

Cultivating a culture of Psychological Safety in Engineering

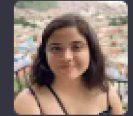
Raise your Hand 🖐️

**How many of you have felt
psychologically unsafe at work?**

REAL DEFINITION

What is Psychological Safety?

Let's ask ChatGPT



what is psychological safety



Psychological safety refers to a shared belief among members of a group or team that they can express themselves without fear of negative consequences, such as punishment, ridicule, or rejection. It is a concept that originates from research conducted by Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson.



In psychologically safe environments, individuals feel comfortable taking interpersonal risks, such as speaking up, asking questions, admitting mistakes, and sharing innovative ideas. They believe their opinions and contributions are valued and respected, regardless of their rank or status within the group.

Psychological Safety is the feeling and belief that you can share your thoughts/feelings, ideas and opinions without being punished for it...

2 goals for today's talk

**KNOW WHAT
PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY IS AND
ISN'T**



**TAKE AWAY KEY
ACTION STEPS**

HI, I'M ANKITA!



Ankita Kulkarni

Educator | Senior Engineering Leader |
Developer

bit.ly/refactorankita23

@kulkarniankita9

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I help developers level up their Engineering skills

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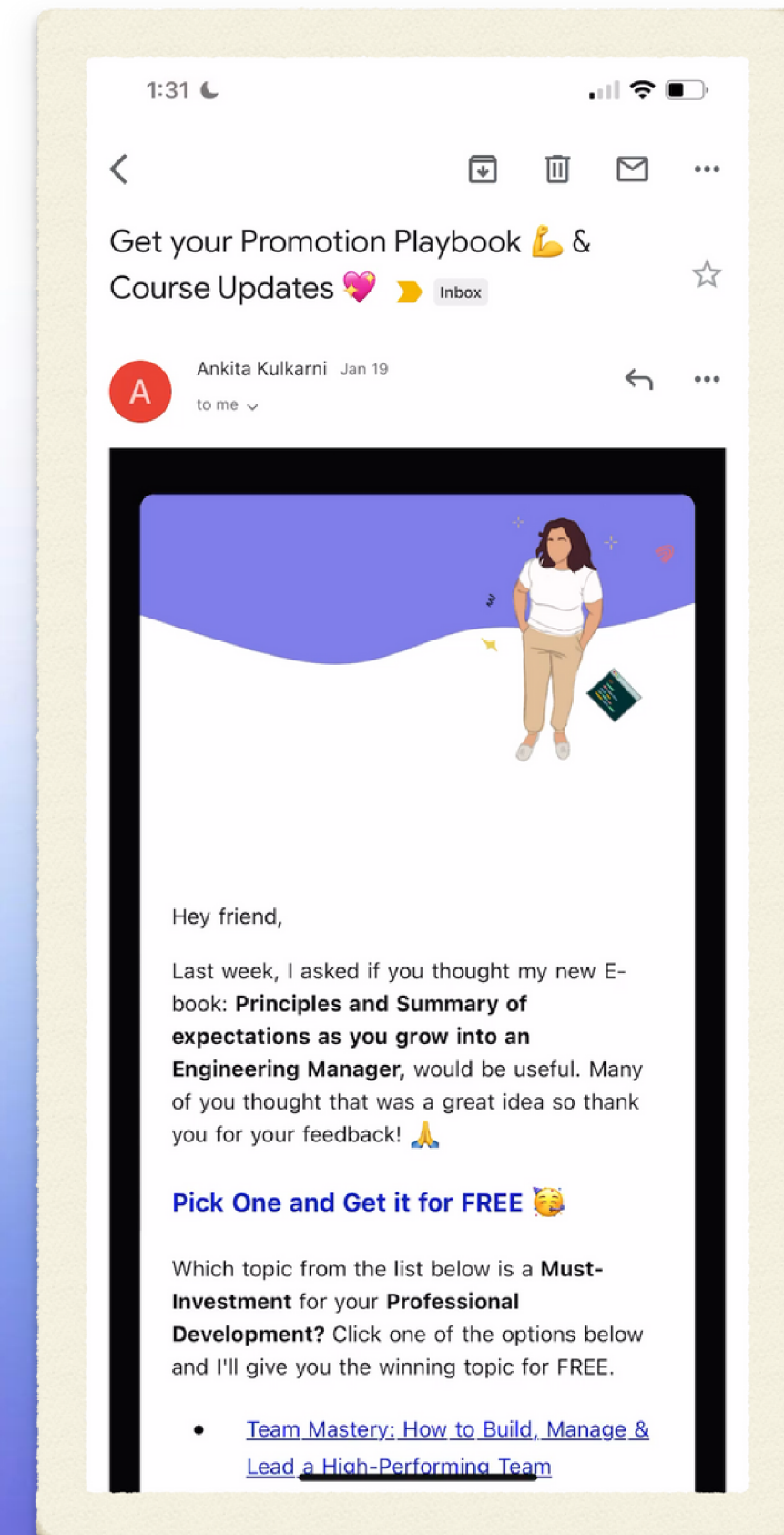
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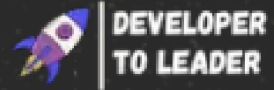
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COMMON MISCONCEPTION

