

FROM PAUSE TO PROGRESS™

BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Whole-Person Development for Leaders, Managers & Employees

Using the EMBRACE 6 P's of Personal Growth™

A PRACTICAL, HUMAN-CENTERED FRAMEWORK

For navigating decisions, communication, accountability, change, and the everyday habits that help people and businesses grow.

Jan Davidson

Speaker • Author • Trainer • Creator of the EMBRACE Model™

jan@embraceyourjourney.net • embraceyourjourney.net

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

A Guide for Real Workplace Moments

This edition brings the EMBRACE 6 P's into business and leadership development: leading yourself, working with others, managing people, and turning knowledge into daily practice. Use the core guide first, then select paired challenge and success cases from the research and scenario supplement.

Section	Page
Workshop Promise & Business Overview	3
The Business Reality: Leading People While Being People	3
The EMBRACE 6 P's at Work	5
The Two-Hour 6 P's Overview	6
Signature Learning Moments	7
Business & Leadership Scenario Lab	8
The Person Behind the Role	9
Progress People Can Carry Into the Next Workday	10
Program Fit & Delivery	12
Ways to Bring the Experience to Your Organization	13

BUSINESS IS HUMAN WORK

Decisions, relationships, and everyday habits shape how work gets done. Grow the Person. Grow the Business.

Research & Practice Supplement

About Jan & EMBRACE 14 • Research 15–16 • Facilitation 17

Cases 1–14 18–31 (one case per page)

Four-hour format 32 • First-week practice 33 • 30-day review 34

Organization discovery 35 • Sources 36–37

EMBRACE YOUR JOURNEY • BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP

From Pause to Progress™

Whole-Person Development for Leaders, Managers & Employees using the EMBRACE 6 P's.

The Workshop Promise

Participants leave with a shared language and a practical reset process to rehearse during a difficult decision, a tense conversation, a changing priority, or a moment of success they want to repeat. The aim is usable practice, supported by leaders who address obstacles in the work itself.

SIGNATURE RESET QUESTION

"Which P am I in, and what is my next honest step?"

Designed for business owners, emerging leaders, supervisors, managers, individual contributors, and cross-functional teams in small businesses and larger organizations.

What Participants Leave With

- Use the 6 P's during decisions, conflict, change, overload, and successful moments worth understanding and repeating.
- Recognize the difference between an automatic reaction and an intentional response.
- Identify what needs attention and possible contributors; avoid assuming one root cause.
- Choose one clear next step that supports communication, accountability, boundaries, customer relationships, and personal responsibility.
- Apply the framework across workplace roles; identify one behavior to practice and one organizational condition that supports it.

The Business Reality: Leading People While Being People

People are asked to deliver results while priorities compete, messages interrupt, customers need answers, and change keeps arriving. A new manager may still carry a full individual workload. A capable employee may hesitate to raise a problem. A successful team may not know which habits made its results possible.

At the same time, employees do not leave grief, caregiving, financial concerns, health worries, family demands, uncertainty, frustration, or decision fatigue at the employee entrance. They bring their whole humanity to work.

THE BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

People manage tasks and their responses to those tasks. Leaders also shape workload, resources, expectations, and the conditions in which others are asked to succeed.

This Workshop Is Different

The experience combines private reflection, realistic workplace scenarios, guided discussion, and practice. Participants may pass and never need to disclose personal experiences. Leaders practice listening and accountability without using the framework to label or diagnose colleagues.

Business Priority	How the Workshop Supports It
Employee Well-Being	Notice overload early and identify both a personal response and a work-design issue requiring leadership action.
Decisions & Accountability	Clarify facts, decision rights, expectations, and follow-through before reacting.
Cross-Department Communication	Check assumptions, name dependencies, and confirm who owns the next step.
Leadership Development	Practice feedback, delegation, listening, recognition, and decisions under pressure.
Change & Skill Development	Turn a learning need into protected practice, feedback, and a manageable experiment.
Learning & Trust	Discuss problems without humiliation and study successful work so useful habits can spread.

The EMBRACE 6 P's at Work

The EMBRACE Model™ identifies WHAT we work on; the 6 P's are HOW we work through it. Use them for challenges and successes. This is a returning process, not a rigid checklist: revisit any P, or return to Pause when unsure.

