



PSLA Domain Definitions – High/Low Scores and Why This Matters

Communication & Collaboration

Communication & Collaboration involves the clear exchange of information and transparent discussion of what a worker needs to do their job successfully. This involves collaborative efforts to support each worker's success at work.

Leaders with high Communication & Collaboration scores are in touch with their teams. They take time to ensure that roles, responsibilities, and priorities are communicated clearly. These leaders don't simply assign tasks, they engage in two-way communication with employees including collaborative discussions of goals, priorities, and expectations. They encourage and recognize employees for their efforts as well as for their outcomes. Furthermore, leaders high in Communication & Collaboration take interest in the growth and development of their entire team, and provide opportunities to develop skills and maximize potential. Such leaders are good at supporting the success of their entire team.

Leaders with low Communication & Collaboration scores can be out of touch with their teams. They may create confusion and stress through miscommunication or a lack of communication about expectations, deadlines, resources available, deliverables, or project goals. These leaders may not seek or welcome feedback about challenges faced by employees. They may miss opportunities to leverage strengths of individual employees or be unaware of what those strengths actually are and fail to recognize the efforts of employees or encourage growth and development. Leaders low in Communication & Collaboration scores may find their team to be low in morale and motivation.

Why strengthening skills in Communication & Collaboration matters:

- Employees know what they need to do
- Tasks are executed correctly
- There is clarity about team and individual priorities
- Miscommunication and errors are reduced
- Employee potential is optimized
- Challenges are identified and resolved earlier

Social Intelligence

Social Intelligence involves acting as a role model and facilitator of psychologically safe interactions between and among all workplace stakeholders, including those who are marginalized or vulnerable.

Leaders with high Social Intelligence scores promote psychologically healthy and safe interactions among and between team members, as well as between themselves and others. These leaders are comfortable with employees coming to them with personal or emotional problems, and support employees through these problems so they can continue to be productive in the workplace. They strive to make their workplace an open and accepting environment for all individuals, including those experiencing mental health issues, and offer helpful resources to team members who are struggling. They act as a role model to their employees, remaining positive even during times of high work stress and keep employees motivated and engaged even when work demands are high. The culture of a team with a Socially Intelligent leader is usually cohesive, resilient, and productive.

Leaders with low Social Intelligence scores may have difficulty addressing personal or emotional issues in the workplace. When employees bring up emotional issues, these leaders might feel uncomfortable and uncertain of how to deal with the situation. They might consider it outside of their role or unnecessary to address employee emotional or psychological distress, conflict or discord, particularly when work demands are high. They may not see the value in motivating employees to do their best work and find meaning in what they do. The culture of a team whose leader has low Social Intelligence can be dysfunctional or hostile.

Why strengthening skills in Social Intelligence matters:

- Stress at work does not necessarily lead to absence
- Employees with mental health issues reach out for help earlier
- Employees demonstrate civility and respect
- Team productivity is maintained during times of high demand
- Employee engagement increases

Problem Solving & Conflict Management

Problem Solving & Conflict Management involves supporting and requiring consistent, respectful, and effective discussion and resolution of issues. Those who fail to do so are held accountable as needed.

Leaders with high Problem Solving & Conflict Management scores place high value on civility and fair treatment in the workplace. They do not tolerate disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour, regardless of current workplace demands and stressors. When workplace conflicts do arise, these leaders are able to effectively resolve them while maintaining the dignity of both parties. These leaders make efforts to hear from employees about any challenges they're facing and do their best to work with employees on solutions. They're also aware of how employees are handling work demands. If their team is struggling to keep up with the workload, these leaders will make adjustments and check in to make sure employees aren't feeling overwhelmed. Leaders with high Problem-Solving & Conflict Management scores can be successful in supporting high functioning teams, even in demanding or complex environments.

Leaders with low Problem Solving & Conflict Management scores can be ineffective and/or inconsistent in resolving workplace issues. They might turn a blind eye to disrespectful or inappropriate behaviour. These leaders may choose sides in a conflict, fail to defuse tensions, or choose a solution regarded by others as unfair. Coming forward with any concerns or issues is not encouraged, and an attitude of "just deal with it" prevails. This also extends to any challenges employees may be facing in the workplace. Leaders who score low in this factor are less likely to welcome feedback from their employees or be aware of unreasonable work demands. These leaders often have conflict ridden and dysfunctional teams.

