good at, and not managers only, and which will bring you the biggest return on your investment.

### Create Space for Human Moments

When the soft skills are in place, it is time to create space for the most-needed human moments to boost performance for the workforce. However, we also know that businesses are under a huge amount of pressure right now, and when those pressures are screaming for attention, sometimes the people stuff slips off the radar. How do we ensure we actually walk the walk, and don't just pay lip service?

Quite simply, it's about creating space for those human moments, and ring-fencing that space as non-negotiable in the same way you would any other important meeting. For leaders, this means blocking in one-to-one calls once a week, facilitating space for teams to talk about how they are feeling, and considering people's personal circumstances about returning to work and any anxieties that come with that. It's not about a couple of emails from a faceless CEO or pushing on with the strategic aims of the organisation and hoping that everyone manages to keep pace with them. The reality is this: your people are your biggest asset in your organisation, and ensuring they feel motivated, connected, and energized must be your top priority.

# TEAMS

## Psychological Well-Being Post COVID-19 for Teams

During COVID-19 many companies have experienced overwhelmed teams. According to **Gartner Group** this happens because of the increased volume of work but also because many have been forced to create processes and structures for their job where none existed before. All this combined with even faster changing conditions and a more distributed workforce, makes it crucial for HR-Managers to focus on creating a climate of psychological well-being for teams post COVID-19.

In our **research** of how these circumstances affect the individual we've found that successful globally dispersed teams require three elements: trust, support, and a sense of belonging.

To accomplish psychological well-being post COVID-19 for your teams, we advise you to keep your mind on these three key areas:

- **5 steps Fostering Trust and Knowledge sharing in Diverse Virtual Teams**
- **Tips to Create more D&I at the (Remote) Workplace**
- **Create a Sense of Belonging with a Healthy Virtual Feedback Culture**

# 5 Steps to Fostering Trust and Knowledge Sharing in Diverse Virtual Teams

Trust is the basis for positive relationships and therefore essential for successful teamwork. But trust can't be forced; it must grow. And that takes time. At the same time, it is extremely vulnerable: it doesn't take much to destroy trust. And if mutual trust takes a big hit, it can be difficult – even impossible – to restore.

Therefore, we find it crucial that you as a HR-Manager are working to continually improve mutual trust in your teams - which is not just important in 'real world teams'.

No matter if you are working with face-to-face or remote teams the below check marks are important indicators to ensure that your teams have high levels of mutual trust. Do you know if this is the case in your teams today?

## **In teams with high levels of mutual trust:**

- people interact openly and honestly with each other, creating a pleasant working atmosphere.
- people dare to be themselves because they know that there is mutual respect and appreciation.
- people feel safe enough to try new things and make mistakes – important conditions for innovation.
- people dare to give each other feedback and can discuss conflicts – important conditions for growth.
- people can rely on each other, both for work and personal support. They help each other, find solutions together, and share knowledge and experiences. That's how they progress together.

As previously mentioned, trust isn't something you can force. However, there are some things you can do to foster trust:

#### **1. Get to know each other**

Take the time to learn more and really get to know each other, not only as colleagues, but also as human beings. Take time to chat, do nice things, go out together for lunch, celebrate successes. This can be done virtually too with scheduled digital coffee breaks, for example.

#### **2. Pay genuine attention to each other**

Tell each other what you are doing and what's on your mind, both workwise and in your personal life. When people come to work, they bring their entire selves. This is also important in a virtual setting. Remember to pay attention in virtual meetings and shut down any noisy software. You can also schedule the first five minutes of a virtual meeting to be about personal stuff, before you move on to the business talk.

#### **3. Appreciate mutual differences**

Each team member is different and makes a unique contribution to the team. Discover what each person brings to the team and how individual qualities can be better utilized. This is how you also ensure that colleagues know who to turn to when they run into problems.

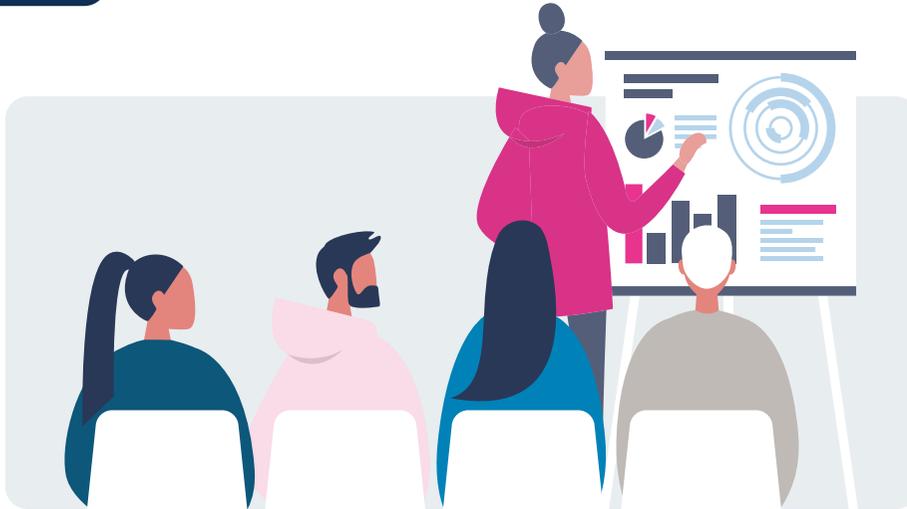
#### **4. Be transparent**

Be open and honest, especially when things aren't going well, or mistakes have been made. Stick to agreements and don't make empty promises.

#### **5. Tackle challenges together**

As an extension of 4: When things aren't going well, if the team faces a challenge or if there's conflict, then work together to find a solution! By involving your team members, you create a feeling of trust and commitment: "We're in this together."

When you have a team where people mutually trust each other, it is so much easier to have a healthy team culture where team members feel safe to speak up, give each other constructive feedback, and share their experiences and knowledge. Let's take a closer look at how (re-)remote knowledge sharing can become an integrated part of your teams and how mutual trust and psychological well-being is the foundation of creating a supportive learning environment that makes your teams more effective and happier.



## What Is Knowledge Sharing?

Maybe you think you already have a lot of knowledge sharing internally in your organisation. What about all the information like reports, product knowledge, rules, documents, and procedures you have available? However, these often only constitute a small percentage of the knowledge sharing. You must also consider all the unconscious knowledge from individuals, such as: experiences, the mistakes we have made, in a combination with skills, professional methods, knowledge, and learning.

## How You Open to Knowledge Sharing

It strengthens the business when you share the knowledge and the experiences that already are available among the employees. Nonetheless, knowledge sharing is a more complex phenomenon than you think – especially when your teams are working full or partly remote. That's why it requires management and control.

To begin with, it can be a good idea to develop mentor programs internally in the organisation. In that way, new and less experienced employees develop and become more effective by getting advice and counselling from experienced colleagues. At the same time, the mentors often gain a lot from the mentor programs, as they become better at expressing in words the knowledge, they already have available. In addition, it can be very inspiring and rewarding to participate in a colleague's growth and development. To move a step closer to become a learning organisation, development must be a deep-rooted practice in the company.

## A Supporting Learning Environment

Do you bluntly tell your opinion to a colleague? Or are you more hesitant? The premise for creating a supportive environment is namely that everyone should feel safe to express their thoughts and opinions (Pe-akon, 2018). As mentioned previously; feeling safe to speak up is all about the level of mutual trust and respect in your teams. A supporting

learning environment has room for the stupid mistakes and that you can share your mistakes, so others don't make them as well – without being cast a sidelong glance. In that way, you can attempt an alternative solution the next time, instead of the usual one that doesn't work anyway.

Also, remember to evaluate the individual projects: what went well and what went less well? And then the managers need to engage themselves, be open in the debate, ask for new perspectives, and invite people to give criticism and feedback.

### Remote Knowledge Sharing

Share your knowledge and transform it into learning modules in a **Learning Management System (LMS)** or learning platform. In that way, you can make your knowledge easily accessible in a form of an internal wiki for both current and future employees. Announce that you have brand new learning content for the rest of the employees in a social learning feature in your learning platform or by notifications.

Alternatively, you can announce through internal communication channels, if you want to give an oral presentation where you share knowledge for a specific employee group digitally as a kind of webinar. Who knows – with an open invitation like that, maybe another department could also benefit from the new knowledge?