P	Purpose	Workplace Application	Reset Question
PAUSE	Stop; interrupt automatic reaction.	Notice your response before answering, deciding, giving feedback, or rushing past success.	What am I noticing right now?
PINPOINT	Identify the issue.	Identify WHAT needs attention, WHY it matters, and HOW it appears. Explore possible contributors; separate facts from assumptions.	What needs attention—WHAT, WHY, and HOW?
PROCESS	Ownership and direction.	Name feelings and assumptions. Own your part without blame and identify direction. Seek support; responsible action need not wait for feelings to resolve.	What is mine to own, and where am I headed?
PLAN	Choose an appropriate next step.	Choose action, support, escalation, or continuing what works. Match the step to the need; it need not be small.	What is my next honest step?
PRACTICE	Repeat and learn.	Repeat an appropriate plan across situations; it may become automatic. Allow enough practice to learn; reassess sooner if harmful, unsafe, or unsuitable.	What should I keep practicing or reassess?
PROGRESS	Evidence of meaningful movement.	Compare actual change with intended direction. Effort and feedback alone are not proof. Celebrate meaningful movement; continue what helps or adjust.	What evidence shows meaningful progress?

SHARED WORKPLACE LANGUAGE

"Which P are you in?" gives teams a simple way to name where they are. "What is your next honest step?" moves the conversation toward ownership and action.

The Two-Hour 6 P's Overview

A proposed introductory format. Select one short case; the full scenario library is for deeper sessions and follow-up.

Time	Segment	Participant Experience
0:00-0:08	Welcome + Set the Room	Purpose, expectations, and professional participation agreements
0:08-0:23	What P Are You Carrying Today?	Signature icebreaker and immediate connection to the framework
0:23-0:35	The Business Reality	Notice pressure and what helps work go well
0:35-0:50	Pause	Interrupt reaction and create room for choice
0:50-1:05	Pinpoint	Look beyond the visible issue to explore possible contributors
1:05-1:20	Process	Name feelings, ownership, and direction without overexposure
1:20-1:27	Reset Break	Breath, stretch, water, quiet reflection
1:27-1:42	Plan	Choose a realistic next step, including maintaining what works
1:42-1:55	Practice	Rehearse one workplace case in pairs; switch speaker and listener
1:55-2:00	Progress + Commitment	Name one shift to carry into the coming week

Participation Agreements

- Share only what feels appropriate.
- Participants are always allowed to pass.
- Listen to understand - not to fix.
- The goal is insight and application, not personal exposure.

- Apply what is useful within your role, decision authority, and organization.

OPENING FRAME

The workshop does not ask employees to smile through problems that need to be addressed. It gives them a structured way to notice what is happening, understand it more clearly, and choose how to respond.

Signature Learning Moments

1. "What P Are You Carrying Today?"

Participants choose the P that feels closest to where they are. People can share a deadline or team and still bring different experiences. Offer a fictional workplace example as an equal alternative to personal reflection.

Why it works: It is memorable, low-risk, and gives participants an immediate connection to the framework without requiring personal disclosure.

2. The 3-Breath Pause (Optional)

- First breath: notice your body.
- Second breath: notice your emotion.
- Third breath: notice your choice. Use another brief stop if preferred; do not delay necessary safety action.

TAKEAWAY

Pause offers room for choice; it does not guarantee calm or clarity.

3. Fruit vs. Root

A missed deadline may be the fruit. Possible contributors include competing priorities, unclear ownership, a missing skill, an unrealistic promise, or a dependency nobody checked. A strong result also has roots: useful preparation, clear decisions, help-seeking, or a reliable handoff. Separate what you observed from what you assumed.

TAKEAWAY

Name what needs attention; explore causes without assuming you know another person's motives.

4. The One-Step Plan

Participants complete: "Because I noticed _____, my next honest step is _____."

TAKEAWAY

A plan should fit the need. Give it a reasonable opportunity; one uncomfortable attempt alone does not mean it failed.

Business & Leadership Scenario Lab

Use one concern case and its success partner to practice all six P's. These are original, research-informed fictional composites, not accounts of named companies. Full cases, facilitator prompts, and evidence links follow the core guide.

