





- **Difference.** The benefits of the pandemic, however, do not apply evenly. Instead, it has created divergence in experiences and mindsets: some thrive (entrepreneurial mindset, new set of skills and emerging leaders) and others may (blue collar workers, parents of young children, carers of sick or vulnerable relatives); some desire certainty and the return to status quo while others are more comfortable with the emergence and discovery of a new normal.
- **Leveraging learning.** There is also a desire to retain the positive habits acquired during this period and to leverage them for future competitive advantage.

Another emerging theme is the human implications of the crisis, specifically on **wellbeing**. While opening up opportunities, prolonged remote working (especially with a second wave of lockdowns in some countries) can take a toll. The pace of change and adoption of new ways of working also carry the risks of increasing disconnection, exhaustion and burnout, which can erode the goodwill, trust and cohesion generated from the initial response to crisis. This leads to the question of whether organisations and leaders have the resources and empathy to support their people through the continued pace and demands of change.





## Creating a forward-looking culture: psychological safety and reflection spaces

When we look at where we are now, through a short-term lens, we can see a lot of benefits and opportunities arise out of this crisis, but this period of disruptive change has been exhausting. Learning has accelerated, wellbeing challenged, and there is increasing divergence in experiences, mindsets and expectations on how and why we work. Culture is also starting to show cracks and organisations may be running out of capacity to support their people through the prolonged crisis.

Psychological safety can be a powerful connector in the organisation-human interface. Coined by Amy Edmondson, and defined as “a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is **safe** for interpersonal risk-taking,”<sup>ii</sup> psychological safety is the foundation of high learning organisations where people can be creative and innovative, make and learn from mistakes, and think forward. When leaders role model trust, curiosity, confidence and inspiration, they propagate a growth (rather than reactive) mindset, which in turn enables their people to be more motivated, resilient, persistent and engaged.

Reflection spaces is also another important connector, giving people an opportunity to engage with one another, to take stock and think through the lessons learned from the crisis, to identify the real drivers of change and how to proactively create the right kind of culture and leadership for sustainable work going forward.

### Sources:

<sup>i</sup> The Future of Jobs Report 2020, WEF. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020#:~:text=It%20aims%20to%20shed%20light,in%20the%20next%20five%20years>.

<sup>ii</sup> Edmondson, Amy C. *[The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth](#)*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2018.