### Summary:

- Start a mentor system
- Make a safe learning environment
- Share the mistakes, so others don't make them
- Evaluate the projects
- Be open for criticism and feedback as a manager
- Share your knowledge digitally in an LMS
- Use your competencies across departments

### Examples from Learningbank: Knowledge sharing across functions and departments

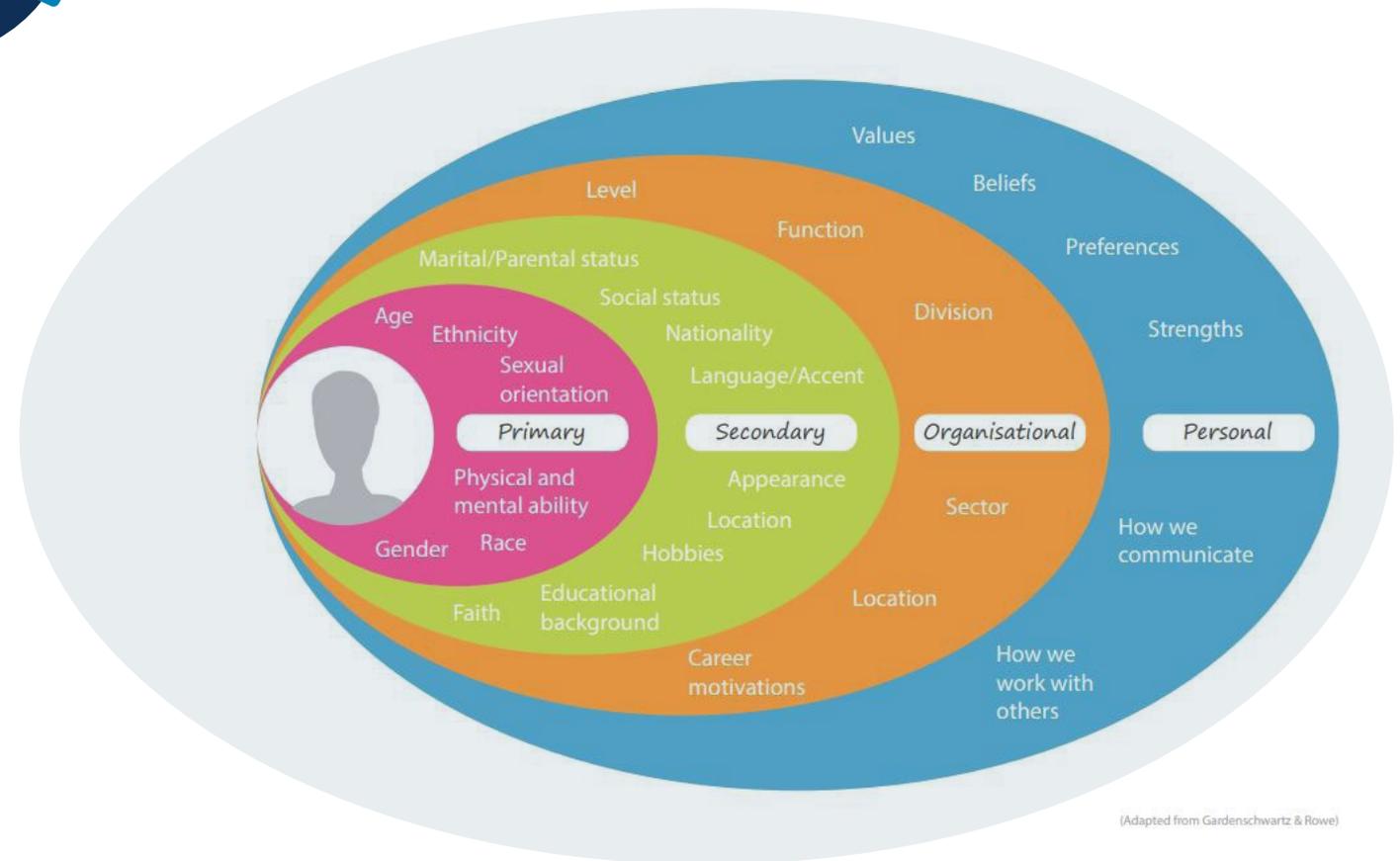
In Learningbank, we often work across departments in project groups to get more perspectives and use the variety of skills across the organisation. Here, a current example is to elevate our tone of voice from the marketing channels into our platform and internal/external communication as well. Here, we have people involved from both Marketing, Product, and Adoption to get a tone of voice everyone can see themselves flow from their tongue or fingertips. Maybe you can recognize how you work across too or have a similar example?

# Tips to Create more D&I at the (Remote) Workplace

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) enable successful organisations in a variety of ways: diverse organisations are more innovative, better at making decisions, and more profitable than their competitors (Insights' article: Inclusion is a competitive advantage). Post COVID-19 the workplace environment will be changed - probably forever - and it can be challenging to think of a way to maintain company culture remotely. However, now is not the time to cut back on investing in company culture and inclusivity (**Forbes, 2020**) and it seems like many global organisations are now going in the right direction. According to LinkedIn Learning Workplace Learning Report 2021 D&I programs are ranked #2 globally just after "leading through change" programs. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of L&D pros globally report they will deploy D&I programs in 2021.

We will now discover how you can continue building a strong inclusive culture and community in your remote organisation to break down silos and make it easier for employees to overcome barriers with connecting no matter if you have a full or partly remote workforce. Let's get into it!





## Levels of diversity

Let's look at the levels of diversity outlined in the model created by Gardenswartz and Rowe. In their interpretation, there are four levels of diversity.

- First are the primary dimensions, which include factors that are innate to the individual and, by and large, unlikely to alter, i.e., age, sex, physical abilities, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social origin
- In the next ring we have the secondary dimensions, which are about how individuals show up: appearance, income, location, education, habits, parental and marital status
- Third is the organisational diversity layer, which focuses on the factors that directly relate to work - the function or field the person works in, type of job they do and the department they work in, for example

Taken together, these three layers seem to give a fairly good indication of how diverse your workforce population might be; after all, you can segment the population by age, sex, ethnicity or social origin and either pat yourself on the back for a job well done or begin to craft a D&I policy that will help expand the range of voices in your organisation. However, many organisations stop their search for diversity right here, without reaching into the fourth and final layer of the model –

### **The Personal Dimensions**

This layer of the diversity model is the most often skipped when it comes to crafting an organisational approach to D&I. Personal style and individual preferences can't be so easily mapped onto a workforce matrix, and yet this is where the true richness can lie, if you are willing to access it, and embrace (or include) all the diversity that it offers. For example, you could have two people in a team with similar educational backgrounds, work experience, age, and income, and yet they'll come at a challenge from very different directions. One person may be willing to break the mold with a new and innovative solution, and one may find wisdom from what's gone before. One may be focused on making sure the rest of the team is happy, and one may prefer to focus on the task at hand.

“Gender and racially diverse teams perform better, innovate more and improve economic equality.”

– **Stephanie Lampkin**, founder and CEO of Blendoor, a company that uses AI and analytics to help companies remove unconscious biases and improve diversity

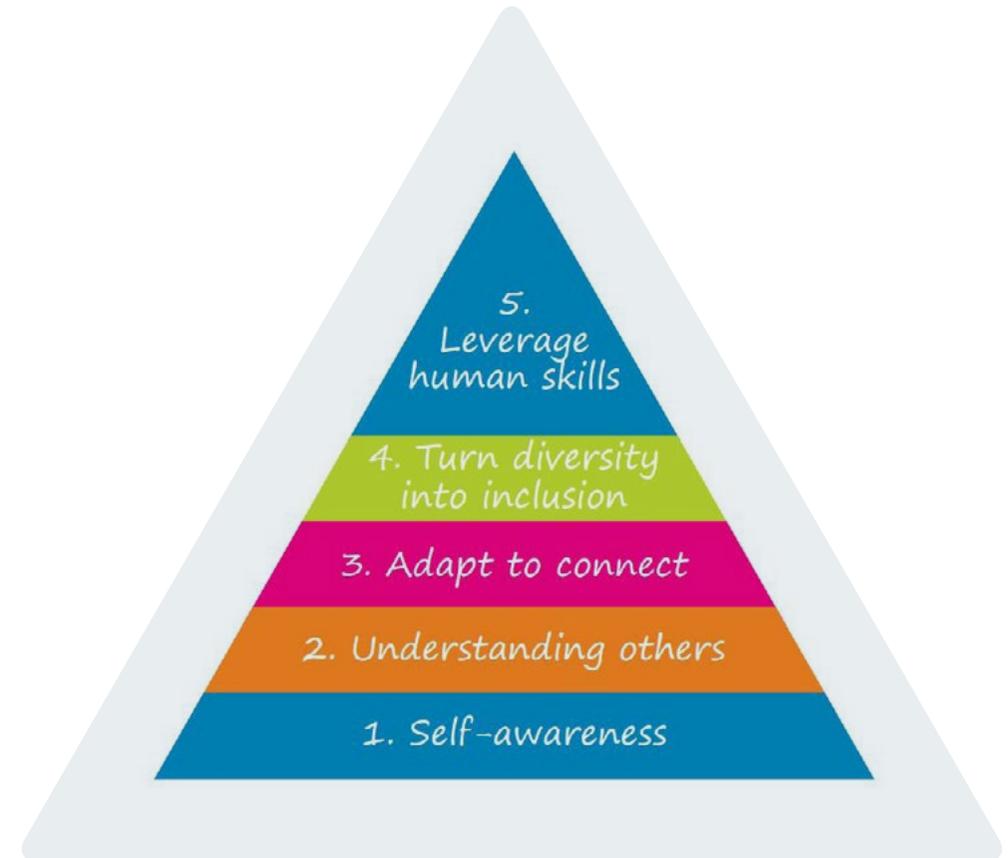
It is these real human differences which are the boon to innovation, teamwork, and profitability, but if you don't know how to mine for the gold that's hidden inside every single person in your organisation, you are never going to be able to leverage their full potential. The diversity already exists – it is up to the leaders of an organisation to take that wonderful variety and embed it into an inclusive culture.

