

# **How to Integrate Fair Process and Psychological Safety into the Workplace without Saying “Fair Process” and “Psychological Safety”**



INNOVATIVE  
MANAGEMENT  
TOOLS™

Frameworks for Focused Conversations

## Introduction

In the modern workplace, creating an environment conducive to open discussions about problems, goals, and processes is essential. With today's rapidly evolving business landscape, fostering open communication, collaboration, and innovation is crucial. This paper explores the concepts of "Fair Process" and "Psychological Safety" and introduces an approach utilizing Conversation Frameworks™ to cultivate a workplace where collaboration and incremental progress flourish. As organizations tackle complex challenges and pursue ambitious goals, embracing these concepts becomes pivotal for fostering collective insights and employee engagement. Embracing the interplay of these concepts, this paper presents a transformative approach, leveraging Conversation Frameworks to reshape organizational dynamics.

### Fair Process: Bridging the Gap Between Vision and Execution

Fair Process entails incorporating diverse perspectives from front-line employees, managers, and stakeholders, fostering focused discussions on specific organizational issues, processes, or goals. It emphasizes inclusivity and fairness, inviting contributions from individuals across the organizational hierarchy. These conversations extend beyond traditional problem-solving, exploring various scenarios, aspirations, and challenges. By leveraging a diverse range of voices, Fair Process catalyzes progress, improvements, and organizational growth.

### Psychological Safety: Giving Voice to Employee Input

Psychological safety is an essential factor in creating an environment where employees feel comfortable speaking up without fear of retribution. Conversation Frameworks play a pivotal role in promoting psychological safety by allowing individuals to contribute their ideas, provide feedback, and actively engage in the decision-making process. Employees who believe their voices are valued are more likely to be engaged and proactive in driving positive change.

### Conversation Frameworks: More Than Problem-Solving

Conversation Frameworks go beyond addressing problems; they create a space for addressing situations, frustrations, goals, and future aspirations. By inviting individuals from varying organizational levels, Conversation Frameworks capture the unique insights of both high-level strategists and hands-on practitioners. This approach ensures that every perspective is considered when shaping the path towards organizational goals in a safe environment.

### Introduction to Conversation Frameworks

Conversation Frameworks offer structured and organized approaches to facilitate discussions on specific topics within organizations. Leveraging interactive whiteboards, these digital tools promote collaboration and bring experts to the table, fostering a conducive environment for problem-solving and decision-making.



Within the Conversation Frameworks ecosystem:

- Topics cover 28 common challenges across People, Process, and Planning domains, catering to the diverse needs of organizations.
- Designed for small groups of 8-10 participants, sessions are tailored to encourage active participation and engagement.
- Each session is designed to be completed in approximately 4 hours, providing a comprehensive exploration of the chosen topic.
- Flexibility is key, with the option to segment sessions into hourly increments to accommodate varying schedules and preferences.

The data from the ongoing DIAGNOSE™ - Organizational Challenges Survey conducted by Innovative Management Tools highlights the widespread prevalence of challenges addressed by Conversation Frameworks. Of the 28 topics covered, 25

are identified as challenges in over 75% of surveyed companies, with 8 topics exceeding a staggering 90% consensus. This extensive prevalence underscores the relevance of Conversation Frameworks in addressing organizational needs. These numbers are from existing, established companies of various sizes and industries.

Originating over 25 years ago as "cards on the wall" sessions, Conversation Frameworks transitioned seamlessly into the digital space in late 2022. Their industry-agnostic nature ensures applicability across all departments within organizations, facilitating holistic problem-solving and strategic planning efforts. By addressing common and recurring themes, Conversation Frameworks assist organizations in navigating the complexities of "Organizational Whack-a-Mole™," where challenges continually emerge from the constant movement of People, the constant evolution of Processes, and the continuous list of new projects that require proper Planning



Conversation Frameworks teach leaders and workplace trainers how to facilitate psychological safety rather than talk about it in theoretical terms. While most organizations want to embrace good practice and can even describe what psychological safety looks like, they don't know how to "get there". Conversation Frameworks give the HOW to DO, rather than telling WHAT to DO.

Now having the context of Conversation Frameworks, we turn to the topic of Fair Practice, Psychological Safety, and how Conversation Frameworks specifically advance these topics inside the workplace.

