MODULE OVERVIEW

Team autonomy: Freedom within a clear framework

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Engagement is declining, and autonomy is one of the strongest levers for reviving it: an international study from 2026 shows that it fuels motivation, improves performance and engagement, and reduces burnout, especially as AI shifts work toward judgment and initiative. Autonomy is more than flexible working hours, and the module shows its two pillars: a clear decision framework that makes people accountable and frees initiative as much as it protects against overload, and real psychological safety (Edmondson).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Contrast autonomy with hands-off management: decide and act in a clear framework with tailored help.

02 Build autonomy on its two pillars: a clear decision framework and real psychological safety.

03 Delegate in stages and set the framework for autonomy by jointly agreeing on vision, results, processes, and areas of freedom.

04 Negotiate your decision scope and goals with your manager, so you commit to what you helped define.

WHO IT'S FOR

Managers who want to give accountability without losing control, and team members seeking autonomy without feeling lost.

- **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

- Afthonios method: a classification of the areas of autonomy at work (method, time, decisions, goals, resources, people) – inspired by Daniel Pink's "4 Ts" (Drive)
- Leading "with context, not control" – Reed Hastings (Netflix)
- Psychological safety – Amy Edmondson
- 3 decision-making modes, including the advice process – inspired by F. Laloux (Reinventing Organizations)

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2026: global engagement at 20%, with Europe the lowest of any region (~13%)
- Hagger & McAnally Starr, 2026, Stress and Health: meta-analysis on Self-Determination Theory (192 studies, 93,552 employees) – autonomy fuels motivation, engagement, and performance
- Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business School, The Fearless Organization, 2018
- Reed Hastings & Erin Meyer, No Rules Rules, 2020

Module created by Afthonios.com.

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