But where do you begin? Let's look at the five steps HR-Managers can take to turn diversity into something truly inclusive in their teams.

### **1. Self-awareness is key**

In our work with global clients in Insights, we see the same result time and again: when you invest in your people, helping them increase their self-awareness and their awareness of how others like to work, the business benefits are massive.

When people can readily identify their strengths and the value they bring to their organisation, and likewise recognize how to address their weaknesses, they can bring their entire human self to the team, every single day. It is not just a business decision, it is a gift which leaders give their employees that helps them grow personally and profes-



nally, and it never ends. Self-aware people can be an organisation's best asset, and its competitive edge. Investing in people right at the beginning of their time with you is an investment you will reap the rewards of forever.



## 2. Understanding others

After self-awareness comes developing awareness of others, and then developing empathy for the space that lies between you. People who know themselves can also begin to understand that the perspective of everyone in the team is different: their lived experiences differ, their motivations, goals, and skillsets are different, how they approach problems and opportunities is different too. When people know that – and truly live and work in that knowledge – then their capacity for teamwork expands exponentially.

Teams where everyone acknowledges, with empathy, the strengths of others are super strong, and super productive. Conversations feel open and honest, communication problems ebb away, and people feel able to throw out their most innovative ideas in the certain knowledge that the team will catch them and be able to turn their idea into something real.

## 3. Adapt to connect

When a team (or an entire department or organisation) understands themselves and those around them, relationships become easier to handle, and much more productive. That is because they are able to do

what we call ‘adapting to connect’. In other words, people are operating from a place of real self-awareness and awareness of others, such that they can dynamically adapt their personal style in the moment, to better connect with the person in front of them. This is a major boost to the team culture, a way to build strong team relationships, and a strategy to keep conflict to a minimum and let harmony reign.

Adapting to connect is how fast and smart decisions are made, it is how problems are solved by those in the room, and it is how teams work more closely as one, adding substantial value to the organisation as a whole.

## 4. Turn diversity into inclusion

Your organisational D&I policy will be geared towards making sure that you bring together a workforce that holds within it many backgrounds, nationalities, qualifications, career experience, ages, sexes, races, and abilities. That is fantastic; it gives you a fighting chance at becoming more innovative, profitable, and getting higher quality work done faster. But it does not take you over the line. What will get you there is taking that culture of diversity and turning it into a culture of inclusion – and that means seeing, appreciating, and inviting every single personality to contribute.



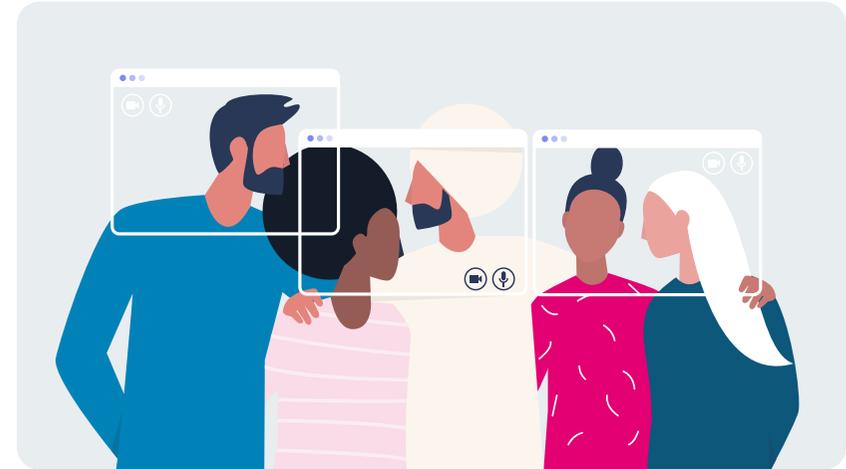
For there to be inclusion, leaders need to recognize the differences that exist in the workforce, and truly value them all, by letting the strengths of each person shine, in their own way. Successful corporate cultures are not created by leaders; instead, they grow organically, as a reflection of the human community that makes up the workforce. So don't try to impress upon your organisation, department, or team what the culture should be, let the culture flourish however it wants to, in a way that feels like everyone is inherently part of it. Leaders should surround themselves with people smarter than them, give them the tools to innovate, and then let them go ahead and do just that. That will take people of all kinds; dreamers, makers, team players, those with great project skills, design skills, empathy, listening skills, the ability to speak up in difficult situations, the will to push past what they thought was possible. We call these human skills, and they are core to every successful organisation we have ever worked alongside.

##### **5. Leverage those human skills**

The world is changing faster than it ever has, and yet slower than it ever will again. That's a tough time to be a leader in an organisation, no

matter your industry, your strategic savvy, or how experienced you are. No leader can claim to be truly equipped for the changes that we're all going to undergo in the next handful of decades. But what they can do is adopt an attitude towards disruption that says: people first. The technology that's coming is, without doubt, going to revolutionize much of our life and work, but technology is given power by the humans who operate it. You can't become industry leaders simply by investing in the same technology that all of your competitors are buying into as well; you have to leverage the investment you made in your people to truly edge ahead in a way that nobody else can replicate.

That means inviting in all the voices in your organisation, whether they're comfortable for you to hear or not, or whether they conform to the overriding culture or differ from it in unexpected ways. It's only by digging down into the boundless variety that all people hold within them, and which multiplies exponentially when they come together with a common purpose, that organisations can reap the real rewards of innovation, teamwork, and immense profitability.



### Tips to Create more D&I at the (Remote) Workplace:

- Anonymize resumes in a recruitment process. Look at name, age, and address - or choose to anonymize some of the elements. An example could be removing age from a resume at a workplace with a lot of young employees. Or removing the unconscious bias about women in their final 20s or start 30s who might need maternity leave at one point.
- Ask all candidates the same questions at a virtual job interview. Studies show that there is a tendency to ask men more open questions, and, on the contrary, women more closed questions. If you get the opportunity to speak more nuanced and elaborately, the likelihood of getting the job is greater. The world is not black and white or yes and no.
- Language: Whether it is a virtual meeting or a digital message practice to say 'chairperson' instead of 'chairman' if you are uncertain what gender the person has. The same goes when you must write

and describe. Here, you can instead mix the use of 'he' and 'she', instead of only typing 'he'. A more inclusive choice of wording is to use 'women' instead of 'girls'. The same goes for groups who often experience to be called 'minorities'. Instead, they prefer 'marginalized'.

- Use check-ins and check-outs in all virtual meetings to include everyone at the call. The check-in and check-out can be a single question, a quiz or anything that takes an action from the attendees at the meeting.
- It's a good way to have a small talk before hitting the agenda and it really fuels connection and brings light, humour and personality into the virtual meeting sphere where everyone can feel isolated and a bit on autopilot from time to time.
- Spend a virtual break with a co-worker you do not know well - yet. Be respectful about other ways of life, and maybe you get wiser yourself and expand your horizon?

- Update your policies. If you sit in a company where there are policies for almost all processes, such as recruitment, onboarding, etc., you should give them an extra look, and update them with regard to D&I - and let your employees know the policies are updated. Take it seriously and work with your culture. Policies that are not written down, but part of your everyday work life in your company can also contain bias and prejudice, so, think about how to change these to make everyone feel included.
- Acknowledge that you can and will fail in the process to create more diversity and inclusion. It is a 'two steps forward and one step back' process while you continuously learn to create more D&I at the workplace.
- Get the data to know your current D&I-status Be bold and ask your employees the tough questions, and not just the regular ones from the engagement survey. Value their opinions about how they actually feel about being at your company - also about how whether they feel included while working remotely. Find the pain points in your company that you are unaware of.

- Create **digital learning about D&I** for employees and managers, that creates awareness of prejudices, privileges, and biases in a gamified, engaging, learning environment, which can kickstart a new culture about diversity and inclusion in the remote workplace.
- See more tips and learn more about **the importance of D&I**



# Create a Sense of Belonging with a Healthy Virtual Feedback Culture

Everyone should feel included and involved. They should feel connected to their co-workers and teams. Connection is the biggest driver of belonging at a workplace (**Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends, 2020**) but how do you create connections when some members of the team or everyone is working remotely? As we talked about in the previous chapter about inclusion it is very much to do with turning diversity into something truly inclusive where employees are treating each other fairly and respectfully.

