



Blue  
EQ™

PsychSafety16™

## Matrix Solutions Sample Report Results & Analysis

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# Unleashing the Power of Psychological Safety in the 21st Century

Dear Matrix Solutions Leadership Team,

On behalf of the BlueEQ Research Team, we would like to thank you personally for bringing the *PsychSafety16™* survey into your organization. This report will provide you with your organization's aggregated results, as well as additional analysis related to the results.

Based on our accumulated client experience with leading organizations around the world, we continue to see the direct connection between psychological safety and performance. The relationship between these two variables is so undeniable that we believe organizations will be far less likely to sustain competitive advantage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century if they do not maintain a threshold level of psychological safety.

In fact, as we analyze organizations across sectors and industry lines, we recognize that all organizations rely on two primary processes—execution and innovation. Both processes are, in fact, primarily social processes. **Thus, leaders have two basic options—oil the gears of collaboration with high levels of psychological safety, or throw sand in the gears with low psychological safety.**

You may have heard about [Google's Aristotle Project](#). They dedicated two years of careful study to identify the defining characteristics of world-class teams. Make no mistake, this is one of the most important research projects on team performance ever conducted. After analyzing more than 180 teams, they found an unmistakable pattern: The single most important characteristic of a high-performance team is psychological safety. Other factors contribute as well, but this factor--the belief that it's safe to take interpersonal risks--is the linchpin variable and nothing less than rocket fuel to propel a team forward to success.

We hope these survey results yield deep insights into the current culture, dynamics, and overall performance of your organization.

Thank you for the privilege of supporting your efforts to improve your organization.

Kind regards,

BlueEQ Research Team

# Overview: Is Your Organization Healthy, Happy, and Productive?

You don't need to be a cultural anthropologist to know if your culture is healthy or sick. Just focus on one thing--the level of psychological safety—a barometer of overall organizational health and performance.

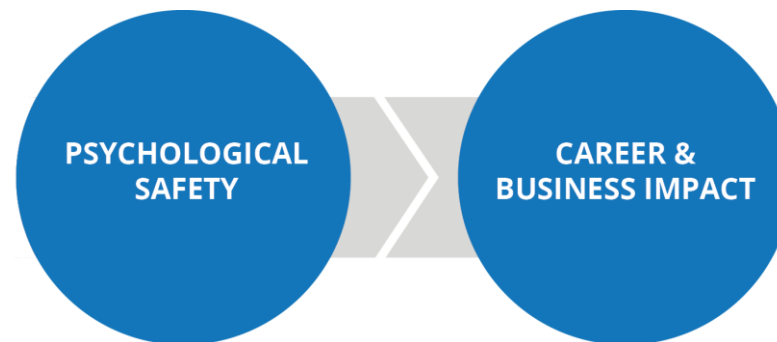
Organizational culture is a reflection of leadership. Sick cultures are bored, lonely, angry, stressed, and tired because the leaders reflect those patterns. Healthy cultures are energetic and engaged, curious and collaborative for the same reason.

Low psychological safety is a paralyzing organizational pathology. Remember Tolstoy's famous line from his novel *Anna Karenina*? "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Organizations are no different: They can be sick in a million different ways, but the happy and healthy ones are alike in sharing the singular attribute of psychological safety.

What is psychological safety? **It's simply a condition in which people feel safe to discuss ideas, experiment, take risks, give feedback, and learn from mistakes.**

## Psychological Safety as a Predictor of Performance

Healthy cultures have psychological safety as a defining attribute. Sick cultures never do. Why? Because high psychological safety releases discretionary effort; low psychological safety freezes it. A growing body of research now shows us unequivocally that psychological safety leads to both career and business impact. Thus, when we measure high levels of psychological safety in an organization, it becomes a strong predictor of overall performance. If psychological safety score or (PSS) is low, we can predict with a high degree of accuracy that employee engagement will be low and attrition will be high. If, on the other hand, the PSS is high, we can predict high engagement, productivity, innovation, and retention. When people honestly believe they can speak up, challenge the status quo, and take measured risks, the magic begins!



## 4 Quadrants of Psychological Safety

### Overall Results



### Description

Based on our international normative database, psychological safety scores below 75% are considered below average.

Overall survey results show that Matrix Solutions has an imbalanced profile for psychological safety. The Learner Safety quadrant garnered a top score of 76.8%, while Collaborator Safety registered the lowest score at 64.3.5% Inclusion Safety and Challenger Safety were 73.4% and 73.4% respectively.

We define Collaborator Safety as an employee's perceived permission to give and receive feedback. Clearly, many employees at Matrix Solutions do not feel a level of psychological safety sufficient have open dialogue and constructive debates between team members.

### Prescription

In all organizations, the modeling behavior of senior leaders is the essential driver in culture formation and the creation of prevailing norms. Matrix Solutions has an acute and urgent need to address the way their leaders model safe behaviors, recast its prevailing norms, and establish an overall higher level of psychological safety within its culture.



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## Breaking Down Psychological Safety

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BlueEQ has pioneered the study of psychological safety, breaking the construct down into four quadrants of separate and yet related categories of behavior. Each quadrant of behavior is based on a different motivational principle.

### 1. Learner Safety

The first quadrant is Learner Safety, which reflects an employee's belief that it is safe to engage in all aspects of the discovery process including asking questions, trying new things, and learning from mistakes. If Learner Safety is low, employees are less likely to venture out, sniff, poke, and crawl around the organization to find answers to their questions. Learner Safety fosters a willingness to learn something new, attack a thorny problem, or look for a new opportunity or breakthrough.

### 2. Challenger Safety

Challenger Safety is the safety an employee requires when he or she thinks something needs to change and it's time to say so. This type of safety is based on perceived permission to challenge the status quo, which grants the employee immunity from repercussion or reprisal. If an employee feels a high level of Challenger Safety, he or she is more likely to speak up because of the perceived license to disagree. If an employee feels a low degree of Challenger Safety, he or she will likely avoid saying anything that might be potentially threatening to those in positions of authority.

