



Champions in Chairs 2022

Summary Report

6 September 2022

Key points



Tuesday 6 September, 10am – 3pm

Harbourside Room, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

MC: Niav Owens

Guest Speaker: Belinda Clark

Workshop Facilitator: Chris Spinks, AIS Leadership & culture

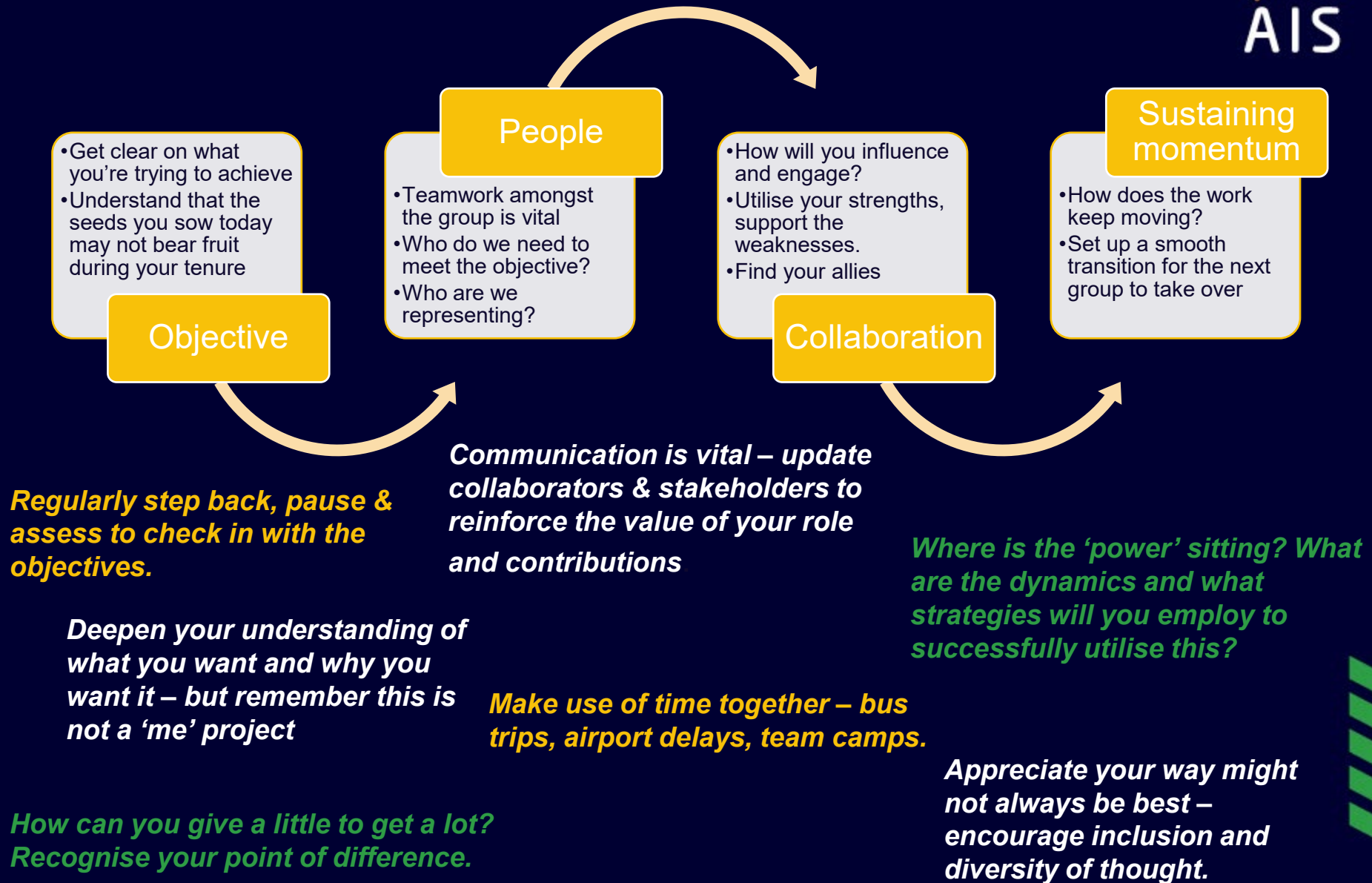
Panel: Hannah Every-Hall, Kurt Fearnley, Jane Waldburger

A large, solid yellow arrow pointing horizontally to the right, spanning most of the width of the slide.