## The D4 model can be used no matter if you have teams working full or part time remotely

By bringing the awareness of consciously thinking feedback through, you will experience that your teams:

- Improve mutual respect among the team members
- courage to be vulnerable gets a stronger connection among your team members
- fostering stronger sense of belonging when you have teams working full or part time remote

A specific working area where this can be challenged is when you give and receive feedback from your colleagues.

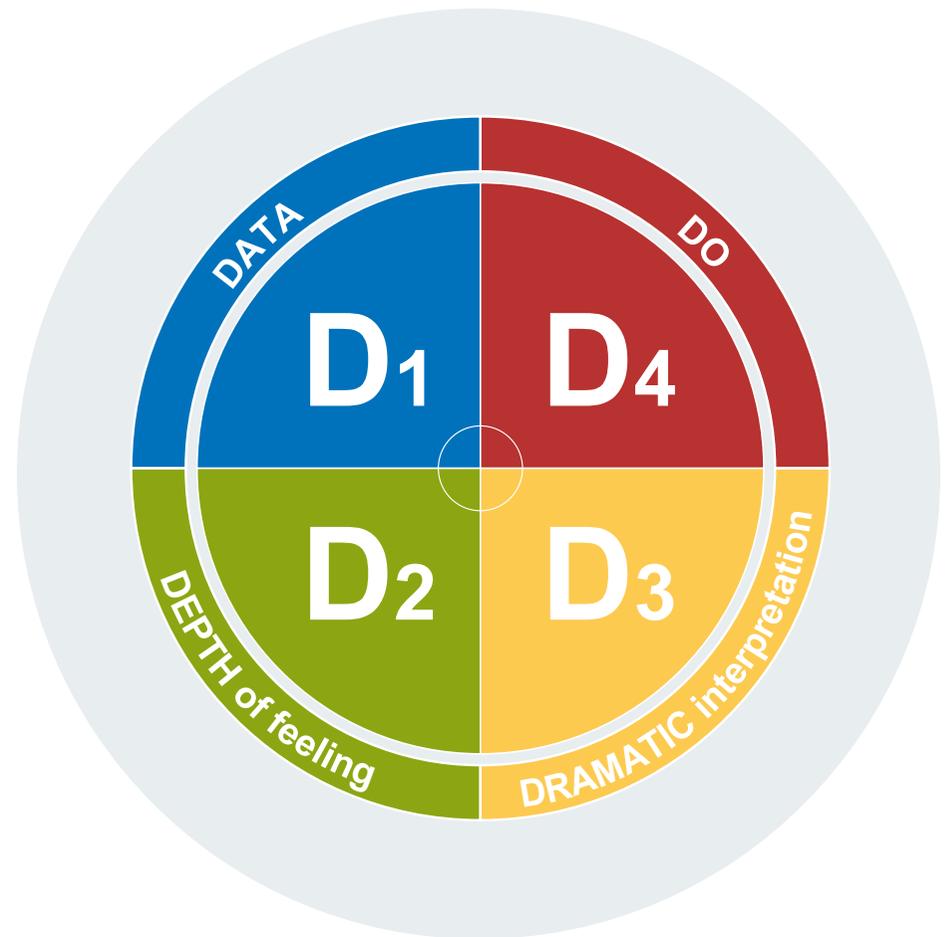
In this last chapter of the Teams section, we will tell you a little bit about how to create a healthy virtual feedback culture. It all comes down to a simple but powerful tool called the D4 Feedback model which intends to help your teams give more 'complete' feedback with the four Insights colours in mind.

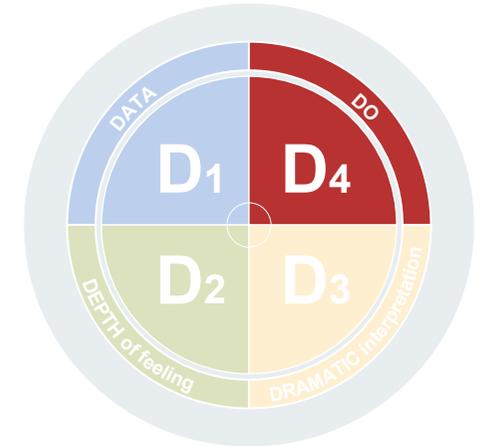
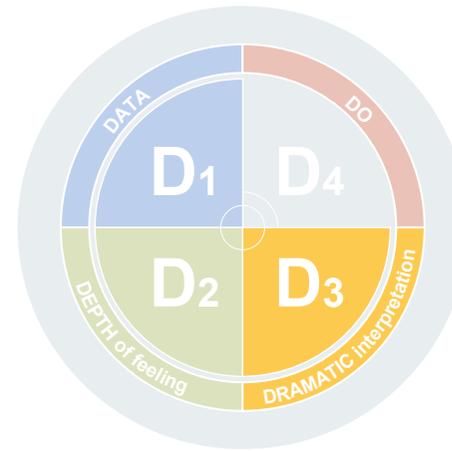
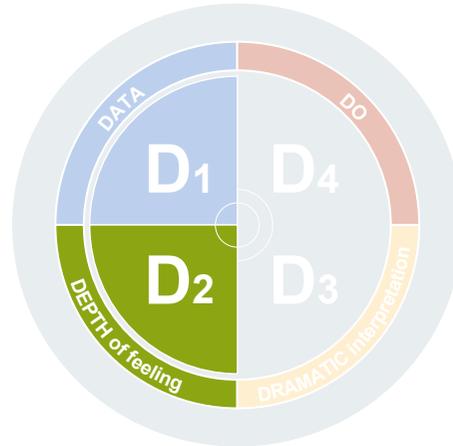
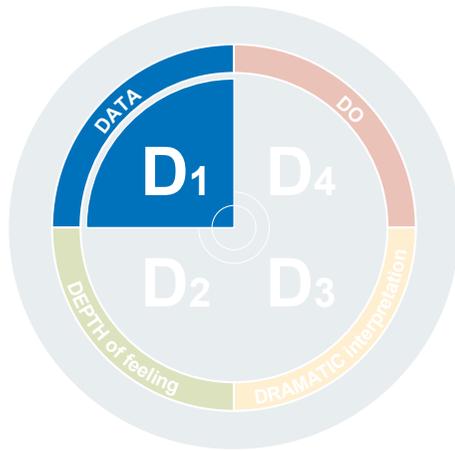
## Healthy virtual feedback culture

The sad truth is, most feedback, most of the time is ignored – it just does not ‘get in’. Many of us have been conditioned to ‘stand on our own two feet’ and ‘be independent’ especially during times like now where we have all been more isolated than we are used to not having that ‘small talk’; sharing ideas and feedback with your office mates. Many of us now behave more as if we are the ‘lone ranger’ – attempting to do everything by ourselves and always on a quest with no time for feedback.

The ‘D4’ model of Insights is a data-based feedback model designed to maximize the chance that the feedback is ‘let in’. To ultimately change behaviour and create a healthy (virtual) feedback culture, we need to use all of our four Insights colour energies in giving and receiving feedback.

The D4 model is easy to use and above all, it is practical. when you become ‘unconsciously competent’ using the model, it will be a guiding framework and you will use the energies intuitively in the order that you think is best given the context.





First, let's take a look at what each of the four-color energies look like by themselves when it comes to giving and receiving feedback'

**Step 1. DATA - Cool Blue Feedback**

The first D stands for Data.

- What are the facts?
- What actually happened?

**Step 2. DEPTH OF FEELING - Earth Green Feedback**

The second D stands for Depth of feeling

- How does it make you feel?
- How did the event affect you?

**Step 3. DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION - Sunshine Yellow**

D3 is the Dramatic interpretation.

- How do you interpret the situation?
- How does it seem to you?
- What meaning do you give it?

**Step 4. DO - Fiery Red Feedback**

The fourth D stands for Do.

- What is needed? What needs to be done?
- What are you going to do?
- And what do you want the other person to do?

## The 'Traditional' Way to Give Feedback

We often give feedback using the colour energies we either prefer to use or using the colour energies the culture of your team/ organisation finds acceptable.

### *Example:*

*Imagine that a colleague is late for a (virtual) meeting – the third time this has happened in recent weeks. Everybody in the meeting is annoyed and there is a need to give some feedback to your colleague. Traditionally, feedback from four different people may reflect their four different dominant colour energy preferences.*

### **Cool Blue – Caroline**

In the meeting Carol continues with the agenda that she sent out one week in advance. The meeting had started bang on time. In the break Carol speaks to the colleague in private and says “You were 15 minutes late today. Last time you were 10 minutes late and the time before 30 minutes late. We needed to re-jig the agenda to cope with your absence.”

### **Earth Green – Erik**

Makes eye contact with them as they walk in and looks at his watch. Calmly he says “We all waited for you before we started. I have to say, I feel annoyed. You have taken my time and that of others in the meeting. This is a frustrating situation to be in.”