### 3. Collaborator Safety

The third quadrant of psychological safety, Collaborator Safety, is built on mutual access and social engagement. In other words, the employee feels safe to work with his or her colleagues in a free and unconstrained way at any time. The employee is persuaded that he or she works in a constant and perpetual state of open dialogue and constructive debate based on a permeable membrane between him or her and the other team members. Giving and receiving feedback is the air employees breathe. The tacit assumption is that execution and innovation are primarily social processes, so "co-laboring" as the word denotes, is as natural as playing or eating together.

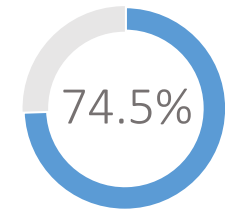
### 4. Inclusion Safety

Based on the principle of mutual respect, the final and culminating quadrant of psychological safety is based on inclusion. Inclusion Safety is agnostic to a person's title, position, authority, or background. To have Inclusion Safety is to know that you are valued, listened to, and treated fairly. Delicate and perishable, Inclusion Safety is created and sustained through consistent, affirming touch points with co-workers. All employees will at some point stumble, fall short, and get it wrong, but they are never embarrassed, punished, marginalized, or rejected. A culture high in Inclusion Safety consistently reminds its members that they are valuable members of the team.

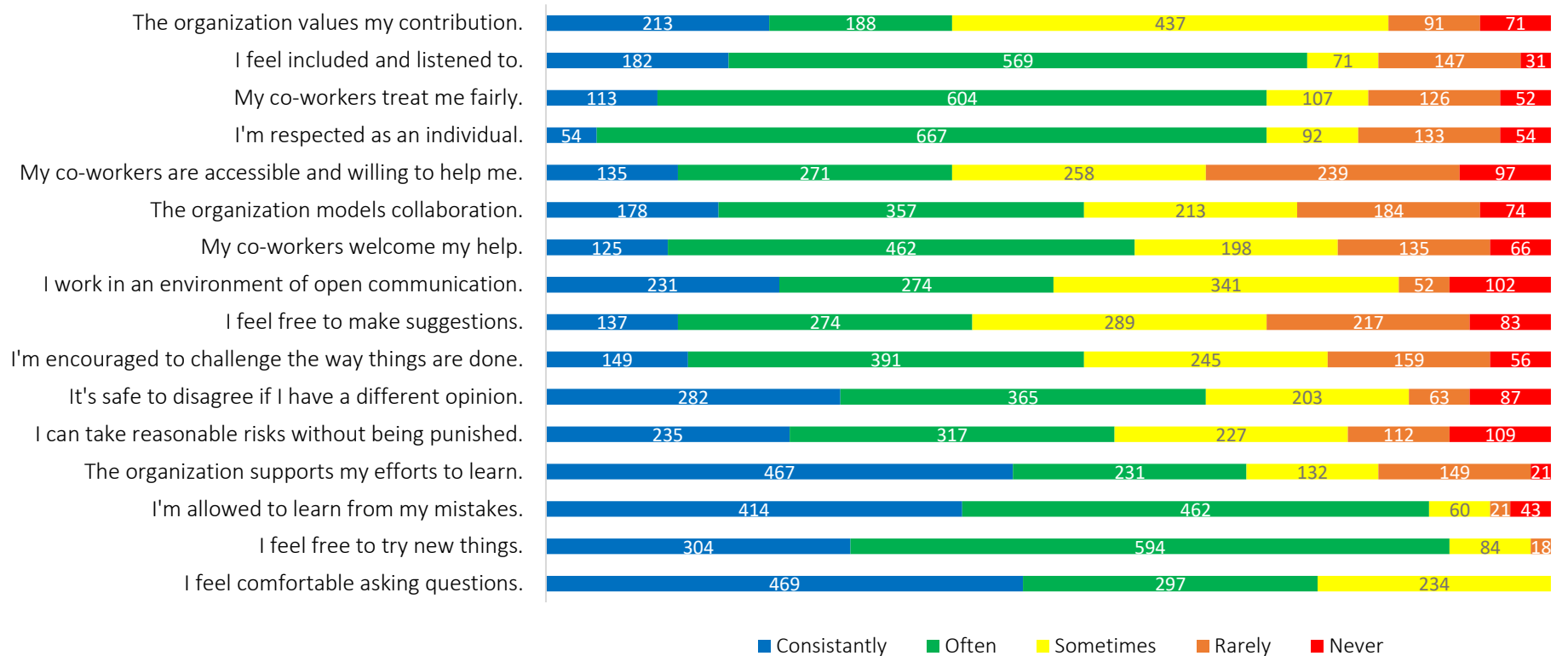
# Description of Results

## Overall Psychological Safety

Overall Score

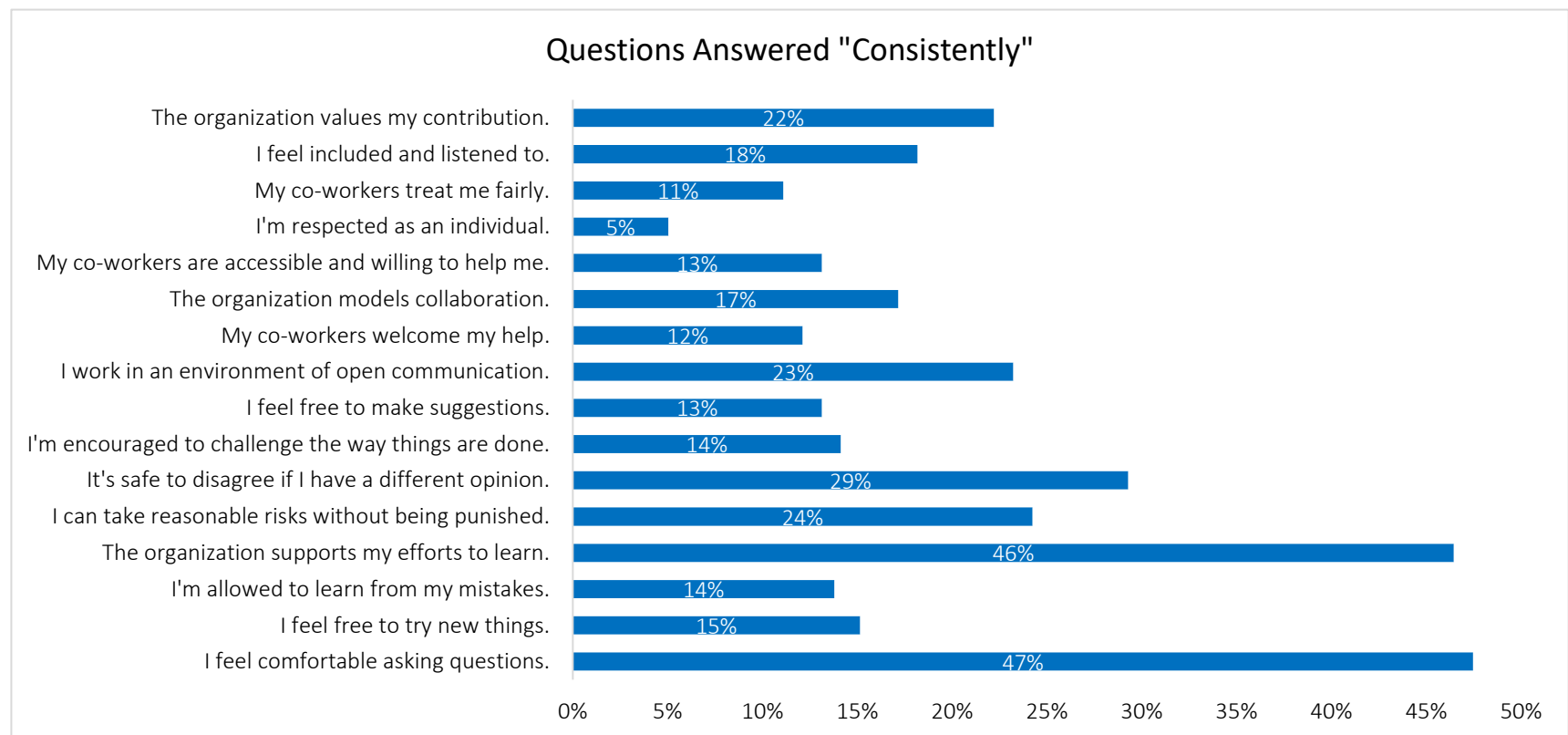


Participant Responses By Rating Category



## Top Box Scores

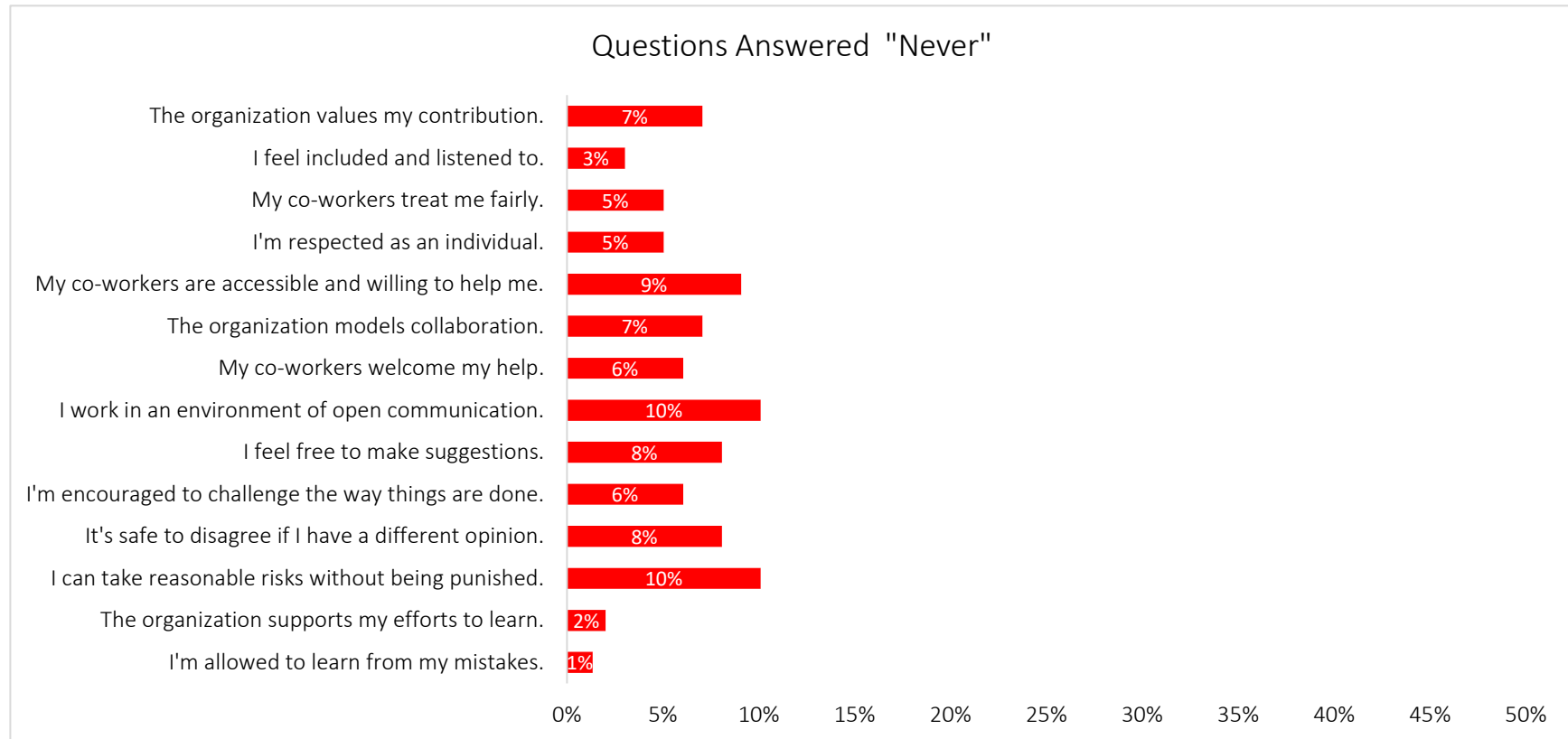
A top box score refers to the total percentage of respondents who answered a question using the highest point on the rating scale. In this case, the blue bars below represent the percentage of respondents that answered each question with a 5, based on a 5-point rating scale in which 5 indicates "Consistently."





