



# Psychological Safety Program Checklist for Franchise Systems

This checklist is designed to help franchise members, whether in start-up or mature stages, create a workplace environment where employees, franchisees, and stakeholders feel respected, valued, and safe to voice their ideas or concerns. These actionable steps reflect best practices for building psychological safety into your franchise system.

## 1. Learn the Basics of Psychological Safety

- ☐ Define it simply: Psychological safety means that people feel safe to speak up without fear of punishment or embarrassment.
- ☐ Read key resources: Start with free resources such as [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\)](#), [Government of Canada Psychological Health in the Workplace](#), or other reputable sources.
- ☐ Identify relevance: Think about how this concept applies to your daily franchise operations, such as team meetings or supplier negotiations.

## 2. Start with Leadership Commitment

- ☐ Hold a leadership meeting: Share a 5-minute summary of psychological safety and its benefits (e.g., better ideas, stronger teams).
- ☐ Ask leaders to commit: Request one specific action, such as asking for feedback during team meetings or acknowledging employee input.
- ☐ Set the tone: Remind leaders their behaviour is the model for the rest of the franchise system.

## 3. Assess Your Current Workplace

- ☐ Conduct a quick survey: Ask employees and franchisees, “Do you feel comfortable sharing your ideas here? Why or why not?”
- ☐ Observe meetings: Look for signs of fear, such as team members hesitating to speak or only certain voices dominating discussions.
- ☐ Identify areas for change: For example, if employees feel ignored in meetings, introduce a rule where everyone gets a turn to share.

## 4. Create a Simple Program Plan

- ☐ Set clear goals: For example, “By the next quarter, 80% of employees will feel comfortable raising concerns with their manager.”
- ☐ Draft a commitment statement: Write a one-sentence pledge (e.g., “Our company is committed to nurturing open, respectful communication.”).

- ☐ Plan small actions: Start with one change, such as biweekly check-ins to ask employees how they’re feeling at work.

## 5. Train Your Team

- ☐ Short, focused sessions: Schedule a 15-minute meeting to introduce the concept of psychological safety using everyday examples.
- ☐ Use real-life scenarios: Teach managers how to respond to employee feedback without dismissing or criticizing it.
- ☐ Share a resource: Provide a one-page guide with tips like “Ask open-ended questions” or “Thank employees for sharing their ideas.”

## 6. Make Immediate Changes

- ☐ Change meeting norms: Introduce a practice where everyone is invited to share one idea or concern during team meetings.
- ☐ Encourage feedback: Place a suggestion box (physical or digital) where employees can anonymously share concerns.
- ☐ Set up a ‘no interruption’ rule: Ensure all voices are heard during discussions without interruptions or dismissive comments.

## 7. Recognize and Refine

- ☐ Acknowledge participation: Publicly thank those who contribute ideas during meetings.
- ☐ Highlight successes: Share stories like “This policy change happened because of an employee suggestion.”
- ☐ Refine your approach: Use survey feedback to adjust strategies. For example, if anonymous suggestions increase participation, expand this option.