### **Sunshine Yellow – Susan**

“Hey there, great to see you. We have only just started – please catch up. I was imagining something dreadful had happened with you being so late, or maybe you just can't get out of bed in time! Anyway – let's all get going”.

### **Fiery Red – Frank**

As the colleague enters the room to join the meeting, Frank looks up and says “You're late again – you must stop doing this. Get in here, sit down and join the meeting now. And don't be late next time”.

Now let's use the 'D4' model and see what the given feedback may have looked like in the example if all four energies had been used in turn.



### Step 1

#### **DATA - Cool Blue Feedback**

In the break, we speak to the colleague and say “You were 15 minutes late today. Last time you were 10 minutes late and the time before 30 minutes late. We needed to re-jig the agenda to cope with your absence.”

### Step 2

#### **DEPTH OF FEELING – Earth Green Feedback**

We then go on to say, “I want you to know I feel very annoyed you were late. I noticed other people in the room appeared agitated too. When my time is taken like this, my frustration wells up. I want you to know how irritating this is for me.”

### Step 3

#### **DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION– Sunshine Yellow Feedback**

We then add: “I was making the fact that you were late mean all sorts of things. I was imagining something dreadful had happened to you. I don’t know if any of them are true or not, but I was wondering if you respect the people in the meeting? It can be disrespectful to waste people’s time. Your tardiness also made me assume that you are a disorganized person.

### Step 4

#### **DO – Fiery Red Feedback**

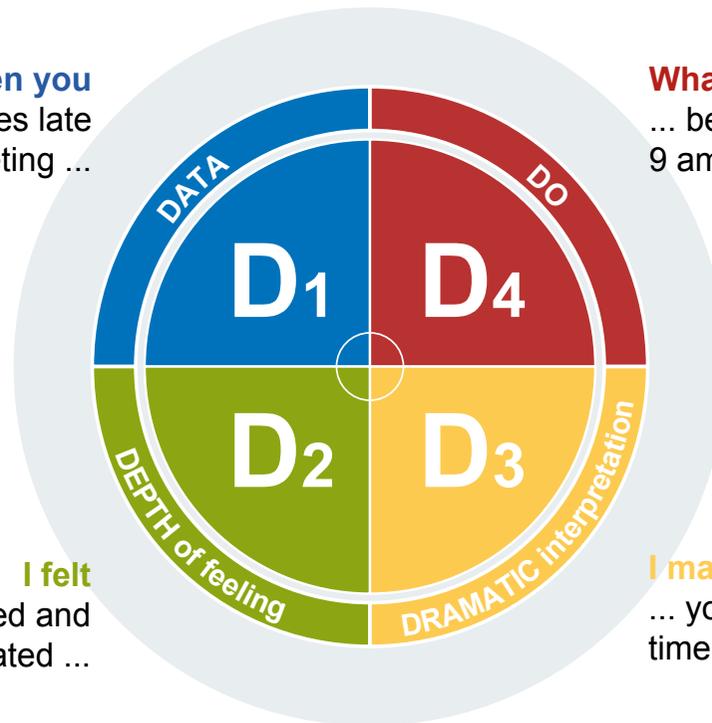
And finally, ending with your Fiery Red energy, you may say: “I want you to promise to me that you will be on time or early for the next meeting. It’s at 9 am tomorrow morning. Will you be able to make that commitment for me?”

The D4 Feedback model: gives 'complete' feedback with the four Insights colours.

The Insights wheel is perfectly balanced and a symbol of ‘wholeness’. If we go round the wheel and touch on all four energies, our feedback will be more complete and ‘whole’.

To do this requires distilling the components of our feedback into the four colour energies. Often feedback comes to us intuitively and we may not have consciously thought it through. However, systematically working around the ‘D4’ model and expressing the feedback using each of the four colour energies in turn can improve the quality of the feedback dramatically.

**When you**  
... were 15 minutes late  
for today's meeting ...



**I felt**  
... annoyed and  
frustrated ...

**What I want you to do is**  
... be on time for tomorrow's  
9 am meeting start.

**I made it mean**  
... you don't care about my  
time and are disorganised.

**Spontaneous 'D4' Feedback in a virtual meeting**

In a virtual environment we know that meetings can be very tightly scheduled during a day and therefore you might need to have a 'quick-er tool' to support you in giving feedback.

The 'D4' model can also be used to give very quick and spontaneous feedback for instance in a virtual meeting. The act of starting the first sentence with a phrase that puts you in touch with each of the colour energies in turn, is sufficient to balance the feedback.

Working with our example earlier, this would look like:

When you ... were 15 minutes late for today's meeting

I felt ... annoyed and frustrated

I made it mean ... you don't care about my time and you are disorganized

What I want you to do is ... be on time for tomorrow's 9am meeting



## The 5 Stages To 'Landing' Feedback

We can consider that our feedback has only 'landed' with the other person when they have fully heard it AND are prepared to act based on it. People may react differently to acknowledging and developmental feedback. It is likely that developmental feedback may evoke a stronger defensive response. There are five stages to go through before feedback can be said to have 'landed':

**Denial** – do we actually 'let it in'

**Anger** – with the feedback provider or with themselves – this anger can also be an expression of a 'suppressed fear' in the individual

**Rationalization** – seeking to justify and 'explain away'

**Acceptance** – really, really 'letting in' the feedback

**New learning and behaviour change** - they 'take action' and the feedback 'lands'

Often with acknowledging feedback, the five stages are cycled through in seconds. However, sometimes, people with low self-esteem get stuck in denial over acknowledging feedback and cannot 'let it in'.

### Two types of feedback:

1. Acknowledging feedback – given to acknowledge appreciation of a particular action or behaviour
2. Developmental feedback – given to correct or bring attention to a particular action or behaviour that has been found inappropriate



### **Why Does Feedback Fail to Land?**

If our self-concept is inconsistent with receiving acknowledgment, some positive feedback will never get past denial.

If we don't value the opinion of the person giving the feedback, it will be 'water off a duck's back'.

If the feedback given to us was 'emotionally charged' we will tend to get stuck at the anger stage.

If feedback is not given at the right time or in the right context it may not 'land'.

If the deliverer of the feedback is not skilled and has not been trained in the use of a model such as 'D4', we may not 'hear' their points.

### **Top 3 Tips in Giving Feedback**

Use "I" statements and always "own" the feedback you are giving.

Always leave the recipient with the choice of acting on your recommendation (or not!)

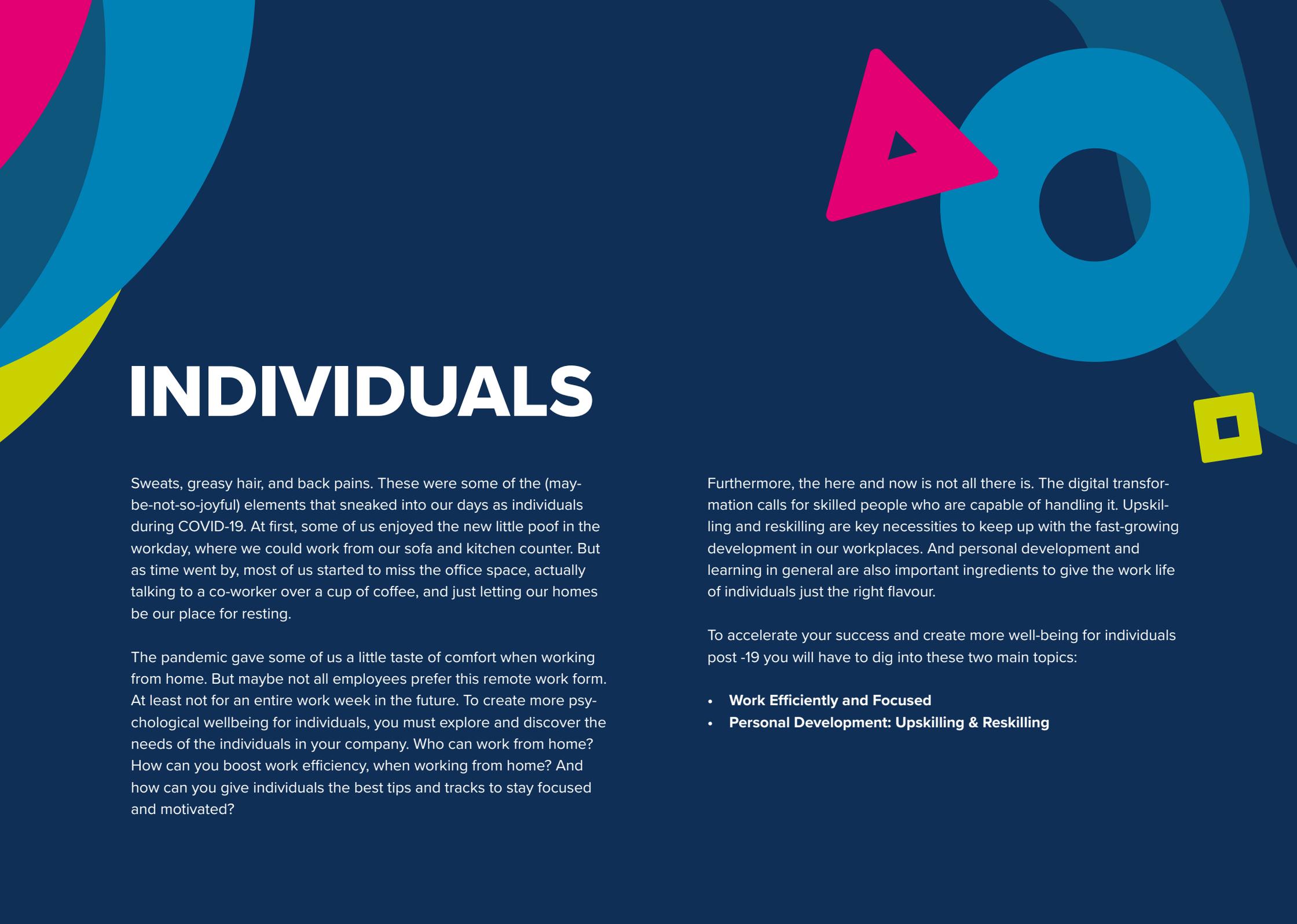
A great question to ask before you give feedback is "MAY I GIVE YOU SOME FEEDBACK?". If you have asked for permission and the answer is yes, the other person is prepared and more open. Be aware, if they say "NO" and you are giving the feedback for their benefit, you may need to withhold the feedback. If you are giving the feedback for your benefit, you may decide to give it to them anyway and explain to them you are giving the feedback for your benefit. Never ever, give feedback just to 'make yourself feel better'.

