RESILIENCE FOR THRIVING TEAMS

Use this guide to build resilience in your one-on-one and group leadership interactions at work.

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Resilience @ Work

In times of disruption, resilience isn't just a nice-to-have—it's essential.

As uncertainty becomes the norm, well-being and employee experience are critical to retaining talent, maintaining productivity, and unlocking real success. But resilience doesn't happen by chance. It starts with creating a safe space where individuals feel safe to ask questions or raise sometimes difficult issues.

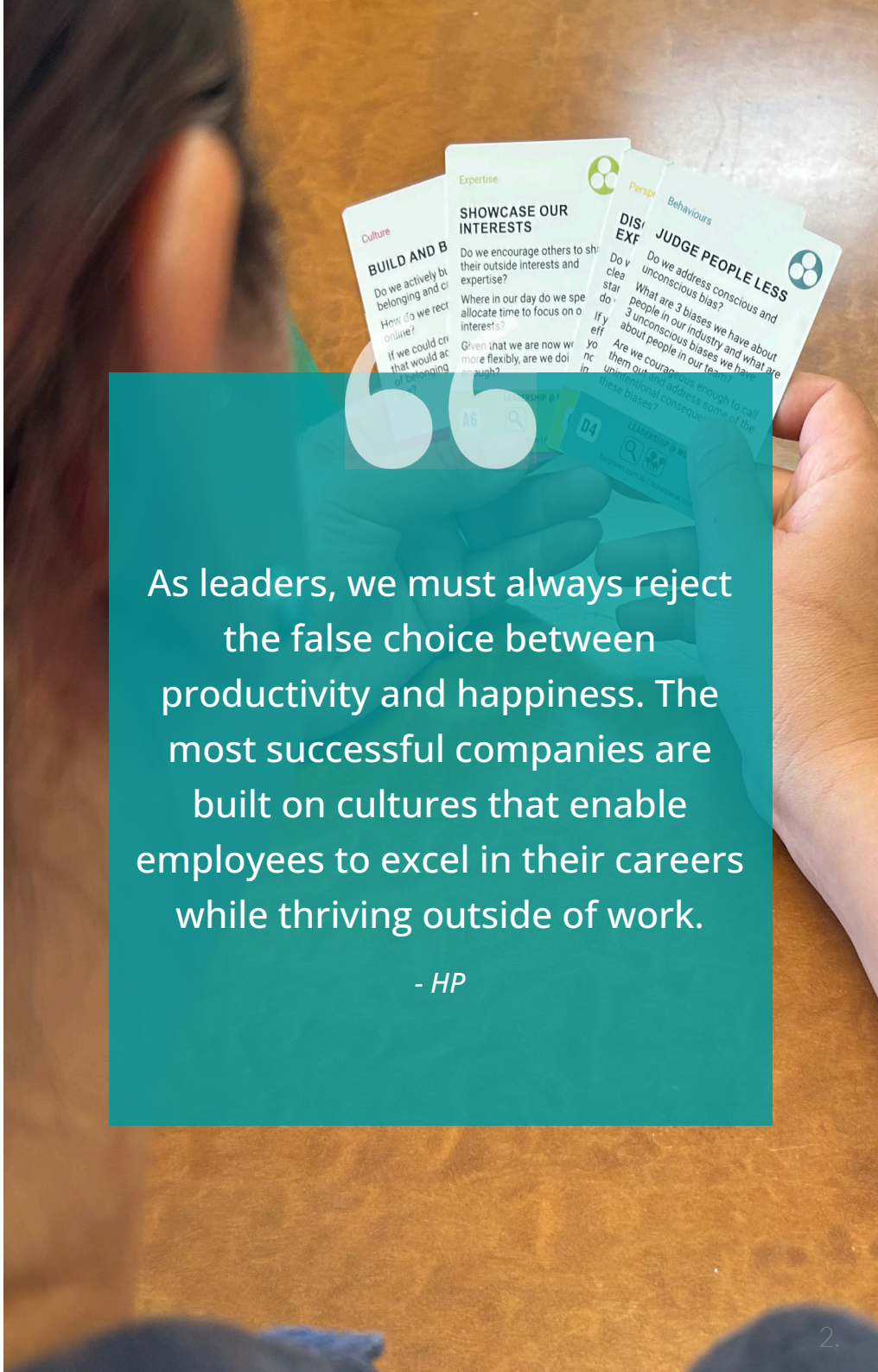
And while expectations keep rising, many managers and mid-level leaders feel the strain. As [Enboarder] notes, they often struggle to *"provide enough human connection for their direct report(s) and/or team."*

Rebuilding trust, relationships, and psychological safety takes more than good intentions—it takes deliberate action.