## The Power of Inclusion

Incorporating front-line employees and managers who operate at different altitudes within the organization is pivotal. Those immersed in the day-to-day intricacies understand the potential challenges and roadblocks that may arise during change. By actively involving them in discussions about the desired goals and outcomes, leaders can tap into their expertise and align their insights with the organization's overarching vision.

## Questioning: An Indicator of Engagement

A common misconception is that employees asking questions during change initiatives are resistant to the proposed changes. In reality, these questions stem from a desire to mitigate chaos and ensure a smooth transition. Employees who inquire about potential challenges are safeguarding the interests of the company and their roles within it. Addressing these questions in a session guided by a Conversation Framework not only enhances the quality of decisions but also fosters a sense of ownership and respect among employees.

## Leadership's Role in Ensuring Psychological Safety

To establish psychological safety, senior management must embrace an attitude of problem-solving rather than blame assignment. Conversation Frameworks shift the focus from individual performance to collaborative problem-solving. By visualizing the challenge as a shared target, the frameworks create an environment where individuals unite to address the issue at hand, regardless of personal affiliations.

"The holistic, experiential approach of the activities offered by Innovative Management Tools fits into any business approach or organization. The 'blended learning' approach means that those involved can examine their own capabilities in a no-blame, no-fail culture."

*Ray B., Director  
London, England*

"The way a change happens is through our feelings and our emotions. Any company that simply subscribes to analysis to get the change does not get results. All the analysis in the world does not substitute for caring, sharing and dealing with the emotion - the feeling. You can analyze and fixate on a process for change but until you get to the people and address their feelings around it - their understanding of it - the change will not happen! I have found the right way to implement change with IMT. By engaging the employee and addressing their emotions and feelings, this business is making it happen."

*Barbara M., MBA, Owner  
Illinois*

## **The Digital Evolution: Bringing Conversation Frameworks to Life**

Today's digital landscape offers new opportunities for utilizing Conversation Frameworks. Interactive online platforms, such as digital whiteboards, enable participants to contribute their insights and responses in real-time. These platforms provide a visual representation of the challenge, encouraging collaborative problem-solving and fostering a deep understanding of the issue at hand. The immediate archival feature ensures that session progress is captured efficiently, allowing for easy reference and follow-up.

## **Democratizing Conversation Frameworks for Organizational Growth**

Implementing Conversation Frameworks doesn't need to be an arduous process. These tools can be accessible to organizations, from corporations to startups, and across industries. As an advocate of knowledge-sharing, our approach is to provide unlimited, lifetime access to a framework after a short training on how to facilitate the session using the tool. By ensuring proper training and utilization, organizations can maximize the benefits of this approach and drive positive change.

## **Conclusion**

Incorporating "Fair Process" and nurturing "Psychological Safety" within the workplace is not only an aspiration but a strategic necessity. Conversation Frameworks provide a structured approach to harnessing the collective intelligence, expertise, and perspectives of employees, managers, and stakeholders. By embracing these frameworks, organizations can foster a culture of open dialogue, collaborative problem-solving, and ownership, thereby setting the stage for sustainable growth and innovation. Perhaps best of all is that the ideas, intentions, and spirit of Fair Process and Psychological Safety is baked into the company through actions over words.

## **Who is Innovative Management Tools?**

Innovative Management Tools (IMT) is a US-based company with a rich history spanning over 25 years, dedicated to empowering organizations of all sizes with its comprehensive suite of 28 Conversation Frameworks. From solopreneurs to enterprises boasting over 90,000 employees, IMT has been at the forefront of driving meaningful change and facilitating impactful conversations. Our mission is to democratize these practical and transformative tools, providing essential support and guidance to change agents across departments and companies in all industries. With a keen focus on middle management, front-line supervisors, and team leaders—the backbone of most organizations—IMT is committed to enhancing their effectiveness and success in navigating People, Process, and Planning challenges and driving organizational growth.

For more information on IMT and Conversation Frameworks, visit [www.innovativemanagementtools.com](http://www.innovativemanagementtools.com) or reach out to the owner, Patrick Seaton, at [pdseaton@innovativemanagementtools.com](mailto:pdseaton@innovativemanagementtools.com) or LinkedIn [Patrick Seaton | LinkedIn](#).

Click on this link to watch a short video on Conversation Frameworks: [Understanding Conversation Frameworks - Innovative Management Tools](#)