### **Top 3 Tips in Receiving Feedback**

Always say something like 'thank you for the feedback' when anybody gives you feedback.

Listen and decide that you are 'open to feedback'. Remember, 'all feedback is a gift'

Decide that you will not react defensively to feedback.

The background features abstract geometric shapes in shades of blue, pink, and yellow. A large blue circle is prominent on the right side, with a smaller pink triangle and a yellow square nearby. The overall design is modern and vibrant.

# INDIVIDUALS

Sweats, greasy hair, and back pains. These were some of the (maybe-not-so-joyful) elements that sneaked into our days as individuals during COVID-19. At first, some of us enjoyed the new little poof in the workday, where we could work from our sofa and kitchen counter. But as time went by, most of us started to miss the office space, actually talking to a co-worker over a cup of coffee, and just letting our homes be our place for resting.

The pandemic gave some of us a little taste of comfort when working from home. But maybe not all employees prefer this remote work form. At least not for an entire work week in the future. To create more psychological wellbeing for individuals, you must explore and discover the needs of the individuals in your company. Who can work from home? How can you boost work efficiency, when working from home? And how can you give individuals the best tips and tracks to stay focused and motivated?

Furthermore, the here and now is not all there is. The digital transformation calls for skilled people who are capable of handling it. Upskilling and reskilling are key necessities to keep up with the fast-growing development in our workplaces. And personal development and learning in general are also important ingredients to give the work life of individuals just the right flavour.

To accelerate your success and create more well-being for individuals post -19 you will have to dig into these two main topics:

- **Work Efficiently and Focused**
- **Personal Development: Upskilling & Reskilling**

# Work Efficiently and Focused

## Tips to Work Efficiently from Home

Possibly the biggest shift for everyone throughout this pandemic has been the change around the idea of working from home. This is an enormous shift, with people embracing the move away from a more traditional office-based set-up and towards more flexible working patterns.

It can be difficult to work from home, especially when work and spare time melt together. Moreover, home is usually the place you relax, and that is why you easily get the feeling that you should not work at all.



## Ten Tips to Create an Efficient Home Office

1. Make a dedicated workspace - preferably one where you can shut the door and dirty dishes are out of sight
2. Put on your 'uniform' - wear the clothes you typically would wear in the office. PJs and sweatpants are associated with time off.
3. Set specific work hours - and stick to them. In this way you enjoy your time off with good conscience.
4. Make a to-do-list - it creates an overview of the daily tasks, and it feels good when they are ticked off



5. Limit distractions - close your social media tabs, shut the TV, and do not start a beeping washing machine
6. Check-in with your colleagues virtually for the sake of your social life and efficiency too. Remember to book specific meetings for the social part of work
7. Eat lunch away from your workspace. A focused and efficient brain needs breaks too.
8. Get some air. Take a walk and refresh your brain with a break.
9. “Go home”. When your workday is done, move away from your workstation and shut everything down. Out of sight, out of mind.
10. Get physical - both in terms of physical activity and giving your kid, spouse, or roommate an extra hug. Stay close at home.

### People Want to Work More from Home

A recent study from the Danish Union, Djøf, shows that people want to work more from home, but maybe not in the way you might think. So, maybe it is time to think about even more flexible work forms to keep up the employee engagement. The stats go:

	How often do you want to work from home in the future?	How often did you work from home before the Corona-shut-down in Denmark the 12th of March 2020?
All Days	1 %	2 %
1-2 days a week	52 %	12 %
3-4 days a week	11 %	2 %
1-3 times a month	24 %	28 %
More rarely	7 %	34 %
Never	3 %	20 %



## Methods to Reach your Goals with no Distractions

Focus is important to reach your goals and finish up a task before a deadline. This sends out a great satisfaction to you and is a motivation-booster to your work life. However, in our digital age there are many distractions keeping us away from focus and therefore, the great satisfaction of completing a (difficult) task. The distractions make our brain practice bad habits, instead of the good that keeps us in focus. But fortunately, there are more methods and tips to get your brain back on track and bring the focus back to your workday.

### Smaller Projects - Pomodoro

Pomodoro is the Italian word for tomato, which might not make a lot of sense to you when thinking of gaining more focus. But maybe, if you think about a little tomato-timer, which you might have used before your smartphone when you had to boil an egg once. The Pomodoro technique is created by Francesco Cirillo and designed to boost your focus on one simple task only by splitting the task into time slots of 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break, and then working on the task for 25 minutes again. At the time, you are working on the task, you

must not check your mail or let yourself get interrupted by co-workers or yourself by, for example, picking up your smartphone and checking Instagram. A lot of smaller apps, for example, the sound app Noisli, have already implemented the Pomodoro technique in their software. Noisli is an app where you can mix up different sounds to boost focus, and by using their Pomodoro feature, the sounds will slowly volume down after 25 minutes, meaning that now it is time for a break. The Pomodoro technique is great to use when you have to finish up smaller projects, but larger ones as too, if you practice well.

In Learningbank we are currently trying out the Pomodoro technique on a larger scale in our office. Here, selected employees have received their own timer which turns red, when the particular employee is in focus mode. The red light means that the rest of the co-workers must not interrupt the employee in the focus mode. This is a way to limit distractions during a workday.

### Big Projects - 3-3-6-3

The Danish freelance PR consultant Pernille Garde Abildgaard has developed a method to maintain focus and reach your goals. It is called

the 3-3-6-3 method but can easily be replaced with some other numbers based on your needs. The method means that she spends 3 morning hours, 3 days a week for 6 months minimum to achieve a goal, for example, writing a book. In the time slot blocked to research and write the book she has 3 rules: no phone, no mail, and no exceptions.

By following this method and planning the time slots according to the 6-month deadline, you can as an individual, get a homerun when closing a big project. And especially, limiting the distractions of our digital, modern world can be extremely valuable.

## The Distractions

### The Inbox

Most people agree that mails are an efficient and amazing tool to get a lot of our tasks done during our workday. But it is also a major distraction when we must be focused and spend brain power on important work. And with a lot of distractions, the less satisfying our workday will be, if we never really complete the tasks we are set to do.



But it isn't easy: According to an investigation from McKinsey (2012) every employee spends on average 25 % of their time checking and writing mails. Newer reports say that we check our mail 72 times a day. We already stated it - mails are an efficient tool, but do we really need to check it so many times a day? A way to become more focused is reducing your time spent on mails. A tip here, can be to only check your mail two times a day, for example, at 8.30 in the morning and at 13.30 in the afternoon, or some other time slot that suits your schedule. In this way, you will free more time to focus on your tasks and time to give your brain a break. If you are in a position, where urgent matters need action from your hand, you can put in an autoreply around the mail-checking slots where you put in your phone number if something important comes up.

### The Smartphone

Another major distraction is your smartphone, and you probably let yourself get distracted by it the second you wake up. Let's illustrate: If you use your phone as an alarm clock, it is easy to check mails, Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, you name it - and be running late, just

because you used your phone as an alarm clock. Over breakfast you can once again check all the apps, and there might come an important mail from your boss in your mailbox, which you will think about, and mark as unread, because you actually don't have the time to answer right now. And this is even before you leave for work.

Evolution moves slow, meaning that our brains are still directed to just wake up after a long night of sleep - and not checking multiple applications and start working immediately. This is a bad habit, where you use your brain resources in the wrong way.