We immediately assume that it is just the manager's job to create psychological safety

What is not Psychological safety? X

Some signs to watch out for

**Don't speak up and
aren't allowed to make mistakes**

**Get defensive when you make a
statement or ask questions**

Finger pointing & Blaming

Lack of diversity & inclusion

**When your team members
are not feeling safe 😞...**

STORY TIME

This was me...

THE ABSENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



LIZ FOSSLIE

Characteristics of a Psychologically Safe team

Always keep this checklist ✓ in your mind and review consistently if this is how you feel.



You don't feel afraid to make mistakes



You feel comfortable taking risks and picking up complex tasks



Your opinions are accounted for, and you feel a valued member of the team



You are appreciated for being your authentic self

FUN FACT

**I was happiest in the jobs where I
felt psychologically safe 😊**

In a Betterup Survey,

56% rise in productivity ↑

Company cultures with a high sense of belonging have seen a 56% increase in productivity and a 50% reduction in the risk of employee turnover.

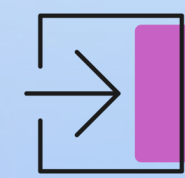
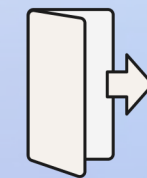
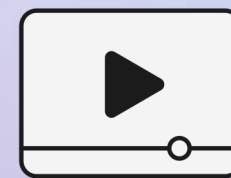
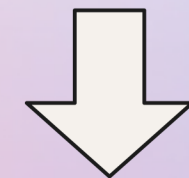
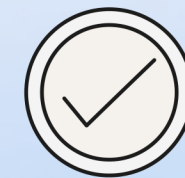
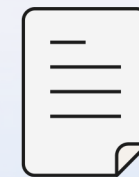
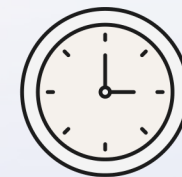
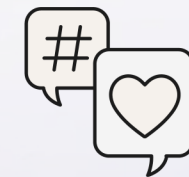
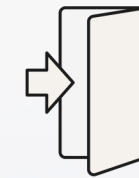
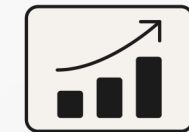
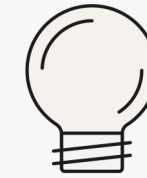
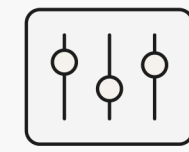
Effectively Leading Through a Crisis

Source: Better up

Company cultures with a high sense of belonging have seen a 56% increase in productivity and a 50% reduction in the risk of employee turnover.