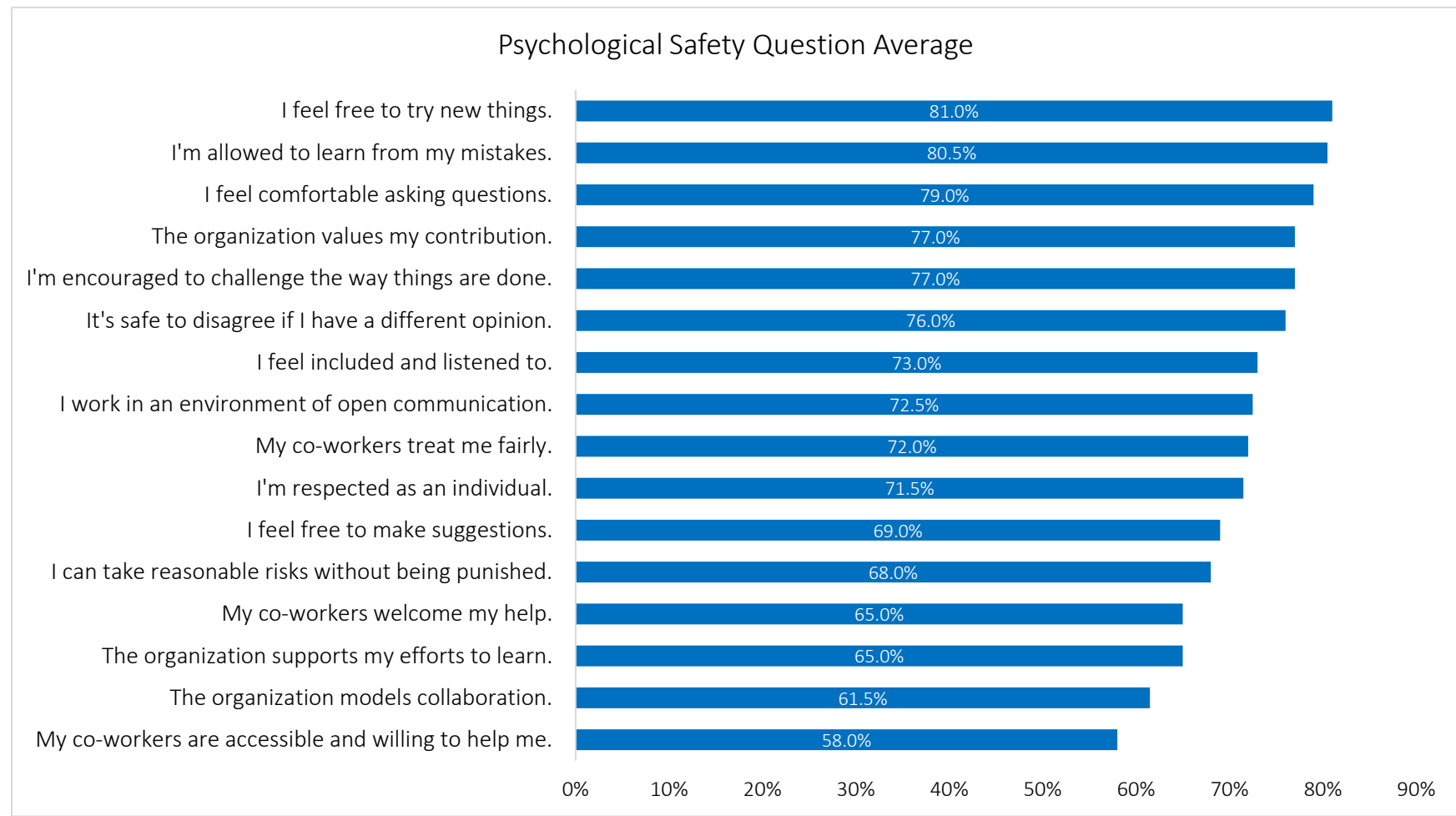
## Bottom Box Scores

A bottom box score refers to the total percentage of respondents who answered a question using the lowest point on the rating scale. In this case, the red bars below represent the percentage of respondents that answered each question with a 1, based on a 5-point rating scale in which 1 indicates "Never."



## Overall Psychological Safety Scores: From Danger to Safety

The PSS results show the overall response average, rank ordered from lowest to highest. In other words, the question that garnered the lowest average rating starts at the bottom, indicated the area of lowest psychological safety or highest danger, whereas at the top of the graph is the question with the highest overall average rating.



## Top & Bottom Three Overall Psychological Safety Score

### Top Questions

	PSS
I feel free to try new things.	81.0%
I'm allowed to learn from my mistakes.	80.5%
I feel comfortable asking questions.	79.0%

### Bottom Questions

My co-workers welcome my help.	65.1%
The organization models collaboration.	61.8%
My co-workers are accessible and willing to help me.	58.0%

The “Top & Bottom Three” PSS refer to the three questions out of the 16 questions in the survey which respondents rated most favorably and three they rated most unfavorably.

For example

- 81 percent feel free to try new things.
- 80 percent feel that they are allowed to learn from their mistakes.
- Finally, 79 percent feel comfortable asking questions.

The bottom three questions included the following:

- 65 percent feel encouraged to help their co-workers.
- 61 percent feel that the organization models collaboration.
- Finally, 58 percent feel that their co-workers are accessible and willing to help.

**Key insight:** Your top three scores represent your organization’s areas of strength in creating lubricated collaboration. Your bottom three scores indicate your organization’s areas of weakness in which people throw sand in those same gears of collaboration to impede or block the process.

When was the last time you checked the oil?



# Demographics Average Scores

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## Analyzing Your Results by Demographic: Our Perspective on Diversity & Inclusion

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Diversity is a fact of life. People look, think, feel, and act differently. They always have.