Scenario	Paired Practice Moments
1–2 Priorities & Capacity	Competing urgent requests / a team protects clear priorities and reliable delivery.
3–4 Feedback & Recognition	A missed commitment triggers blame / a useful contribution receives specific recognition.
5–6 Handoffs & Collaboration	Sales and operations promise different outcomes / a clear handoff prevents rework.
7–8 Delegation & Ownership	An overloaded manager becomes the bottleneck / an employee succeeds with clear authority and support.
9–10 Change & AI Learning	An untested AI draft creates errors / a supported pilot builds skill while checking quality.
11–12 Fairness & Flexible Work	Visibility replaces evidence in judging performance / a team uses clear outcomes and fair access.
13–14 Speaking Up & Learning	An employee hides a near-miss / a team reviews a success and transfers the useful habit.

The Scenario Lab Questions

- Pause - What am I noticing right now?
- Pinpoint - What needs attention—WHAT, WHY, and HOW?
- Process - What is mine to own, and where am I headed?
- Plan - What is my next honest step?
- Practice - What should I keep practicing or reassess?

- Progress - What evidence shows meaningful progress?

CULTURE-BUILDING BENEFIT

The six questions can support self-reflection, development conversations, project reviews, customer follow-up, and manager check-ins. Invite people to use the language; do not demand a personal explanation of which P they are in.

The Person Behind the Role

A job title, report, presentation, or finished task reveals only part of a person's experience. People may carry:

- A caregiving responsibility waiting at home.
- A difficult financial conversation before work.
- Grief or a major life transition.
- A health concern or sleepless night.
- Family responsibilities and competing demands.
- Uncertainty about work, home, or the future.
- The accumulation of demanding interactions during the workday.

WHOLE-PERSON LEARNING

Train the whole person, and you've trained the employee.

From Pause to Progress™ offers a process people can return to in a team conversation, a leadership decision, or life outside work. Employers remain responsible for reasonable work design and appropriate support; employees are not required to reveal private circumstances.

Why This Matters in Business & Leadership

Self-leadership supports how a person chooses their next response. People leadership adds responsibility for clarity, resources, fair treatment, and follow-through. This guide addresses both so personal growth and business practices can reinforce one another.

A LEADERSHIP QUESTION

What changes when employees are given tools not only for what to do — but for how to move from knowing to doing under pressure?

THE KNOWING-DOING GAP

People often know they should communicate clearly, ask for help, follow through, recognize good work, and address a concern early. Pressure, habits, unclear authority, and unsupported workloads can block follow-through. The 6 P's help participants examine what is getting in the way and choose a step to practice. Managers must also ask what they can change in the system. Information does not equal transformation; supported practice makes learning usable.

INFORMATION DOES NOT EQUAL TRANSFORMATION

Understanding matters. Practice is what makes the learning usable when the real moment arrives.

Progress People Can Carry Into the Next Workday

Progress can be visible in a small action, a better conversation, or a useful change to how work is organized:

- The pause before sending a defensive message or making a rushed decision.
- The clarifying question instead of the assumption.
- The respectful request for support before overload becomes frustration.
- The complete handoff that names an owner, deadline, and next step.
- The boundary stated without hostility.
- The decision to escalate an issue appropriately rather than carry it alone.
- The ability to recover after a difficult interaction instead of carrying it into the next one.
- Using feedback from a moment that did not go as intended to make a different choice the next time a similar situation appears.

FROM WORKSHOP TO WORKPLACE

Attendance is an activity, not an outcome. Whether an organization selects the two-hour overview or four-hour skill-building experience, the goal is not simply attendance; it is for participants to leave with language and tools they can return to when pressure shows up again.

Participants leave with a personal commitment, the 6P Reset framework, and a clear question they can reuse: “Which P am I in, and what is my next honest step?” Depending on the engagement, reinforcement can also include manager discussion prompts, a 7-day application bridge, a 30-day guided reflection series, or a follow-up conversation focused on application.

POTENTIAL ORGANIZATIONAL APPLICATION

- More intentional responses during customer, deadline, or decision pressure
- Clearer communication across roles, locations, and departments
- Earlier recognition of overload and clearer leadership decisions about capacity
- Greater use of clarification instead of assumption
- Shared language for supportive development conversations and check-ins
- Specific recognition and deliberate repetition of practices that work
- Stronger transfer of learning from the workshop into daily behavior

Closing Commitment

ONE INTENTIONAL STEP

"One way I will move from Pause to Progress this week is..."