Resource Page

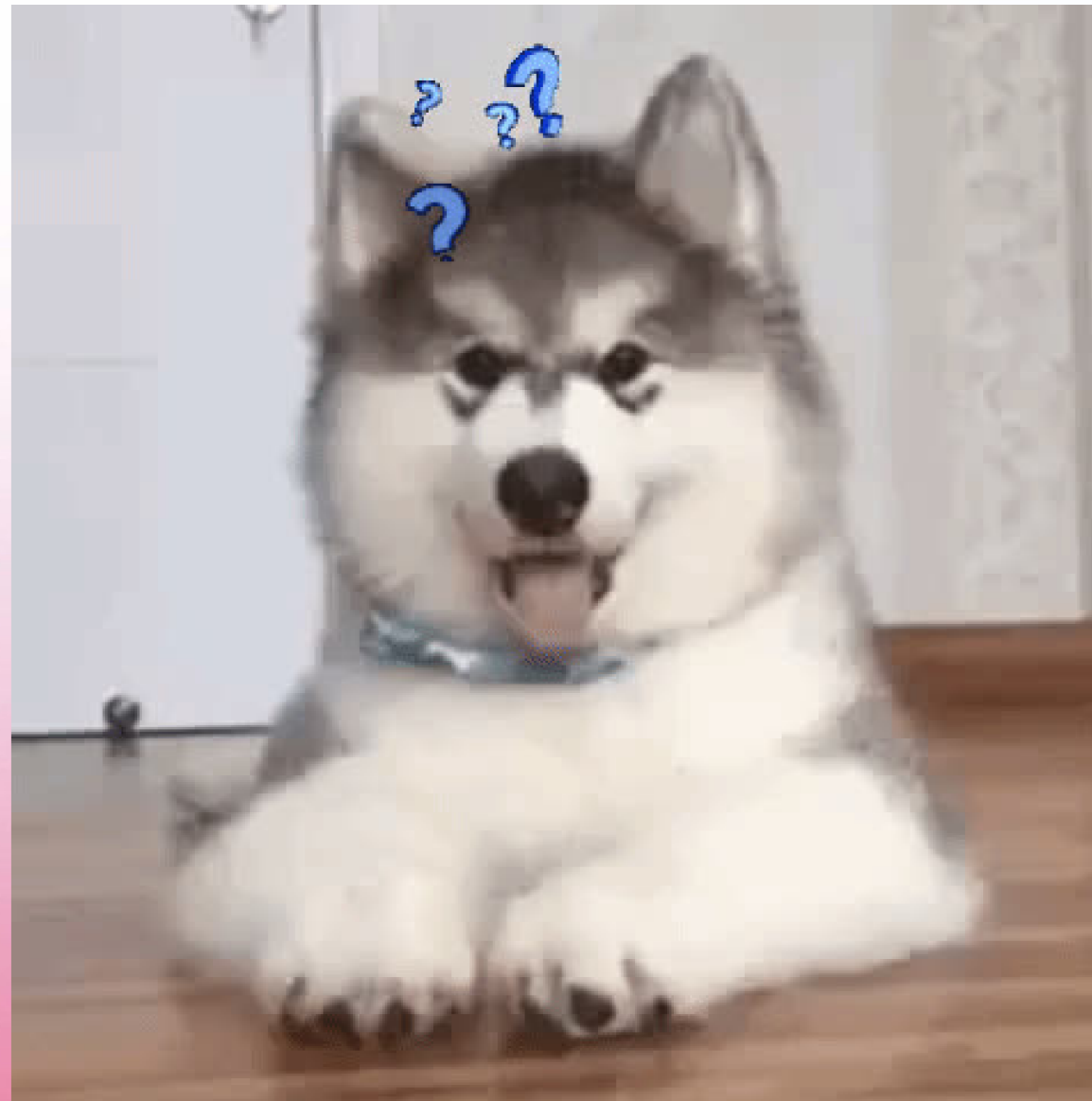
Use these elements in your Canva
Presentation. Happy designing!