But is diversity an advantage? That depends on whether you can unleash its potential through a process of rich collaboration. We call that process inclusion, and inclusion is very much a choice.

If diversity is about the make-up and composition of your workforce, inclusion is about the behavior and performance of your workforce. The two concepts are related, but not the same thing. What does this have to do with psychological safety? Answer: Everything.

The central criticism leveled against organizations over the last three decades is that we have been telling people to believe in diversity until they behave in an inclusive manner. In other words, learn to be aware of, understand, acknowledge, and appreciate diversity, and we often ask people to do this in a climate of compliance and guilt and then expect them to go out and be inclusive.

People seldom cross a threshold of conviction based on awareness and appreciation of diversity alone. Chances are they don't know how to practice inclusion. They still lack the skills.

When you're a child, inclusion is natural. It's in the adult world that we are often introduced to and may become plagued with bias and prejudice. Thus, what is natural behavior in childhood becomes learned behavior in adulthood. As you practice inclusion, you see its impact. This is what we call the behavioral approach—behave until you believe—and it's the crucial breakthrough that organizations need in the 21st century.

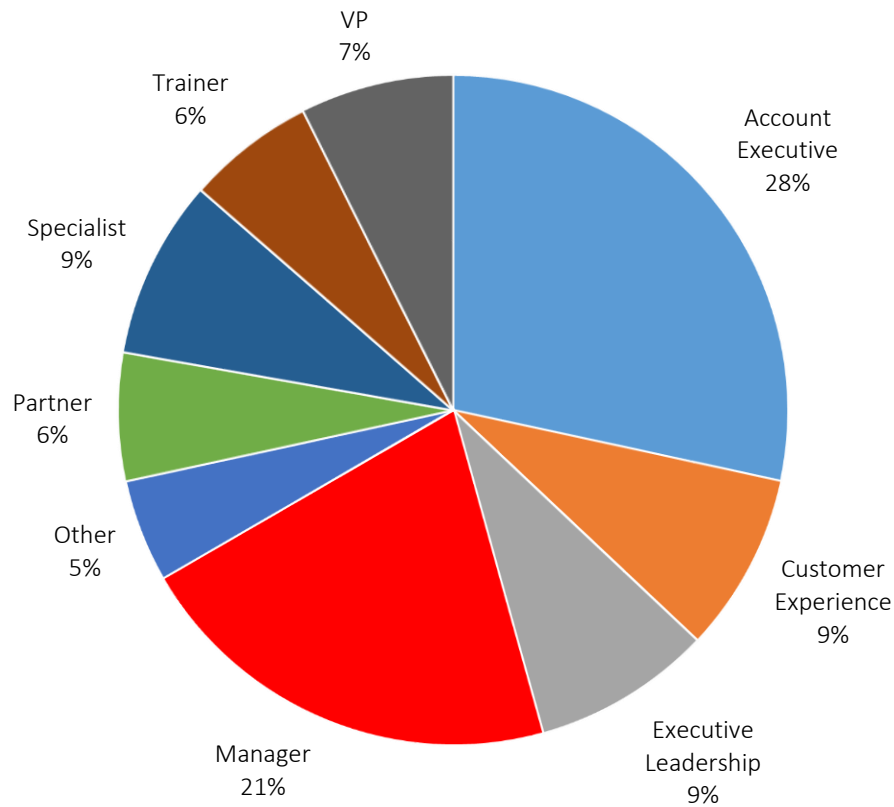
When employees feel Inclusion Safety, watch out. The tone and tenor of the organization begin to change immediately. There's implicit permission to contribute, participate, and even challenge. Because inclusion is a true principle, it carries within itself its own confirming evidence. When people begin to practice inclusive behaviors, the inevitable result is the formation of an inclusive culture—all based on a high degree of psychological safety.

When an organization practices inclusion and sees the benefits, it becomes persuaded that inclusion is both a moral imperative and a competitive advantage.

The following analysis shows the average scores based on specified demographics. Each average is calculated by the four quadrants of psychological safety and the corresponding responses.