Each participant names an appropriate action or practice to continue, a review point, and evidence of movement toward their direction.

When pressure shows up...	Ask...
Pause	What am I noticing right now?
Pinpoint	What needs attention—WHAT, WHY, and HOW?
Process	What is mine to own, and where am I headed?
Plan	What is my next honest step?
Practice	What should I keep practicing or reassess?
Progress	What evidence shows meaningful progress?

REMEMBER

You do not have to carry everything differently today. Choose one thing you are willing to carry with more awareness.

Program Fit & Delivery

Ideal For

- Small-business owners and entrepreneurs
- Emerging leaders and first-time managers
- Individual contributors and project specialists
- Customer-facing and professional-service teams
- Operations and administrative teams
- Technical and cross-functional teams
- Sales and business-development teams
- Supervisors and department managers
- Leadership development programs
- New-hire, staff-development, or employee-appreciation learning days
- Organizations connecting personal growth with practical leadership and business habits

Customization Before Delivery

Use this as the reusable sector guide. Before delivery, hold a discovery conversation about goals, existing training and supports, roles, current pressures, language, workplace policies, participation needs, and how success will be recognized. Select and adapt cases to real decision authority without using identifiable incidents. Create a separate organization-specific copy; retain this master. Agree on timing, privacy expectations, referral routes, practical measures, and follow-up ownership. Keep the six P's in their established order.

Recommended Group Format

In-person or virtual delivery with private reflection, pairs or small groups, and realistic rehearsal. Consider separate manager and employee groups where reporting relationships might inhibit participation. Adapt group size, accessibility, language, and examples during discovery.

What the Organization Provides

- A protected two- or four-hour learning block, based on the selected experience
- Presentation space and standard A/V
- Seating that allows individual reflection and small-group conversation
- A logistics contact and a leader who can explain organizational context and follow-up

What EMBRACE Your Journey Provides

- Facilitated Two-Hour 6 P's Overview or Four-Hour Interactive Skill-Building Experience
- Participant learning materials
- 6P Reset Tool for post-workshop use
- Certificate of Completion for each participant
- Business and leadership scenarios with guided application exercises
- Optional manager reinforcement and follow-up resources

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARY

From Pause to Progress™ is an educational workplace learning experience. It supports self-awareness, communication, and personal growth; it is not psychotherapy, diagnosis, or a substitute for clinical or employee-assistance resources.

Ways to Bring From Pause to Progress™ to Your Organization

Option	Includes
Essential	Two-Hour 6 P's Overview + participant handout + digital 6P Reset Tool
Signature	Essential package + branded participant workbook + desk-size 6P Reset Cards + Certificate of Completion
Culture Builder	Four-Hour Interactive Skill-Building Experience + manager follow-up session + 30-day guided reflection series

A Business & Leadership Program Description

From Pause to Progress™: Business & Leadership Development is a practical learning experience for leaders, managers, and employees. Using Pause, Pinpoint, Process, Plan, Practice, and Progress, participants rehearse decisions, communication, accountability, change, and the habits that turn knowledge into action. A two-hour overview introduces the process; a four-hour experience provides more practice. Research-informed cases explore challenges and successful practices. Organization-specific examples and delivery materials are confirmed during discovery.

The One-Sentence Pitch

GROW THE PERSON. GROW THE BUSINESS.

A practical, human-centered learning experience that helps people turn awareness into clearer decisions, stronger conversations, and intentional action.

About Jan Davidson

Jan Davidson is a speaker, author, trainer, and creator of the EMBRACE Model™. Her professional background includes extensive facilitation and leadership experience within the Indiana Department of Correction, including serving as Facility Director of Addiction Recovery Services. Her work has centered on helping people understand behavior, navigate change, process difficult life experiences, and move from awareness into practical action. Through EMBRACE Your Journey, Jan brings that experience into workplace and organizational learning using practical, human-centered tools designed for real-life application.

About EMBRACE Your Journey

EMBRACE Your Journey™ creates practical learning experiences that help people navigate life's hills and valleys. Jan Davidson's EMBRACE Model™ provides the WHAT of personal growth; the 6 P's provide the HOW. From Pause to Progress™ brings that work into business and organizational learning.

Progress, not perfection or performance.