Few practices you can follow

Ask Questions & Get Curious 🧐



Ask Questions & Get Curious

**ASK QUESTIONS
INSTEAD OF
STATEMENTS**

**ASSUME GOOD
INTENT**



**BRING IN
EVERYONE &
MAKE THEM
COMFORTABLE**

Create open space for making mistakes

01

Admit when you make mistakes

No one is perfect, let's work on a resolution now

02

Share Learnings instead of pointing fingers


That's not what we do

03

Show empathy

Curse of knowledge

Curse of Knowledge

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Post Mortem Learning Hour

Story time



Post Mortem Learning Hour

Story time

Allow the room to present ideas without facing the fear of being rejected or failure



Does your team(s) feel open to sharing ideas in meetings?



When you kick off a meeting, ask discussion-provoking questions.



If you are a lead, your job is to sit back and let the team chime in



Commend good ideas and not-so-good ideas



Don't shut down questions, get curious

Ask their opinion before presenting yours



When groupthink happens, an influential group member's opinion (in the comic above, the yellow lightbulb, A) may directly or indirectly squelch dissenting opinions (the green lightbulb, B) of others.

Ask their opinion before presenting yours

**GIVE SOMEONE
MORE JUNIOR TO
YOU A CHANCE
TO SPEAK UP**



**IF YOU HAVE A
STRONG OPINION,
ASK OTHERS FIRST**

Avoid passive-aggressive comments 

**Whether you know it or not, your
Psychological safety skill is to test when s***
hits the fan 😊**

Things you can do when emotions are high



walk away...

Things you can do when emotions are high

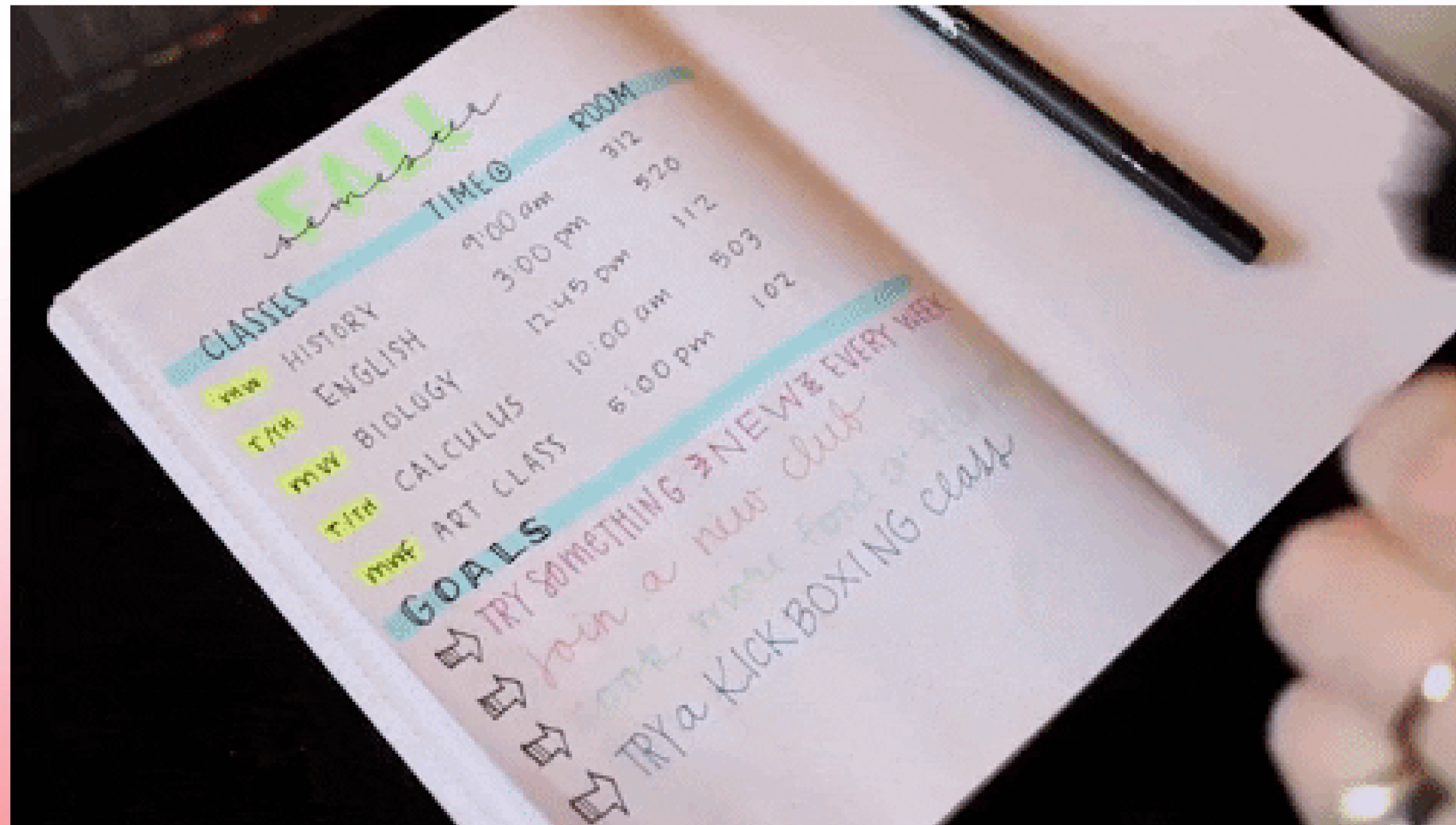
Be careful and avoid passive-aggressive comments ✕

