

How to get comfortably vulnerable at work

Courage and vulnerability go hand in hand. It's hard to be brave in your squiggly career unless you're prepared to be vulnerable as well.

Below are **Brené Brown's** four types of vulnerability.

 Give yourself a rating for each.

1. The willingness to speak up

High Medium Low

2. The courage to trust others

High Medium Low

3. The resilience to keep trying

High Medium Low

4. To behave in line with your values.

High Medium Low

Vulnerability in the workplace is the ability to express and expose, in words and behavior, who we really are and what we genuinely think and feel.


- **World of Work Project**

Ideas for action



1. Moving from 'I'm fine'


Move from 'I'm fine' to 'I'm feeling xxx' to share emotions more openly and flag your feelings.

 "The way to embody selective vulnerability is to flag feelings without becoming emotionally leaky" [Liz Fosslien](#).



2. Building 'useful' boundaries


Focus on what is useful about what you're sharing with the other person on your team as *vulnerability minus boundaries is not vulnerability*. Ask yourself:

 Why am I sharing it with this person; how is it useful for me? How is it useful for others?



3. Proactively share what you've got to give


Signal your situation to others (but don't feel you have to disclose all the details) – sounds like

 "Something is happening in my life, and I might be a bit distracted. I'd prefer to talk about it with you another time, but I wanted you to be aware of the situation."



4. Reframing disagreements to differences


If a discussion is likely to feel uncomfortable approach it with openness and curiosity (key characteristics of vulnerability) by reframing language to refocus the conversation.

 How can you create a safe space for debate and to challenge and build?



5. Sharing your work-in-progress projects

Sharing projects earlier takes more vulnerability – and sounds like

 "I'm still working on this...." "I'm not fully up to speed on xxx yet, but I'd really like to talk it through with you anyway."

Coach yourself questions

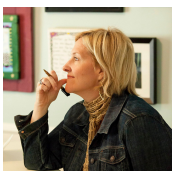
What does vulnerability mean to you at work?



How often do you flag your feelings?



Recommended resources



How to be vulnerable at work without spilling everything
Brené Brown



How to Be Vulnerable: Guidelines and Resources
Carter McNamara



Psychological Safety
Amy Edmondson discusses the concept she has pioneered and championed through her research on #151 of Squiggly Careers.