Change *can* happen in a generation

A series of five parallel green diagonal lines in the bottom right corner, slanted upwards from left to right.

Guest speaker: Belinda Clark



Workshop session 1

How can you speak up without the fear of retribution?



‘Psychological Safety’:

The belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes. It is the shared belief that the team is safe for psychological risk-taking.

– Amy Edmondson



Frame the work as a learning problem not an execution problem

Acknowledge your own fallibility



Model curiosity



Set an environment that meets the needs of the individuals.

Broaden the conversation: Great leaders say ‘Yes and...’

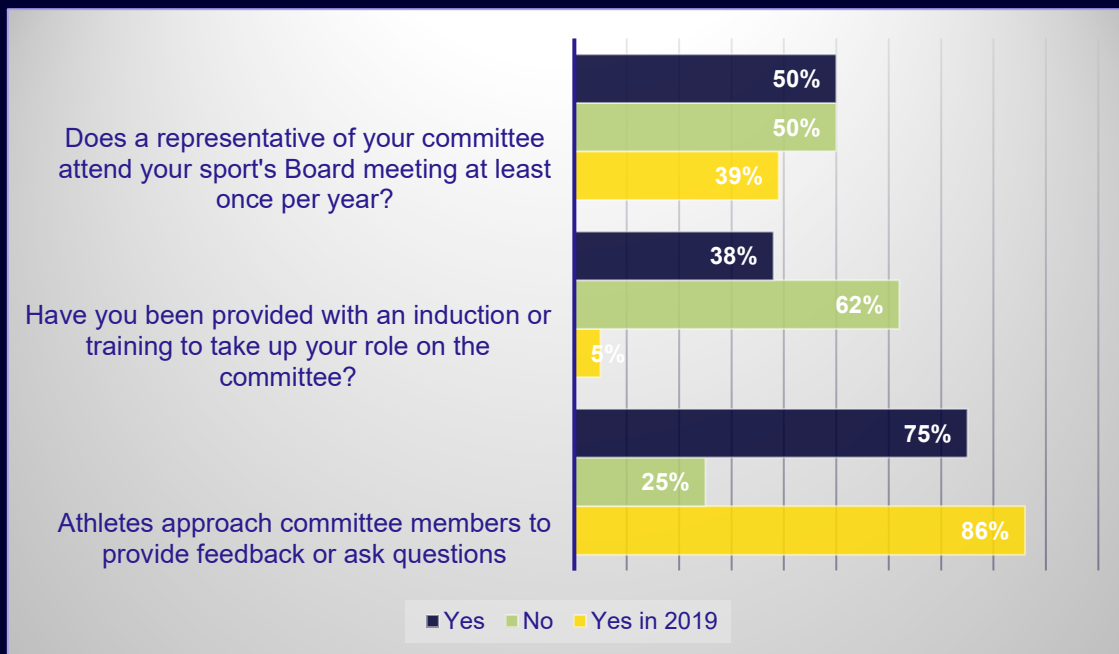
Take it offline, humanise the ‘scary’, think about how you enter a group.

Big gains can be made from connection. Build meaningful relationships. Small acknowledgements create genuine inclusions. Share your challenges.