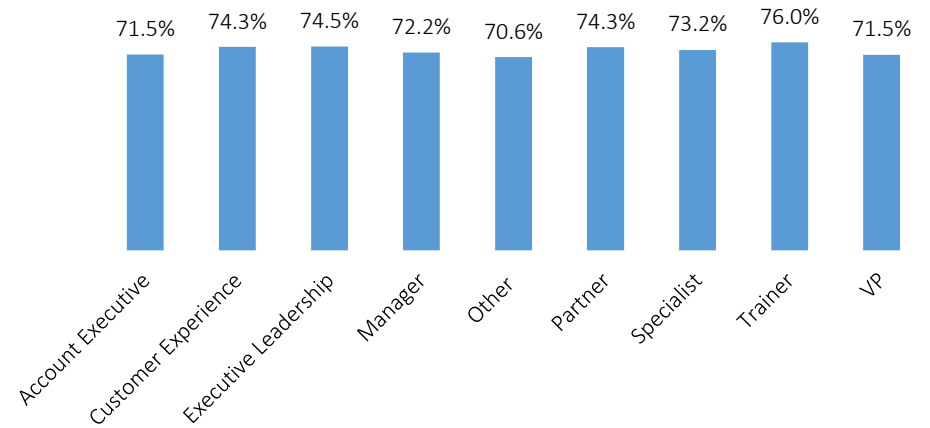
## Position

### Percent of Total Responders



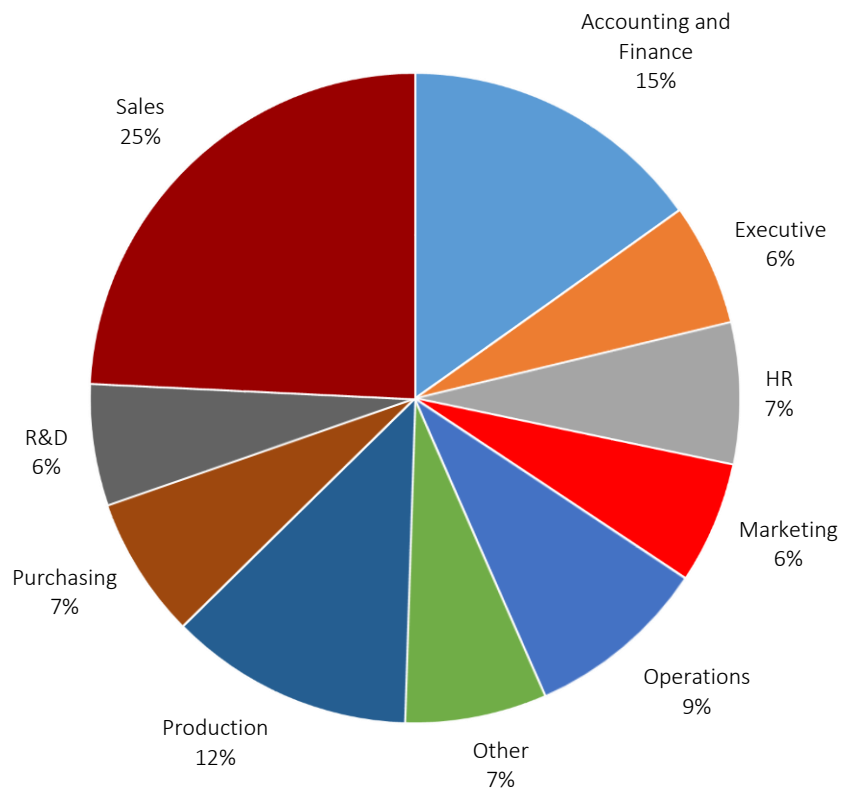
### Psychological Safety Score

#### Average Psychological Safety by Position

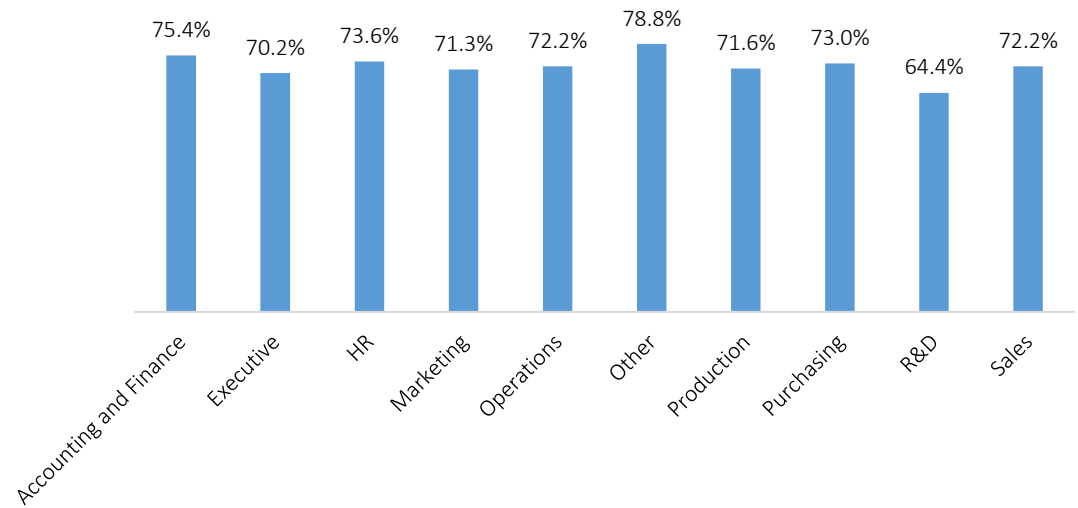


## Department

### Percent of Total Responders

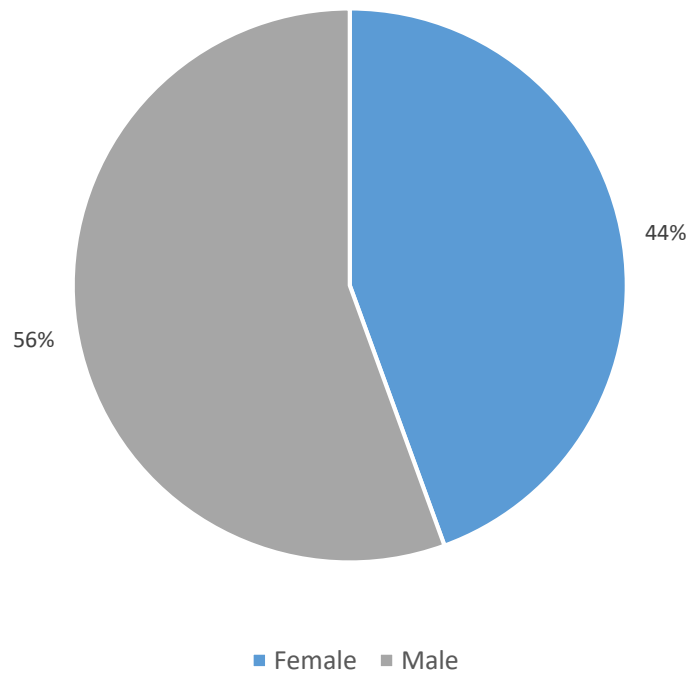


### Psychological Safety Score

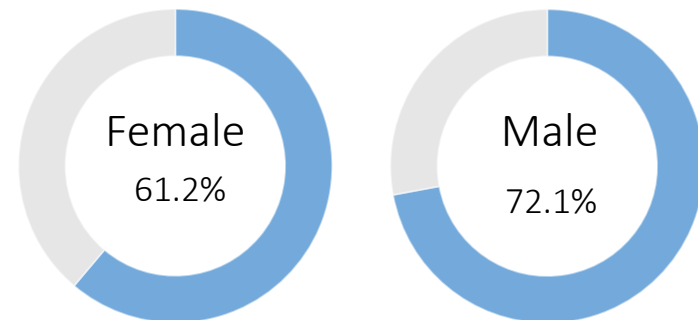


## Gender

Percent of Total Responders

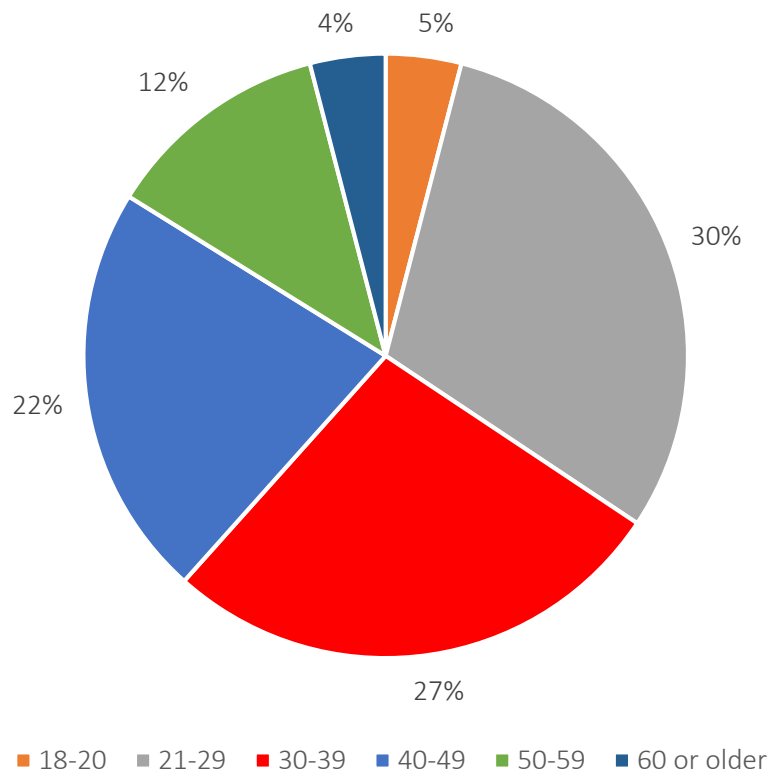


Psychological Safety Score

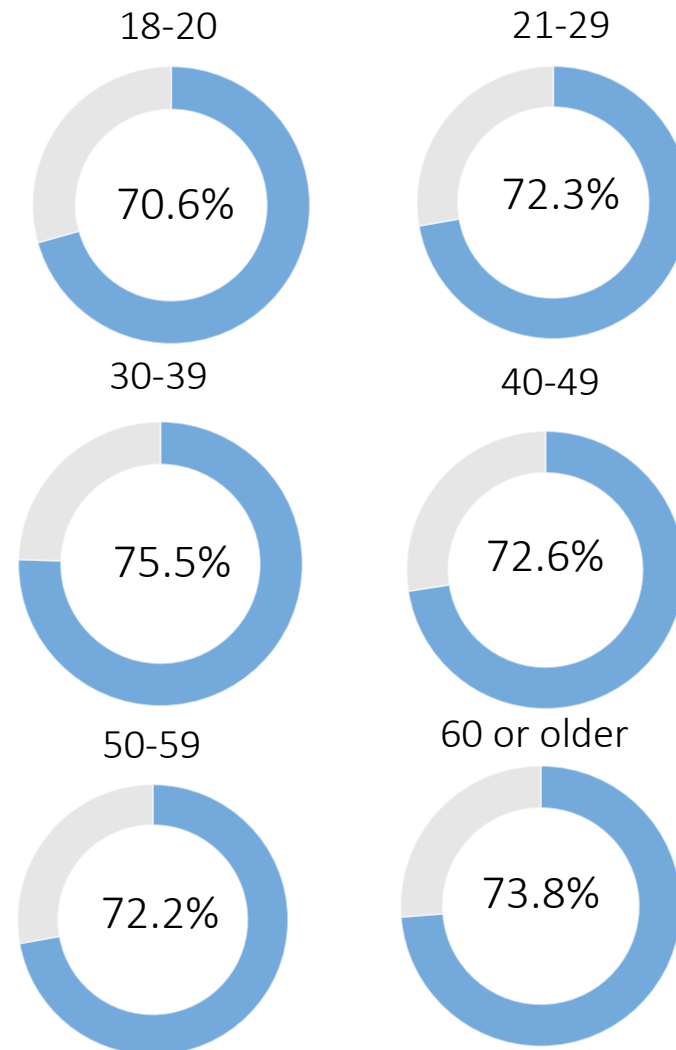


## Age

Percent of Total Responders



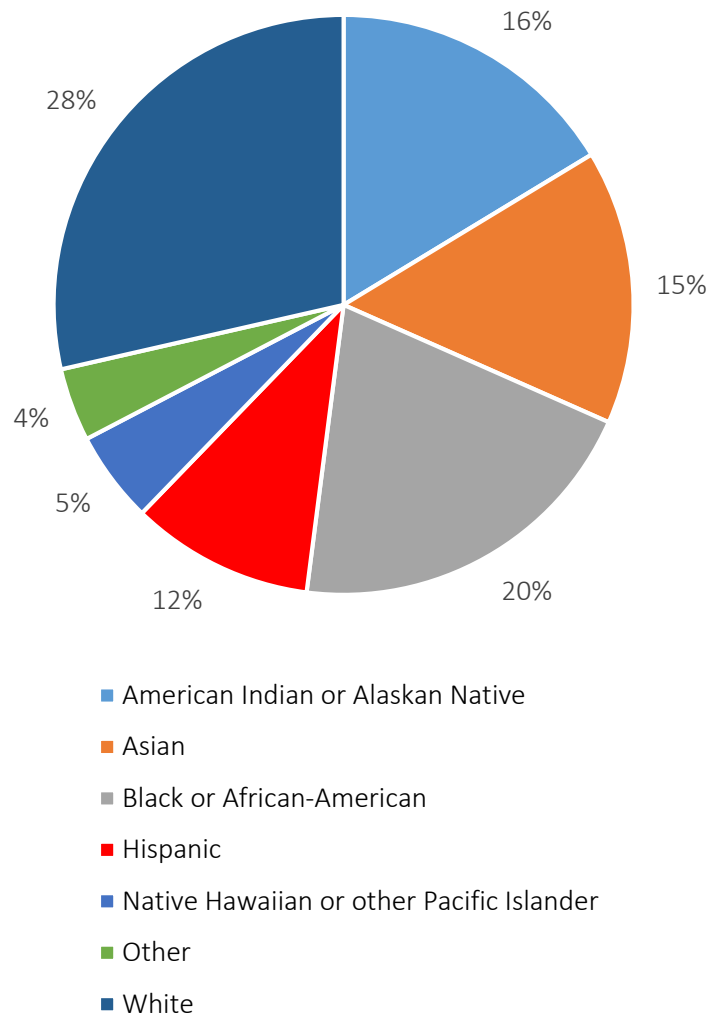
Psychological Safety Score



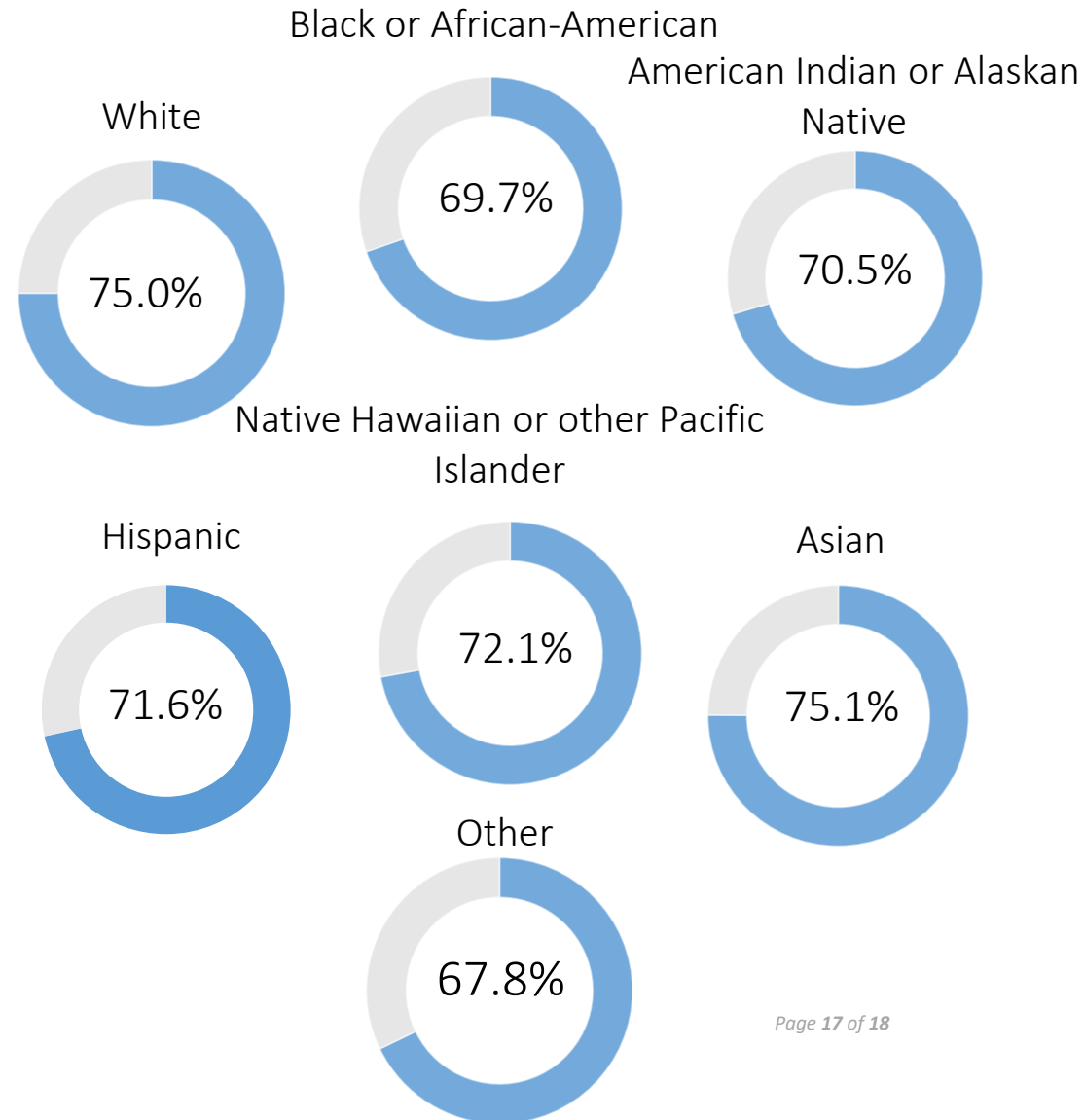


## Race

Percent of Total Responders



Psychological Safety Score



# Methodology

The PsychSafety16™ instrument was designed by the BlueEQ™ Research Team under the direction of Dr. Timothy R. Clark, chief scientist.