### **The Screen Habit**

Gloria Mark is a Professor at The Department of Informatics at the University of California, and in 2006 she explored how long we can be focused and how often we get interrupted during our workday. Back then we were interrupted after working for 2 minutes and 11 seconds, and in 44 % of cases we interrupted ourselves. Gloria Mark's research was updated in 2016 focusing on work where screens were used, whether it was a smartphone, computer, or other device. Here, we were only capable of being focused for 40 seconds at a time, when we

worked on screens. This indicates that we must be even more aware of the distractions that keep us away from staying focused. If it is a habit that you let apps, mails, and other software light up on our screens and bring us out of focus, you must take a trip to the notification centre first thing and turn the notifications off to slowly get rid of the habit. And it takes time to learn the brain new processes and get rid of bad habits, so, even though you have turned off notifications, your brain still might interrupt your focus (because it is used to this) and find another distraction. Maybe your phone is lying next to you and your laptop, and even though it is turned off and facing down, it can be a major distraction. **Research shows** that having a smartphone within sight reduces a person's ability to focus because part of their brain actively works on not to pick up or use the phone. So, put simple, if you want to become more focused, keep your smartphone away from your workstation.

### **Multitasking**

Multitasking or task-switching are other distractions that drain your brain power. It is a myth that doing more tasks at the same time is a way of being more efficient in your daily work. When your brain must split its power to the different tasks you are doing, it also has to reduce

its attention to the tasks, meaning the tasks are done less efficiently. And you want to do quality work and not just the bare minimum, right? In fact, you actually miss out on doing quality work and the delight of finishing up a difficult task, when you try to multitask your way to it. You raise the bar for yourself when you not just fiddle around between small tasks, and instead immerse yourself into a harder, more challenging task. The satisfaction is way greater.

Your brain is changeable. With new habits such as shutting down your mail and stopping multitasking you can come a long way to avoid brain drain and get your mind into shape. And you can also do multiple exercises to train your brain to be even more focused. Use the pomodoro or 3-3-6-6 method to build up your brain power or start practicing meditation or mindfulness to increase your performance. Furthermore, you can ask your manager for, for example, memorizing exercises or find more focus exercises yourself to boost your mind.



### **Sum-up Tips to Avoid Digital Distractions:**

- Turn off notifications
- Check mails on specific times of day, for example, 8.30 in the morning and 13.30 in the afternoon, and shut down your mail software the rest of the day
- Do not put your smartphone next to you. Preferably, you should keep it out of the room you are working in
- Don't multitask - Multitasking is for computer brains not human brains
- Think of your mind as a muscle - it needs training too. Ask your manager for focus exercises or find them yourselves to get your brain into shape and be more efficient in your daily work

# Personal Development and Learning: Upskilling & Reskilling

A true motivation booster that can secure a greater sense of psychological well-being is learning something new. Both because it is fun and thrilling to use new skills to do the daily tasks more efficiently, and it can breathe life into a potentially dull work situation. And this can lead to a stronger retention of employees. But turning up employees' skill levels and keeping them up to date is also a great way to ensure that your company can take on future challenges - and these will definitely occur post COVID-19.

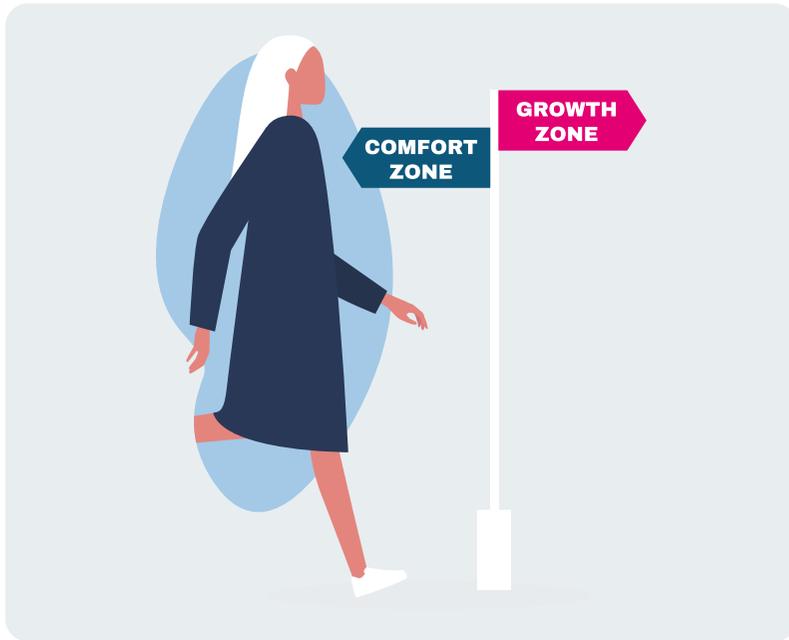
## A Great Investment

We know that people are more interested in their own development than ever before. And according to Gallup, an impressive 87% of millennials rate “professional or career growth and development opportunities” as important to them in a job. And **94% of employees** would stay longer if companies invested in their development. So why aren't we investing in all our people?

Maybe it's time to think about what the message is when we only invest in our top tier of people – especially within the context of the world we're living in. When we first went into lockdown last March we did initially under the guise of 'we're all in it together'. However, it didn't take long for that to unravel. There were those who were considered key workers and those that weren't. Those who were able to work from home and those who couldn't. Those who had access to the furlough scheme and those that did not. And that's just scratching the surface. As we edge towards the other side of the pandemic, we do not need learning to be another thing to divide us.

## The Learning Participation Gap

However, as it currently stands, it is. According to LinkedIn Learning's 2020 report there is already a participation gap between employees and managers in learning and development – with managers being much more engaged – and only 27% of CEOs actively inviting their



employees to take advantage of learning resources. And that's not all. According to LinkedIn Learning data, managers spend 30% more time learning soft skills than the average learner. From this perspective, learning and development seems to be very much the realm of managers and leadership teams. Read more about soft skills for managers in the [previous chapter](#).

Shouldn't learning and development be for everyone? And not just for the sake of it, but to ensure that our organisations, and people, are robustly equipped to deal with whatever the next big crisis is? If we take a look at another [survey](#), it reports that 55% of CEOs say that the availability of key skills is a blocker to being able to innovate effectively.

It seems that CEOs are concerned about their workforce having the skills to be able to roll with the punches... yet they do not actively encourage learning for their people. In a world where we have to be increasingly nimble, where we have to flex, adapt, and anticipate, failing to prioritize learning and development across the whole of an organisation feels like a bit of a misstep. And if you fail to invest in your people, they will largely vote with their feet – and leave.

So how does that democratization of learning look in the real world? First, it has to be accessible to your workforce. A huge percentage of the workforce are deskless workers, but not all content is designed for mobile learning. That seems a bit off, right? If we want learning to be something that the entire organisation can take part in, it needs to be available to everyone – and easily slotted into their work pattern. More about that in the later chapter about [microlearning](#).

At the moment there's a disconnect between what we know we should be doing... and what we're actually doing. However, all the evidence supports that the best way to create a competitive advantage for your organisation is to enable accessible learning and development opportunities for everyone. As well as being key to future-proofing your business, it's also critical for attracting, developing, and retaining the best people. In a world where people have higher expectations for their employers than ever, if businesses do not prioritize learning, they are the ones who lose.



## How to Reskill & Upskill the Workforce

A lot of Nordic organisations have already embraced the need for upskilling and reskilling to adapt to future needs. In fact, 42.3 percent see it as their biggest priority according to Learningbank's **Nordic Learning Trends Report 2020**. And the reasons are plenty. One, for example, is that you as a HR-Manager, will probably look into upskilling and reskilling **60 % of your workforce over the next two to five years**. Especially, when the current average half-life of a skill is just five years. This means that **1 billion jobs** will need to be reconfigured over the next ten years.

Secondly, automation of jobs removes certain job positions, and because of this fact, reskilling into new positions is important to keep employees and inhouse-know-how.

Maybe you've already read how to upskill managers [Design: Link til 'Upskilling Managers']. And if you read this guide from A to Z, you just got some of the reasons why upskilling and reskilling is both good to adapt to future work life and to create greater well-being for individuals. As a last point, before moving to the how-to's, it is also delightful to have

in mind that acquiring new skills can boost new motivation into the work for individuals. Especially when you learn something new, that is also beneficial for the workplace, which makes you even more indispensable.

## Reskilling

Reskilling is when you learn new skills for a different job function within the same company, whereas reskilling's sister **upskilling**, which we will talk about in the next chapter, is learning new skills within the same job function.

**The World Economic Forum** anticipates that 75 million jobs get displaced by 2022 in 20 major economies. Underlining the extra importance of reskilling, when we do not talk exclusively about creating more psychological well-being.

But even though **74 percent** say that reskilling is important or very important for their organisation's success within the next 12-18 months, only 10 percent are ready to address it.