Write down how you are feeling & journal your thoughts ✍️

I'm not asking you to create a Bullet journal



I'm not asking you to create a Bullet journal 😊



I'm not feeling good right now. I need sometime to think, is it okay if I get back to you in an hour?

COMMON MISTAKE

I don't know is a complete sentence

if you need time

**I believe it's $\lt\gt$, but I don't know
at this moment, but let me
confirm this and get back to you
after x meeting**

Be kind and transparent



FREE COURSE FOR REFACTOR CONFERENCE

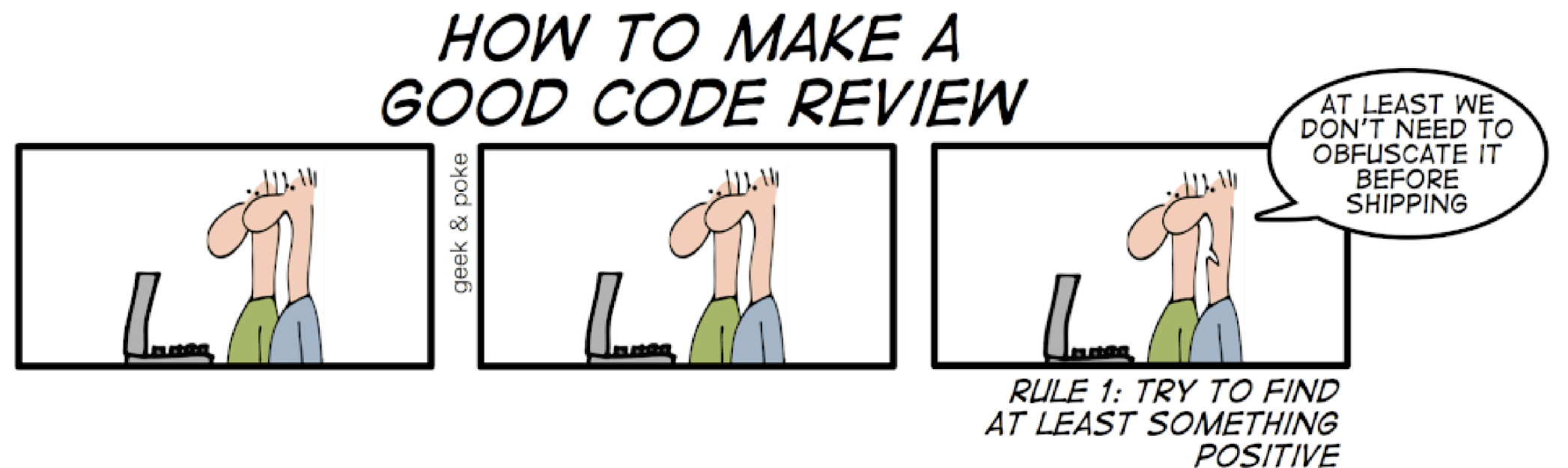
BUILDING SOLID FOUNDATIONS AS AN ENGINEERING LEADER



Slides and code snippets at:
bit.ly/refactorcourse

Foster a culture of collaboration and curiosity during Code Reviews

During CODE REVIEWS



Foster a culture of collaboration and curiosity during Code Reviews

During CODE REVIEWS



Avoid 'you', use 'we'



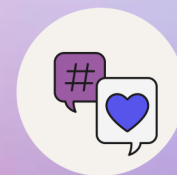
it is not your code or my code, it is our code



Ask questions instead of statements



Commend good ideas and not-so-good ideas



Don't shut down questions, get curious

Inclusive language during code reviews



JUST RENAME THIS FUNCTION

EXPLAIN WHY YOU DID THIS?

NOT SURE WHY YOU IMPLEMENTED IT THIS WAY



DO YOU THINK WE COULD RENAME THIS FUNCTION SINCE

CAN YOU PLEASE PROVIDE AN EXAMPLE OR CAN YOU PLEASE CLARIFY FURTHER? I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT COMPLETELY

WHAT WAS YOUR THOUGHT PROCESS FOR GOING FOR THIS SOLUTION? I ASK AS _<CONTEXT>_

Language Matters

Use Inclusive Language and these mini scripts



Amy Edmondson
@AmyCEdmondson



Mini-scripts for [#psychologicalsafety](#), Part 2. This time: how to say it when you're not the boss.

Psychological Safety: How to say it when you're not the boss

- Something's been troubling me. Do you have a few minutes to talk about it?
- Some of this is not good news. Is this an okay time to dig in?
- We've got some updates we'd like to run by you.
- I've hit a roadblock/I've got to go back to square one
- I mentioned the problem to the team and we've got some ideas.
- I've made a mistake and wanted to let you know right away.
- Our experiment didn't go as hoped.
- I need help figuring this out.
- There's been an uptick in X, and we can't explain it yet.
- What's the best procedure for getting input? Who should I approach?
- How much detail do you like to hear?
- I need another pair of eyes on this. Do you have a minute/hour/day to look at it?
- I don't feel right about this. Can we pause and take a closer look?