***Get up on the balcony.
Understand and acknowledge the landscape – don’t hide from it.***

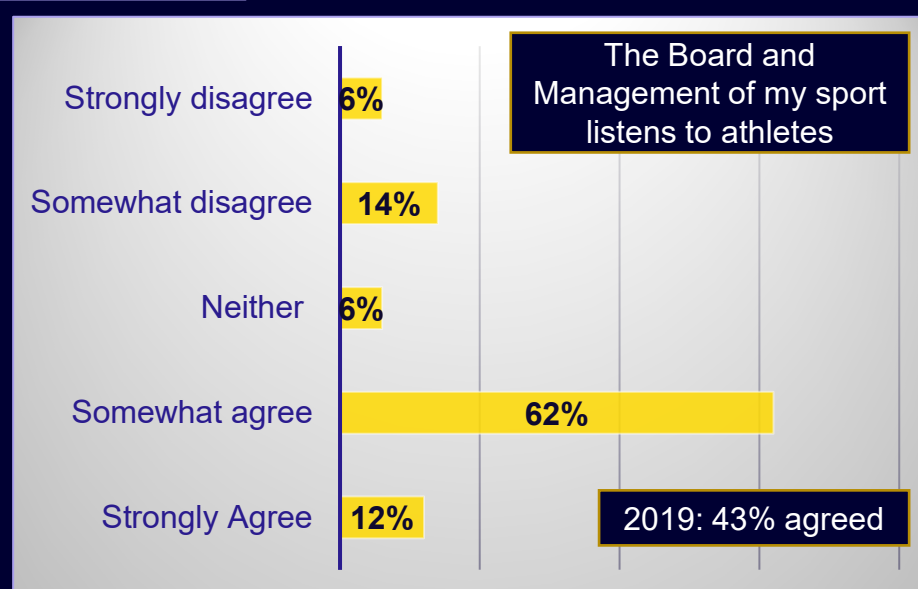
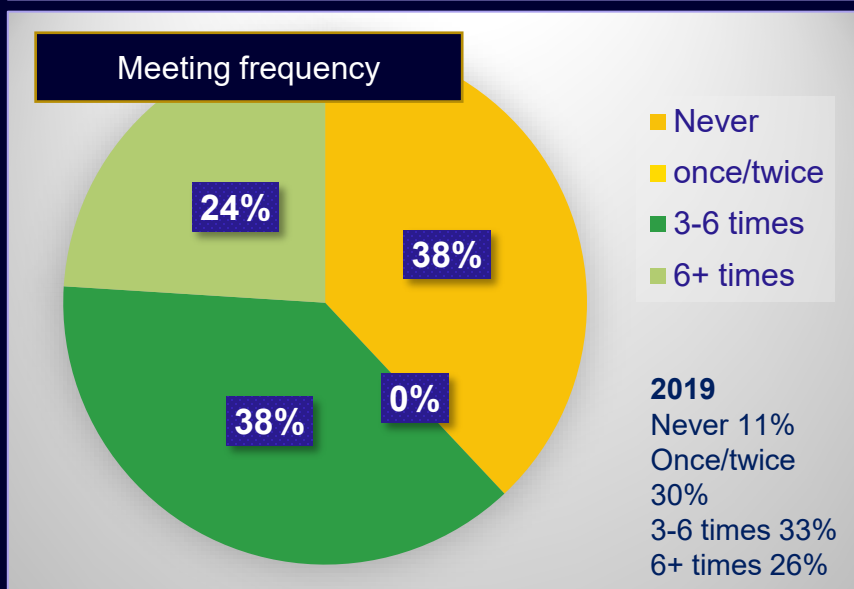
Safety in numbers: ‘we think this’.
Be truly representative of your athlete community.

Survey results comparison: 2019 v 2022



Some positive trends, in line with a general increase in appetite for bringing the athlete voice to the table – and listening to it.

Continuing work to support inductions, training and making an athlete committee a standard part of governance.



Panel discussion

Kurt Fearnley, Hannah Every-Hall, Jane Waldburger



Preparation

- Understand your sport's governance
- Do your pre-reading
- Reach out for further knowledge
- Understand the basics of meetings
- Seek out external confidantes to help build your confidence

Board and management relationships

- Find a mentor
- Get coffee
- Be a standing agenda item
- Ask 'stupid' questions (because they're not)
- Invite a Board member to speak at your meeting
- Be OK with the hard stuff because you're sharing the load

Value

- Be yourself – you don't need to be rigid & formal.
- Athlete experience & knowledge is just as important as the accountant, strategist etc
- Separation of operational lens v strategic lens
- Speak up
- Presenting your opinion won't guarantee an outcome but at least you will be heard

Operations

- Close the feedback loops with the group you're representing.
- Share what you're working on. Show that you're listening.
- Share the challenges with your stakeholders
- Communicate and support – flesh out the strengths & weaknesses of the group

Workshop session 2

Bringing it all together



Transparency & trust reinforced by solid communication with athletes, Board, NSO and other stakeholders.