Furthermore, 61 percent in Deloitte's Human Capital Trends (2019) mark that they find it challenging to find the right qualified experienced hires today, and that it takes an average of 42 days to fill an open job.

The numbers speak for themselves. We should have started reskilling yesterday. For good reasons: Reskilling is often cheaper and needs fewer resources. It can be done for as little as one-sixth the cost of hiring an external candidate, according to Deloitte's Human Capital Trends. A bonus is that you keep a lot of inhouse-knowledge within your business by reskilling an internal hire. A person who is already familiar with your business culture and do's and don'ts.

### The How to Reskill Guide in 4 Steps

It can seem overwhelming for an employee to jump into a completely different job function. Unless they are ready for new challenges and maybe has evolved new skills that could be useful in another role. Here are 4 tips to smoothen out the process and reskill the workforce of tomorrow:

#### 1. Discover Strengths and Weaknesses

Map out what core strengths the employees possess and weaknesses too. At the same time, find out what direction they want to move in, in regard to their career goals, and connect it to the jobs that needs re-skilling. Do not see this as an annual check-in but see it as an ongoing process.

#### 2. Connect New Skills with Company Goals

Show employees how they can succeed in a new role and how their new and current skills come in-hand. Align their aspirations with company goals and connect the employee to the new skills needed to achieve success - for both the employee and the company.

#### 3. Boost Learning Initiatives in the Flow of Work

Digital learning is great to provide employees with new skills to maintain a new job function. Especially **microlearning** (which we will look more into in a later chapter) and **stretched learning** are amazing tools to upgrade employees' skills during their workday. Stretched learning, for example, lets employees reflect upon the learning and has only one

or two learning goals for each learning activity. In this way, digital learning will not seem too overwhelming for the employee, as if they are assigned to loads of new learning modules to learn a new skill. Some learning platforms can boost this process with ease, assigning specific learning modules for specific employees at the right time.

#### 4. Make Learning Available

As mentioned, the learning can be boosted in the flow of work. But, at the same time, it should be available when it suits the employee to do the learning. Do not lock the learning modules away in a specific folder. Hidden, unless you spend several clicks to find it. Instead, make sure the learning is available on all devices - laptop, smartphone, and tablet - and at any time of day.

### Upskilling

When reskilling is about moving into another job function, upskilling is about getting new skills to boost performance and achieve success in a current role.

But on a global scale, only one in five employees mention they have the skills they need for their current roles and future careers. Furthermore, **70 percent** say they have not even mastered the skills they need for their jobs today. On a macro level, **19 percent** of skills will be irrelevant in 3 years.



Upskilling is the solution to the problem, and at the same time a challenge to tackle. So, how do we upskill the modern workforce?

Employees are busy. Period. That's why learning in the flow of work is crucial to build a modern workforce with the right skills. Digital learning content types as microlearning are helpful when you create learning for busy employees with a tight schedule. We will dive more into **micro-learning** in a later chapter.

Furthermore, creating a strong **learning culture**, that we mentioned previously, is also a great idea to grow an environment where upskilling and adapting to future needs becomes piece of cake.



## Skills and Success

Another solution to the upskilling challenge is connecting learners to the skills they need to succeed in their role. The time is up for the traditional fumbling through the pages of a course catalogue to find something that might seem interesting to learn – both for L&Ds and HR, but also for the learners themselves.

Take learning seriously and find the meaning behind the learning and **modern employee development**. If an employee learns something they cannot use in the organisation, they might go somewhere else to do so. Upskill and create learning content for employees that relates to your organisation's mission and vision to tackle the challenges of tomorrow. This is meaningful for both the employee and the organisation. Learning and development is no longer a one-way street, however. It takes twists, turns, and roundabouts for your employees to grow and become ready for the future of work.

One thing is sure: it never stays still.

**Blended** – and **Social** learning, **knowledge sharing**, and going **from classroom training** to digital learning are all tools and learning types you can dive into and get more inspiration to create a strong learning culture.

### How to Tackle the Upskilling Challenge – In short:

- Look into digital types of learning content as Just-in-time learning and Micro learning to improve your learning program
- Connect learners to the skills they need to succeed in their role – for the benefit of the learner and the organisation
- Create a strong learning culture with knowledge sharing and the use of blended – and social learning – in a digital setting as well

### Microlearning - Flexible Content for the Future Employee

Digital transformation is upon us. Especially, when we look at what we have learned from the global pandemic. And this is a good thing, because new software and digital tools give us the opportunity to optimize our work flow and manage our tasks with more ease. But, at

the same time, this releases time for new, exciting tasks to do, and we often jump head-first, here and now, without any thought for the future. And when will time ever come to actually learn, develop, upskill, and be ready for the future changes at your workplace? Here, microlearning can be the solution.

### What Is Microlearning?

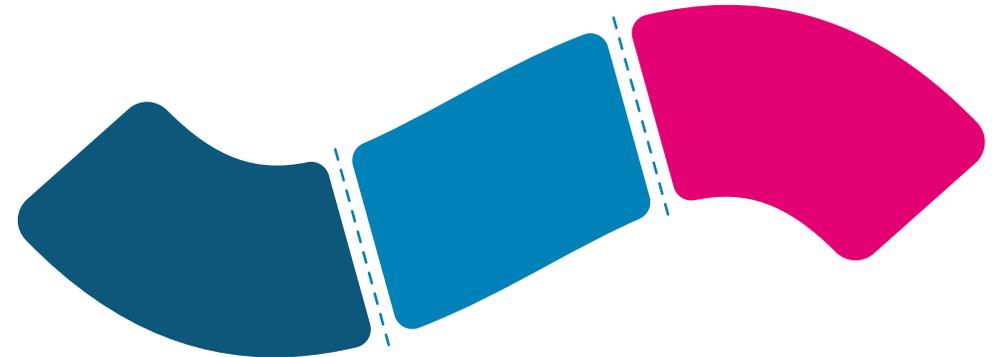
Microlearning is a strategy where you split the learning content into smaller bites. Typically, no longer than 3-5 minutes. It is important to make the learning content short and concise to fit a tight schedule. An example of microlearning could be a quick brush-up quiz with a few questions and answers to engage the learner.

### Examples - Types of Microlearning Content

Just because microlearning is short, concise types of learning, it does not mean that it should be dull. Be creative when you build your microlearning content. Context is important, but do not waste time on text content only.

Examples - Microlearning content:

- Video presentations in pre - and onboarding learning paths
- Brush-up quizzes
- Interactive drag and drop question setups
- Sound bites
- How-to videos
- Puzzles



### Flexible Content - in many Cases

We've already talked about terms as pre - and onboarding [Design: Link til Pre - og onboarding-kapitel]. This is no coincidence, because microlearning can be used in many different learning contexts, and not only when you need to develop a new skill.

### Pre - and Onboarding

Let's begin with the pre - and onboarding example, where microlearning can come in handy. When you are a brand-new employee, you still often grasp all your new tasks, the work culture, and the names of your colleagues. In this case, you do not want to get loaded with a huge pile of information about, for example GDPR, company mission, and history. This information can instead be packed as microlearning content in a playful digital format, where the new employee can take a step at a time, and really focus on each type of information.

This is a motivation booster, both in a preboarding setting where the microlearning content taps into the excitement of getting started at the new job, and in an onboarding setting where the flexible content gives the employee the time to learn, breathe, and really grasp all the new.

### Up - and Reskilling

We've already mentioned this maybe 10 times now, but even so, this is one of the greatest takeaways from this guide: In these ever-changing times up - and reskilling is very important.

However, it can seem stressful to learn something new, and still at the corner of the eye see daily tasks piling up and the inbox count increase. Here, microlearning content can also be a great help, because microlearning can easily fit into a tight schedule when you have to up – or reskill an employee. The thrill of learning something new will rise, with the right planning and stretching of the microlearning content. And there will still be time left to do the daily tasks. No stress in sight.

A good idea is to make the microlearning accessible on all devices, for example, work laptop, smartphone, and tablet. Making the content fit outside the regular working schedule too.

### IT Security

How to be aware of IT security at the home office **97 % of Danish CEOs** point at the cyber threat as a concern, and when 75 % of all cyber breaches and hacker attacks are due to employees' risky behaviour, looking into this area might be a good idea. Employees are an easy target for cyber criminals, and that is why IT security self-defence is extremely important - both at the workplace and home office.

**Tips to IT self-defence at home:**

- Be alert and aware of fishing - Countless fake emails, websites, and text messages are circling
- Check thoroughly for spelling mistakes, wrong domain names, and sincerity.
- Do not click any suspicious links or attachments.
- Do not give any sensitive information over mail or the phone if you do not know the caller.
- Only use tools and communication channels from your workplace and avoid using unknown WIFI's.
- Create strong passwords - and switch them often
- Secure your data and devices
- Update your phone and computer often to prevent hackers from finding holes in your software
- When in doubt - Ask or get help



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