Jan Davidson • Speaker • Author • Trainer • Creator of the EMBRACE Model™

jan@embraceyourjourney.net • embraceyourjourney.net • Beside You on the Journey

Research & Application

Use this supplement to select relevant practice, not to diagnose an organization. Research describes patterns and possibilities; discovery establishes what applies locally. The cases and recommended actions are original teaching applications. None of these studies evaluates the EMBRACE Model™ or establishes outcomes for this workshop.

Concerns worth exploring

Manager capacity and engagement. Gallup's 2026 report describes a second consecutive annual decline in global engagement, with managers central to the downturn. This supports examining managers' competing responsibilities and support, rather than assuming a motivation problem. Application: Pinpoint responsibilities, Plan realistic delegation, and Practice supportive check-ins. [1]

Fragmented attention and unclear priorities. Microsoft documents heavy digital coordination and after-hours activity among Microsoft 365 users. Its widely quoted two-minute interruption figure describes the top 20% by ping volume, not every employee. Application: Pause before accepting another request; Pinpoint competing commitments; Plan a priority decision with the person who has authority to make it. [2]

Fear of asking, admitting, or disagreeing. Edmondson's research synthesis explains how interpersonal risk can inhibit help-seeking and discussion of errors. Application: Process assumptions without humiliating people; Practice asking what information is missing; follow through when a concern is raised. Psychological safety does not remove accountability. [4]

Learning demands during change. The World Economic Forum's employer survey identifies skills gaps as a major barrier to transformation and highlights both technological and human skills. These are employer expectations, not guaranteed forecasts. Application: Pinpoint one task-specific learning need; Plan protected practice and feedback rather than merely assigning a course. [7]

What Is Going Well — and Why

Recognition can be meaningful. Gallup and Workhuman tracked employees over two years and found an association between high-quality recognition and lower turnover. The observational design does not prove recognition caused retention. Application: Pinpoint a useful behavior, ask how the person prefers to be recognized, and Practice specific appreciation. [3]

Flexible work can support results. A randomized trial of 1,612 Trip.com employees found that two home-working days per week improved satisfaction and reduced quitting by about one-third without detected damage to performance. It concerned particular graduate roles at one company; it does not establish the right arrangement for every job. Application: Plan around agreed outcomes, coverage, and fair access to opportunities. [5]

AI can help people learn and perform. Research on a staggered AI-assistant rollout involving 5,172 customer-support agents found a 15% average increase in issues resolved per hour, with substantial differences across workers. This is evidence from one work setting, not a promise of gains in every business. Application: Practice a bounded, approved task with human review; compare quality as well as time. [6]

Teams can learn deliberately from experience. A meta-analysis found performance benefits from individual and team debriefs across varied settings. The result supports structured reflection; it does not establish a specific benefit for this guide's exercises. Application: Review what changed toward the intended direction, what contributed, and what is worth repeating. [8]

Look locally for both sides

Ask: Where is work becoming harder? Where are people already doing something useful? What evidence supports each observation? Whose experience is missing? Look at work samples, handoffs, repeated questions, customer feedback, and existing measures. Do not infer a person's attitude or wellbeing from a single result.

Use the paired cases as starting points. A success is not proof that a process will work everywhere; a concern is not proof that an employee is the problem. Name the behavior, the conditions, and the next test.

Facilitating the Scenario Lab

Choose a pair that fits the participants' actual work and decision authority. In a two-hour overview, use one case for a short rehearsal; offer its partner for follow-up. In a four-hour session, allow deeper practice with both a challenge and a success. Do not attempt all fourteen cases in one workshop.

A 20-minute practice round

Read and clarify the situation (2 minutes). Reflect privately through the six P's (3 minutes). Rehearse the conversation or decision in pairs (6 minutes). Use observer feedback and repeat one difficult sentence (5 minutes). Name a next step, owner, and progress signal (4 minutes).

Roles and observer prompts

One person plays the employee or decision-maker; another plays the colleague or manager. A third person may observe. Did the speaker separate facts from assumptions? Ask a real question? Name a clear request? Check authority and capacity? Agree on follow-through? Notice a useful behavior as well as an improvement? Feedback should describe what was heard or seen.

Debrief with care and accountability

Ask what changed between the first and second rehearsal. Which P was hardest? What could the individual do, and what required a manager's decision? For a success case, ask which conditions made success possible and what could be lost if the practice scaled too quickly. These are suggested responses, not a single correct script. In each Process discussion, identify your part without blame and the direction needed before planning action.

