MODULE OVERVIEW

The perfect manager myth: Why it silences your team

Adaptive module | ~20 min

The demand to be a role model is seen as a virtue and comes as much from teams as from leadership. Its cost is real: manager exhaustion, cautious decisions, and a team that no longer dares to suggest ideas or admit its mistakes. This module replaces that demand with a sustainable goal (walking alongside the team), draws on the work of Amy Edmondson and Brené Brown, and ends with phrases that take courage to say and a team feedback process.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Recognize what the myth of the perfect role model costs managers: exhaustion, standing still, and losing authenticity.

02 Assess how a flawless manager affects the team: ideas left unsaid, psychological safety blocked.

03 Replace the goal of being a role model with walking alongside your team: consistency, authenticity, accepted limits.

04 Dare to say “I don’t know” or “I need you,” and ask your team for feedback.

WHO IT’S FOR

Managers who want more impact while staying genuine, and team members who want to speak up with ideas and doubts.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1. **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
2. **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
3. **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
4. **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
5. **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Psychological safety – Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business School
- Vulnerability in leadership – Brené Brown, Daring Greatly (2012)
- Symmetry of attention – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Amy Edmondson – researcher at Harvard Business School, foundational work on psychological safety, The Fearless Organization (2018)
- Brené Brown – social science researcher, Daring Greatly (2012): vulnerability as a strength in leadership
- Amy Edmondson (1999) – psychological safety and team learning
- Nembhard & Edmondson (2006) – inclusive leadership and psychological safety

- Module created by Afthonios.com.
- Content reviewed on 13 October 2026