Awareness doesn't bring about change on its own – share learnings

Shift from being informative to insightful

Find a mentor

Relationships and building connections are important.

Frame what you need from collaboration – what do you want back from your audience?

Safety in number: This is what the committee thinks on behalf of the athletes

How do you get on balcony? Don't sweat the small stuff

Setting realistic goals for your committee?

Utilising this network – it's good to know there are common struggles

Show vulnerability and model behaviours to build psych safety

What do I or we as a committee need support with?

Additional resources



The AIS is available to support the establishment and upskilling of athlete advisory committees with templates and advice, training and templates.



Further information about the Athletes With Impact program can be found [here](#).



Any other athlete advisory committee queries can be directed to briar.sefo@ausport.gov.au





Appendices

Psychological Safety workshop slides



Champions in Chairs

Workshop Session 1

Chris Spinks – AIS Leadership & Culture Team
6 September 2022

Psychological Safety

The definition



‘Psychological Safety’:

The belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes. It is the shared belief that the team is safe for psychological risk-taking.

– Amy Edmondson

Psychological Safety

Building a psychologically safe workplace



How do you build psychological safety?



Amy Edmondson's TED Talk: <https://youtu.be/LhoLuui9gX8>



Psychological Safety

Getting into the learning zone



Psychological Safety

Key strategies



Frame work as a learning problem, rather than an execution problem

Acknowledge your own fallibility

Model curiosity by asking a lot of questions

Be supportive, inclusive, open and trusting

Tailor your relationship building approach to the individual

Check in on their emotions

Encourage open communication and conversation

Use generative language



Four Stages of Psychological Safety

Recent interpretation by Timothy R. Clark

1. **Inclusion Safety.** Informal admittance to the team; you are accepted and granted a shared identity.
2. **Learner Safety.** You feel safe to engage in the discovery process, ask questions, experiment, and even make mistakes – not if, but when, you make them.
3. **Contributor Safety.** The team invites and expects you to perform work in an assigned role with appropriate boundaries, based on the assumption that you can perform competently in your role; you feel safe to participate as an active and full-fledged member of the team.
4. **Challenger Safety.** You can challenge the status quo without retribution, reprisal, or the risk of damaging your personal standing or reputation.



Psychological Safety

Creating it for others



- Break into four groups
- Each group takes one of the four stages of psychological safety:
 - Inclusion
 - Learner
 - Contributor
 - Challenger
- Consider how to create that level of safety for committee members at the previous stage
 - For 'Inclusion safety', that means the absence of any psychological safety or being new to the group
- 10 minutes to discuss and prepare a brief for the other groups
- 10 minutes to hear from each group and for others to ask questions



Psychological Safety

Creating it for yourself

Examples of how you might contribute to creating psychological safety for yourself:

- Set realistic goals for yourself and the committee
- Establish and draw on peer support to maintain a grounded perspective
- Seek out a mentor for testing ideas
- Maintain a curious mindset
- Establish genuine connections with committee members, the coaching group, the Board, etc
- Draw on the range of strengths in the committee (and outside it, where necessary)



Psychological Safety

Creating it for yourself

How might you ensure psychological safety for yourself?

- 3-5 minutes for individual reflection and application
- 5-7 minutes of sharing in pairs/trios
- 5 minutes of sharing in full group





Champions in Chairs

Workshop Session 2

Chris Spinks – AIS Leadership & Culture Team
6 September 2022

Bringing It All Together

Developing insights and taking action

- 5 minutes to reflect on and consolidate today's discussions, e.g.:
 - What has been intriguing to you?
 - Which of the practices you've heard about today do you most need to consider?
- 5 minutes individual consideration of a question:
 - How might you turn those insights into action?
- 5 minutes sharing in small groups
- 5 minutes sharing with the full group





[AIS.gov.au](https://ais.gov.au)



@theAIS #theAIS

Leverrier Street Bruce ACT 2617
PO Box 176 Belconnen ACT 2616
+61 2 6214 1111