Invite fictional examples and allow participants to pass. Do not collect personal reflections for performance reviews. Explain the organization's actual limits on confidentiality. If discussion raises immediate safety concerns or serious misconduct, use the established reporting route; a reflection exercise must not delay required action.

Adapt without stereotyping

Replace job titles, customer type, tools, and work setting. Keep the underlying choice. For employees without managerial authority, practice a clear request or escalation. For leaders, practice a concrete resource or priority decision. Avoid assuming competence, preferences, or work ethic from age, generation, identity, or work location.

Case 1 | Everything Is Urgent

CONCERN • Priorities and capacity • Research context [1, 2]

An account coordinator has promised a client proposal by afternoon. Two managers add urgent requests, each unaware of the other. The coordinator agrees to both, works late, and sends a proposal with missing information. The next morning, a manager says, “You need better time management.”

Pause — Notice the urge to apologize for everything or defend every choice. Slow the reply enough to describe the situation accurately.

Pinpoint — List the three commitments, estimated effort, deadlines, and dependencies. The visible error is the fruit; conflicting priorities and no shared decision-maker may be roots.

Process — Acknowledge embarrassment and worry without assuming either manager intended the conflict. Ask which commitment matters most and why.

Plan — Present options: complete the client proposal first, defer one request, or obtain support. The responsible manager chooses and communicates the tradeoff.

Practice — Rehearse: “I can deliver A today. Adding B changes C’s deadline. Which should take priority?” Confirm the answer in the agreed work channel.

Progress — Review the next week’s commitments and errors. Look for earlier priority decisions and fewer surprises, not simply longer hours.

Discuss: What part belongs to the employee, and what must the managers resolve together? Watch for replacing workload decisions with advice to be more resilient. Suggested signal: commitments with a clear priority and owner; check delivery quality too.

Case 2 | A Calm Week Worth Studying

GOING WELL • Priorities and capacity • Research context [2, 8]

A small consulting team completes its weekly client work on time without the usual evening scramble. Its lead dismisses the week as easy. A team member points out that they used one priority list, checked dependencies early, and declined a meeting with no decision to make.

Pause — Stop long enough to notice the success before filling the newly available time with additional work.

Pinpoint — Identify what actually changed: work volume, task complexity, staffing, the priority list, and protected focus time. Avoid crediting a new habit for every good result.

Process — Invite quieter team members to describe their experience. Did anyone absorb hidden work to make the week look smooth?

Plan — Keep the useful planning habit for another week and name an exception route for a genuinely urgent request.

Practice — Begin the weekly check-in with the three most important outcomes, dependencies, and what the team will defer. End with each person confirming their understanding.

Progress — Compare delivery, rework, and late work over several cycles. Preserve the routine if it helps; adjust it when the workload changes.

Discuss: Which part is repeatable, and which depended on unusually favorable conditions? A leader should protect useful capacity rather than immediately removing the margin. Suggested signal: more predictable delivery without hidden overtime.

Case 3 | Feedback Arrives as Blame

CONCERN • Feedback and accountability • Research context [1, 4]

A team member misses a reporting deadline twice. The supervisor has not checked the cause but opens a group meeting with, “Some people need to take ownership.” The employee becomes quiet. A required data feed has been arriving late, and the employee also delayed asking for help.

Pause — The supervisor notices frustration and moves the conversation to an appropriate private setting rather than continuing the public criticism.

Pinpoint — Identify the agreed deadline, the late reports, the data dependency, and when the risk became visible. Separate the system delay from delayed communication.

Process — Ask for the employee’s account and acknowledge the effect of the public comment. Listen without withdrawing the expectation of timely reporting.

Plan — Agree on an early warning point, a backup source or revised deadline, and who will address the upstream delay.

Practice — Rehearse: “The last two reports arrived after the deadline. Help me understand the sequence. What will we each do before the next one?”

Progress — Review the next reporting cycle. Recognize earlier escalation and follow-through while checking whether the underlying dependency improved.

Discuss: How can a leader take responsibility for their delivery of feedback and still hold a clear standard? Watch for vague labels such as careless or uncommitted. Suggested signal: earlier risk notification and fewer repeated missed commitments.