This toolkit offers simple, practical tools to help you reconnect with your team, one conversation at a time. Start by bringing your team together. Listen. Talk. Discover what each person needs to truly thrive.

This Toolkit combines the collective wisdom of leaders and experts with Hargraves' powerful Question Tools and People-First Approach.

Designed for practical use, it helps leaders and managers create a safe, supportive environment where individuals and teams can ask the right questions, focus on what matters most, and align on clear actions and outcomes.



> As leaders, we must always reject the false choice between productivity and happiness. The most successful companies are built on cultures that enable employees to excel in their careers while thriving outside of work.
>
> *- HP*

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Foundations of Our Approach

Starting conversations with a blank page is difficult. Often, we don't know how to start or what to say. Or we may feel uncomfortable raising a sensitive issue, at times unable to find the right words or pinpoint the problem.

That's why our approach starts with a range of open questions. Acting as prompts, these questions give people the words and permission to raise sometimes difficult issues, or ask tricky questions which may reveal unconscious issues. And being open-ended and positive, the questions work towards improvements and solutions.

THE POWER OF **QUESTIONS**

The 5th century BC Greek philosopher, Socrates, was the first to understand the power of good questions for learning and problem-solving. The question-first process draws out and examines what is already known, before making connections to new questions which lead to different insights.

Questions change the mindset; they stretch and challenge. Instead of asking for barriers, they ask how to overcome barriers. Instead of asking for known solutions, they prompt you to consider the unknown unknowns.

THE POWER OF **STARTING CONVERSATIONS**

Coming to a consensus can be challenging if people aren't in the right mindset for change. Our process helps everyone prepare both mentally and physically for change, to (re)set their goals and start the next phase of growth.

Using our approach (QTools or cards), even the most difficult questions can be posed safely and respectfully and in good faith. And the tools can be referred to over and over again as things continuously evolve in our brave and sometimes not-so-brave world.

THE POWER OF **CHOOSING**

Choosing one or two questions from a QTool or set of cards forces you to evaluate options and decide what matters most. It requires you to open your mind and think deeply to explore what you want to change. But it also takes mental energy, so we use a structure and categories.

The act of choosing from a set of questions opens up possibilities and frames them in a way that makes it easier to select and prioritise.

Resilience@Work QTool

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Use this Question Tool as a framework to help you pose conversations and identify areas to improve.

EXPERTISE	BELIEF	PERSPECTIVES	BEHAVIOURS	CULTURE	ACTION	RELATIONSHIPS	INFRASTRUCTURE
The team has expertise and a willingness to learn new skills	**Finding purpose in day-to-day work and aligning with personal values**	**Seeing other points of view and being open to new ideas**	**Managing emotions and behaviours to achieve long term goals**	**The team has shared purpose, values and identity**	**Proactively doing what is necessary and changing course when required**	**Team members work well together and have healthy connections with others**	**The team has the infrastructure & resources needed to be agile & responsive to change**
COMPETENCY How can we learn quickly and effectively to build team skills as needed?	**PURPOSE** How can I ensure I understand and support my team's purpose and my role within it?	**OPENNESS** How can I be more open to new ways of doing and thinking?	**ENERGY** How can I boost my energy levels throughout the day?	**IDENTITY** How can we ensure all team members can describe our identity and purpose?	**INITIATIVE** How can I identify what is doable - and do it quickly and well?	**INCLUSIVENESS** How can we make every team member feel that they belong?	**TECHNOLOGY & PROCESS** How can we ensure team systems & processes enable us to achieve our goals or change course when needed?
ANTICIPATION How can we anticipate challenges and risks?	**DIRECTION** How can I ensure the goals and expectations of myself and others are realistic and constructive?	**EMPATHY** How can I better understand the lived experiences of others and recognise they may differ from mine?	**CARE** How can I ensure that I care for myself and others in moments of stress?	**TRUST** How can we build trust as a team so we all feel safe to take risks and speak our truth?	**PROBLEM-SOLVING** How can I think, plan and solve problems in an organised way?	**SUPPORTIVE** How can we ensure team members feel supported, particularly when under stress?	**RESOURCES** How can we ensure we have the resources to be productive and flexible?
NEW TOOLS & METHODS How can we discover and try new technology and practices to be ready for change?	**VULNERABILITY** How can I reach out for support and seek help from others when I need it?	**FOCUS** How can I focus on the things within my control and let go of those outside my control?	**CONNECTION** How can I balance talking and listening when participating in conversations, meetings and other interactions?	**DIVERSITY** How can we be open to and get value from our differing viewpoints?	**CHANGE** How can I ensure I am able to course-correct when needed?	**AUTHENTICITY** How can we strengthen relationships between co-workers?	**TEAM WELLBEING** How can we ensure our systems and culture promote a productive and healthy lifestyle for all team members?
COLLABORATION How can we ensure all team members know what is to be done and what their role is?	**FORGIVENESS** How can I reasonably forgive myself and others when needed?	**FLEXIBILITY** How can I review and adjust my practices to include others in meetings and work interactions?	**PARTICIPATION** How can I positively contribute to activities, rituals and events that bring people together, virtually and in person?	**FAIRNESS** How can we ensure work and feedback are fairly allocated among the team?	**CONFIDENCE** How can I confidently contribute to situations requiring clear directions and actions?	**NEW RELATIONSHIPS** How can we ensure new team members are welcomed and feel valued?	**RESEARCH** How can we access the latest research and data to inform our work?
CURIOSITY How can we develop curiosity to find new information and ideas?	**LEARNING** How can I be confident in my skills and capabilities to fully contribute as needed?	**INQUIRY** How can I actively seek information, skills and perspectives to improve work outcomes?	**ROUTINES** How can I establish healthy routines that are both flexible and sustainable?	**AGILITY** How can we evaluate and adjust how we work and respond to change and challenges?	**PRIORITY MANAGEMENT** How can I get better at prioritising issues that need immediate action?	**TRANSPARENCY** How can we ensure all team members understand decisions and actions?	**NETWORKS** How can we plug into internal and external networks to get capacity, capability and insights?
IMPROVISATION How can we use existing skills and knowledge to improvise when faced with a challenge or setback?	**SELF-RELIANCE** How can I boost my self-belief, take responsibility, and learn from my mistakes?	**SELF-AWARENESS** How can I better understand my strengths and weaknesses and their impact on others?	**SELF-CONTROL** How can I manage my emotions to avoid getting overwhelmed, frustrated or hostile?	**INNOVATION** How can we adopt innovation and change quickly and effectively?	**SELF-CARE** How can I manage my work/life in a positive way to overcome stress?	**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT** How can we resolve conflict and differences respectfully?	**PRIORITIES** How can we better prioritise our work and stop activities those that are no longer important?