ALT

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6:10 AM · Nov 10, 2021

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MAGIC SAUCE

**Learn the recipe to running
inclusive meetings**

Recipe for Inclusive Meetings

<>



Agenda is shared beforehand



Let them know if they should present & expectations



Don't exclude people. Keep an open invite

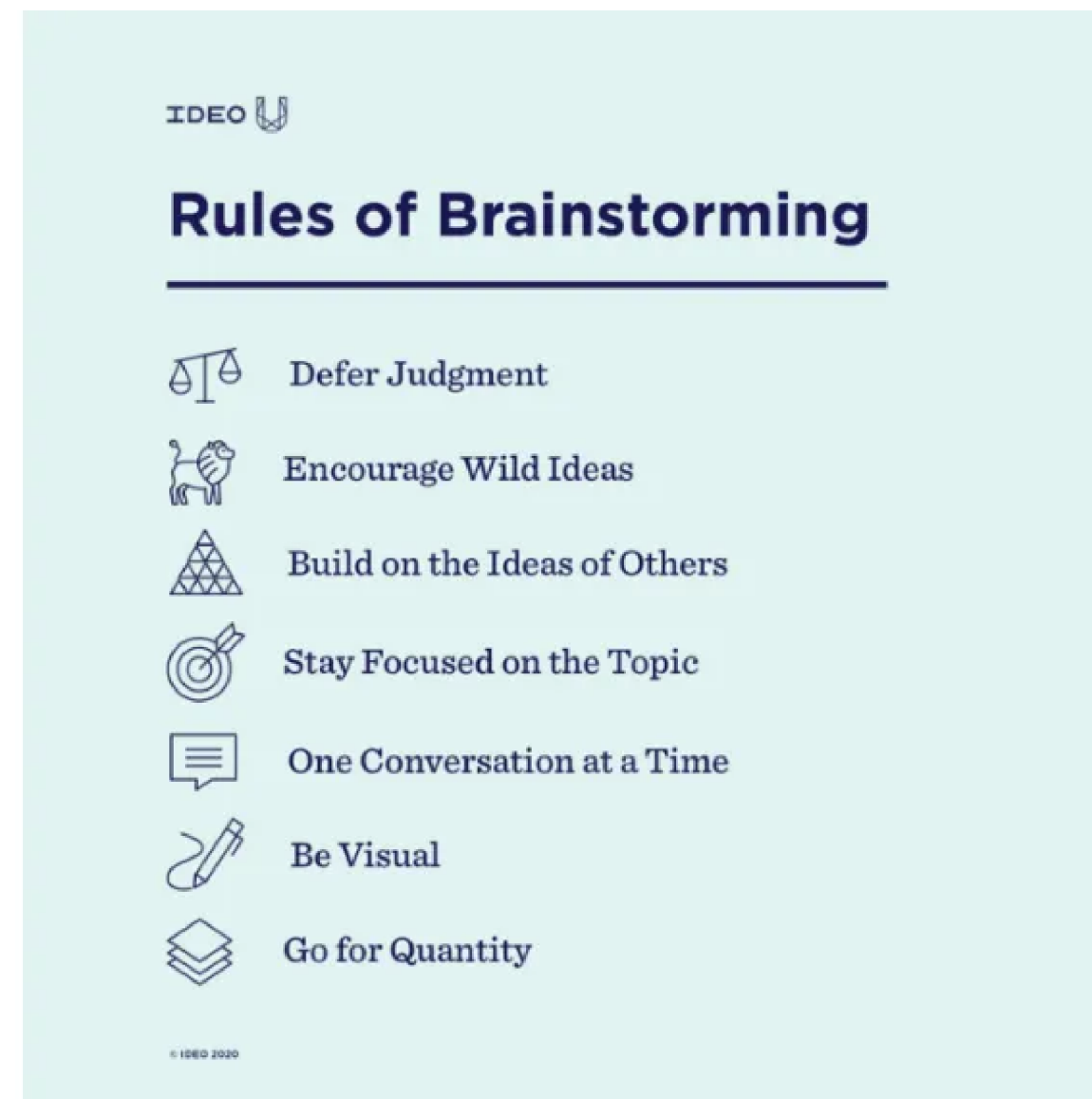


If someone wasn't present, fill them in beforehand



Ask questions, get curious vs statements

Rules of Brainstorming



IDEO Rules of Brainstorming. (Image Source: Ideou.com)

Use Diverge and Converge



When groupthink happens, an influential group member's opinion (in the comic above, the yellow lightbulb, A) may directly or indirectly squelch dissenting opinions (the green lightbulb, B) of others.

Lead by example

Thank you!

All my slides are at
bit.ly/refactorankita23