Case 4 | Recognition That Teaches

GOING WELL • Feedback and recognition • Research context [3, 8]

An analyst catches a mismatch before a customer report is sent. A manager says “Great job” and prepares to move on. A colleague asks what the analyst did differently, revealing that a new comparison check found the problem. The analyst dislikes public attention.

Pause — Make room to acknowledge the contribution without turning it into an unwanted spotlight.

Pinpoint — Name the observable behavior: checking two sources before release and raising the discrepancy early. Identify how that helped the team.

Process — Ask how the analyst would like the contribution recognized and who else helped. Avoid assuming everyone values the same form of praise.

Plan — Offer specific appreciation and ask permission to share the checking method. Agree on a small trial by another team member.

Practice — Rehearse: “Your comparison caught the mismatch before release. It gave us time to correct it. Would you be comfortable showing us the check?”

Progress — Notice whether others can use the method and whether recognition reaches less visible contributions as well as dramatic rescues.

Discuss: What makes appreciation credible? Recognition should not reward preventable crises more than reliable preparation or become a substitute for fair pay and manageable work. Suggested signal: people can name which behavior mattered and repeat it appropriately.

Case 5 | A Promise Falls Between Teams

CONCERN • Handoffs and collaboration • Research context [2, 4]

A salesperson promises a customer a delivery date without confirming capacity. Operations reads the order differently and schedules later. Both teams insist they followed their process. The customer receives conflicting updates, and employees begin blaming the other department.

Pause — Stop the competing messages and agree who will provide the next customer update.

Pinpoint — Reconstruct the promise, accepted scope, capacity information, handoff, and missing confirmation. Focus on the sequence rather than departmental stereotypes.

Process — Let each team explain its constraints. Acknowledge the customer impact and avoid treating an explanation as an excuse.

Plan — Agree on a feasible recovery option and one person responsible for communicating it. Establish what requires operations approval before a future promise.

Practice — Rehearse a closed-loop handoff: “Here is the scope and requested date. Can you accept it? If not, what can we commit to?” The receiver confirms.

Progress — Check a small sample of later orders for accepted scope, owner, date, and customer understanding; review recurring exceptions together.

Discuss: Where was a reasonable assumption mistaken for agreement? Leaders need to resolve conflicting incentives as well as improve messages. Suggested signal: fewer conflicting commitments and less rework, without discouraging legitimate escalation.

Case 6 | The Handoff Works

GOING WELL • Handoffs and collaboration • Research context [4, 8]

A customer implementation crosses sales, operations, and support without the usual confusion. The team used a short handoff that included the promised outcome, open questions, named owner, and acceptance by the next team. A leader proposes a lengthy mandatory form for every future project.

Pause — Recognize the successful coordination before expanding the process.

Pinpoint — Ask which details prevented confusion and which were unnecessary. Check whether the project was unusually simple or benefited from extra staffing.

Process — Invite each role, including the receiving team, to describe what helped. Share credit for early questions and accurate information.

Plan — Keep a minimum useful handoff and define when a more detailed review is needed. Assign a person to test it on a different project.

Practice — Have a sender explain the handoff and a receiver repeat the outcome, owner, next action, and unresolved question in their own words.

Progress — Review whether the next team can start work without chasing essential information. Revise the handoff if it adds effort without reducing confusion.

Discuss: How do we preserve the useful habit without making paperwork the goal? Suggested signal: missing-information requests and avoidable restarts. Pair the measure with feedback from the people doing the handoff.

Case 7 | The Manager Is the Bottleneck

CONCERN • Delegation and manager capacity • Research context [1, 7]

A high-performing specialist becomes a manager but keeps nearly all previous assignments. Team members must obtain approval for small decisions. Work waits in the manager's inbox, and the manager concludes that nobody else takes initiative.

Pause — Notice the impulse to take another task back or answer every question immediately.

Pinpoint — Sort decisions by consequence, required authority, and skill. Identify which delays come from unclear permission, insufficient training, or genuinely restricted decisions.

Process — Name the manager's concern about quality without assuming employees lack motivation. Ask the team what they believe they are allowed to decide.

Plan — Delegate one suitable decision with an outcome, limits, resources, checkpoint, and escalation trigger. Ask the manager's leader to remove or reprioritize conflicting duties.