1. **Define the team you are referring to**. Quietly read each question and choose (tick) those you think are important. (Cross out any questions that aren't relevant.)
2. **Looking at the questions you've chosen**, circle those you think are most important right now. (If you do them well, these are your strengths.)
3. **As a team, discuss your choices.** Agree on 3 or 4 'most important' and think about actions you can take. Hint: to kick-start, look for quick wins.

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Team Activity

This activity uses the Resilience QTool and Design Thinking 'Double Diamond' model. Follow the process below to develop actions that lead to a positive shift through team learning.

1	**Discover**	Ask each team member to quietly read every question and choose (tick) all those they think are important for fostering a thriving, resilient team, in general.
2	**Define**	From their selection, ask each team member to circle the questions they think are most important to your team, right now. *Tip: If you do them well, these are your strengths.*
3	**Develop**	**In pairs,** compare and discuss your choices. Agree on 2 or 3 questions for your team to work on right now. Then, as a whole team, compare, discuss and agree on 3 or 4 'most important'.
4	**Deliver**	**As a team,** discuss and agree on actions you can take to address each of these 'most important'. Prioritise according to: a) we can do this now, b) we can do this over the longer term, and c) we can do this with support from the organisation. Write down the actions and ensure everyone gets a copy. Make a plan to follow-up. *Hint: to kick-start, look for quick wins.*

Note:

- We suggest you send the QTool to participants before the session so they can read the questions individually. This also highlights that your upcoming activity, whether online or in-person, will be different.
- On page 6, we have included the Action Template from our DECODE Process to help you plan actions and outcomes.
- Repeat this Activity at intervals to address emerging issues, maintain momentum and thrive.

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ACTION PLAN (from DECODE)

What actions are possible? Describe these actions.

Owners:	
Title:	
The problem is:	
Our solution is:	
The next steps are:	

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Further Reading

1. Explore our People-First Approach including Better Questions and DECODE.
2. The FLOW Guide to Meaningful Conversations includes research, tools and strategies for better conversations at work.

About Hargraves Institute

We empower leaders and teams to achieve sustainable growth and success.

As Australia's first innovation consultancy founded on community and collaboration, we leverage 20 years of research and experience to provide unique tools and a People-First Approach tailored to your specific needs.

In our experience, getting started is the hardest part. That's why our innovative strategy, delivered through coaching, training, and facilitation, focuses on four key pillars: individuals, processes, ideas, and collaboration. We'll guide you through those crucial first steps to build momentum.

Experience the Hargraves difference as we work with you to enhance team performance, strengthen relationships, and cultivate a diverse, high-performing culture—a culture that fosters innovation and effective strategy execution to deliver real results.

Are you ready to optimise teamwork, boost performance, and achieve sustainable growth?

Contact us today:

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