

Exercise 3: What Stands in the Way Becomes the Way

Content covered on pages 7-8 of Dare to Lead.

In *Dare to Lead*, we learn about ten behaviors and cultural issues that leaders identified as getting in our way in organizations across the world.

- 01.** We avoid tough conversations, including giving honest, productive feedback.
- 02.** Rather than spending a reasonable amount of time proactively acknowledging and addressing the fears and feelings that show up during change and upheaval, we spend an unreasonable amount of time managing problematic behaviors.
- 03.** Diminishing trust caused by a lack of connection and empathy.
- 04.** Not enough people are taking smart risks or creating and sharing bold ideas to meet changing demands and the insatiable need for innovation.
- 05.** We get stuck and defined by setbacks, disappointments, and failures, so instead of spending resources on clean-up to ensure that consumers, stakeholders, or internal processes are made whole, we are spending too much time and energy reassuring team members who are questioning their contribution and value.
- 06.** Too much shame and blame, not enough accountability and learning.
- 07.** People are opting out of vital conversations about diversity and inclusivity because they fear looking wrong, saying something wrong, or being wrong. Choosing our own comfort over hard conversations is the epitome of privilege, and it corrodes trust and moves us away from meaningful and lasting change.
- 08.** When something goes wrong, individuals and teams are rushing into ineffective or unsustainable solutions rather than staying with problem identification and solving. When we fix the wrong thing for the wrong reason, the same problems continue to surface. It's costly and demoralizing.
- 09.** Organizational values are gauzy and assessed in terms of aspirations rather than actual behaviors that can be taught, measured, and evaluated.
- 10.** Perfectionism and fear are keeping people from learning and growing.

Exercise 3: What Stands in the Way Becomes the Way (continued)

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Exercise Instructions: Think about this list of behaviors, then decide if you want to talk about these obstacles in the context of your team, your organization, or any other relevant unit. Once you decide, have everyone write down the three that you think present the most significant barriers to courageous leadership in that unit. Make sure everyone has a shared understanding of the unit you're assessing.

Once everyone is done, you'll use the Turn & Learn to share your top three (everyone shows their sticky at the same time to avoid halo and bandwagon issues – see page 55).

Discuss similarities and differences. Do people in different roles have different experiences? Are there two that your team is willing to hold in mind while you're working through this read-along process?