- Item choice and wording. Final items were drawn from a larger number of 55 piloted items. We selected only the most valid and reliable items.
- Each quadrant of psychological safety includes a scale consisting of four items. Thus, four items multiplied by four scales produces 16 total items.
  - Learner Safety: 4 items
  - Challenger Safety: 4 items
  - Collaborator Safety: 4 items
  - Inclusion Safety: 4 items
- Each item in each scale includes a key characteristic or attribute that measures an essential aspect of the construct of that quadrant. All four items in each scale are thus tied back to the construct represented by the quadrant of psychological safety.
- The instrument makes use of a 5-point rating scale with the following response rating categories, which have been methodologically verified numerous times: 1. Never, 2. Rarely, 3. Sometimes, 4. Often, 5. Consistently. Each question in the instrument is weighted equally. Scores are averaged across all respondents.
- Data are gathered via the online survey and consolidated into a central database.
- The report includes descriptive statistics of the survey results, including basic analysis of the data based on high and low scores, distribution of responses, and demographics, which are customized to client need.
- Reliability: This refers to the internal consistency or dependability of scores on an assessment. Unreliable assessments have a substantial amount of error, or noise, compared to reliable assessments which have little error. Reliability is measured based on the consistency of scores. We measure internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, which is one of the most widely used approaches to estimating reliability. As a generally accepted standard for research, scales should yield a value of .70 to .80 to consider them respectable, and a value above .80 as very good. Cronbach's alpha reflects the internal consistency of a scale or measure.

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