Why strengthening skills in Problem-Solving & Conflict Management matters:

- Perceptions of fairness are sustained
- Morale remains high
- Conflict can become productive
- Employees are held accountable for their actions
- Challenges can be addressed and resolved effectively
- Risk of more serious workplace issues is reduced
- The need for stress-related absence is reduced
- There are fewer barriers to quality work

Security & Safety

Security & Safety involves supporting a safe environment through proactive, prompt and effective responses to any threats to psychological, physical, or professional safety.

Leaders with high Security & Safety scores promote a physically and psychologically safe work environment. They value balance in employees' work as well as personal lives, ensuring work stress doesn't spill over into employees' lives outside of work. Work-life balance is encouraged and employees come forward if they're struggling because they know that they will be supported to seek out resources and solutions. Leaders who score high in this factor effectively identify and address threats to psychological safety, such as bullying, harassment, or violence. They encourage employees to come forward if they have experienced or witnessed harm or threat to psychological safety in the workplace. These leaders are also vigilant when it comes to threats of physical safety in the workplace and acknowledge the potential psychological impact of physical illnesses and injuries on employees at work. In teams where leaders score high in Security & Safety all employees look out for the well-being of each other.

Leaders with low Security & Safety scores may remain largely removed from issues of employee work-life balance, with the mindset that personal issues should be left at home, and any struggles with work demands should be ignored or disciplined. These leaders may fail to monitor workloads or consider the potential adverse effects of overtaxing by assigning unreasonable demands or workloads. They indicate, either directly or indirectly, that employees should not allow family or personal demands to interfere with their work. Leaders who score in the low range on this factor also tend to be relatively passive when it comes to psychological and physical safety in the workplace. They may adopt an "out of sight, out of mind" mindset to psychological risk factors such as workplace bullying. They are unlikely to take effective action against threat or risk to the psychological well-being of their employees. This may lead to a culture of inaction in which employees feel insecure or unmotivated to come forward because they fear nothing will be done. They may be more unaware of the potential psychological impact of physical illness or injury, working on the assumption that once employees are physically able to work, they must be mentally able as well. In teams where the leader scores low in Security & Safety, absenteeism may be higher and disability durations may be longer.

Why strengthening skills in Security & Safety matters:

- Risk of critical incidents is reduced
- Stress related absences and injuries are prevented
- There is improved loyalty and retention
- Trust in your leadership increases

Fairness & Integrity

Fairness & Integrity involves leadership which is honest, transparent and consistent, where there is fairness and equity in decision-making, and a humble understanding of personal limitations and biases.

Leaders with high Fairness & Integrity scores value honesty, equity, and fair treatment in their workplaces. They ensure that all employees are treated with respect and dignity. Discrimination and stigma are not tolerated and the right of all employees to be able to work in a safe and welcoming environment is highly valued and prioritized. Employees who work for a leader who is high in Fairness & Integrity trust them to lead and feel secure that their well-being and that of their coworkers is always considered. As a result, employees are highly engaged and motivated to do their best work. Under their guidance, these leaders' teams come together to form a focused, cohesive group that work towards objectives with a united focus. Individual limitations are supported rather than denigrated. An understanding that everyone holds their own biases allows for a humility and openness that encourages honest discussions about stigma and how it can be prevented/eliminated. Trust is high in teams where the leader scores high in Fairness & Integrity.

Leaders with low Fairness & Integrity scores may not address discrimination and stigma among their employees. Employees may feel unsafe or that their leader doesn't put the well-being of their employees first. These leaders' teams work together when they have to, but otherwise the workplace lacks a sense of cohesion and unity. When employees struggle, they receive little support and may even be reprimanded for speaking up. Finally, personal biases are rarely addressed and open discussions about stigma and other issues related to psychological health and safety are viewed as unnecessary or irrelevant. Teams may feel that their leader has both favourites and scapegoats.

Why strengthening skills in Fairness & Integrity matters:

- All your employees trust your leadership
- Discrimination is eliminated or reduced
- Problematic employee issues are addressed
- Employees are much more likely to want to do their best work
- You are more likely to have a high functioning team