Practice — Rehearse: "You can decide X within these limits. Bring Y to me. Let's review your first example together." Ask the employee to explain the agreement back.

Progress — Check decision wait time, quality, and the employee's confidence with the task. Expand authority only when the evidence supports it.

Discuss: What must the manager's own leader change? Delegation is not transferring an impossible workload or responsibility without authority. Suggested signal: appropriate decisions completed at the intended level with fewer unnecessary approvals.

Case 8 | Ownership With Support

GOING WELL • Delegation and development • Research context [1, 8]

An employee leads a small supplier review successfully. The manager had set a clear outcome, budget boundary, and midpoint check, then stepped back. The employee used the checkpoint to ask a difficult question early. The manager considers giving them all supplier work immediately.

Pause — Recognize the achievement and resist turning success into an automatic workload increase.

Pinpoint — Identify the employee's decisions, the useful checkpoint, available support, and the limits that made the assignment manageable.

Process — Ask what felt stretching, what remained unclear, and whether the employee wants to develop further in this area.

Plan — Agree on a next assignment of appropriate scope, training or mentoring needed, and which existing work will be adjusted.

Practice — Ask the employee to explain their reasoning to a peer. The manager practices questions that support judgment rather than taking over.

Progress — Review both the next result and the quality of independent decisions. Recognize good escalation as part of ownership, not evidence of failure.

Discuss: What distinguishes supported growth from rewarding success with overload?

Suggested signal: the employee can explain decisions and seek help at agreed boundaries while maintaining quality and a realistic workload.

Case 9 | A Fast AI Draft, a Costly Assumption

CONCERN • Change and AI judgment • Research context [6, 7]

An employee uses a newly approved AI writing tool to draft a client update. Under deadline pressure, they send it without checking two claims. The client points out an error. A colleague now says that AI should never be used, while another insists everyone should use it for everything.

Pause — Stop further use of the inaccurate draft and follow the organization's process for correcting the customer communication.

Pinpoint — Identify the task, source information, missing review, and who owned approval. Do not assume either the tool or the employee explains the whole problem.

Process — Acknowledge embarrassment and uncertainty. Separate what the tool produced from verified information and discuss questions people were afraid to ask.

Plan — Define an approved low-risk use, permitted data, a human reviewer, and a check against reliable sources before external use.

Practice — Rehearse reviewing a fictional draft: mark unsupported claims, verify them, and explain a correction. Use only organization-approved tools and information.

Progress — Track errors caught before release and quality after review, alongside time spent. Reconsider the task if review costs outweigh the benefit.

Discuss: What did approval to use a tool fail to clarify? Avoid promises about job security or productivity that leaders cannot support. Suggested signal: consistent verification and clear responsibility for final work.

Case 10 | A Pilot That Builds Skill

GOING WELL • Change and learning • Research context [6, 7]

A support team tests an approved AI assistant on a narrow category of routine questions. Newer employees practice with sample cases, experienced staff review answers, and the team compares quality and time. Some employees improve; others find little benefit. The pilot lead wants to announce a company-wide success.

Pause — Appreciate the learning before declaring the tool a universal solution.

Pinpoint — Identify which tasks and people benefited, where errors remained, and how much review and training were needed.

Process — Invite both positive and negative experiences. Make it acceptable to report that the tool did not help a particular task.

Plan — Continue only where quality and usefulness meet agreed criteria. Define the next test, reviewer, support, and conditions for stopping.

Practice — Ask a newer employee to explain how they checked an answer; ask an experienced employee to demonstrate a case where human judgment changed it.

Progress — Compare task quality, time including review, and learning across experience levels. Share limitations with the results.

Discuss: What would justify expansion, and what would suggest more training or a different task? Research averages are not targets for this team. Suggested signal: a repeatable, reviewed workflow that improves useful work without hiding additional effort.

Case 11 | Visibility Becomes the Standard

CONCERN • Fairness and performance expectations • Research context [5, 4]

A manager praises office employees for commitment because they are often seen at their desks. A hybrid employee delivers dependable work but receives fewer development opportunities. Another team member handles onsite tasks that are rarely acknowledged. Nobody has agreed how contributions will be assessed.

Pause — Notice assumptions linking physical presence, long hours, or quick replies with contribution.

Pinpoint — Review role requirements, actual outcomes, coverage duties, and access to information and assignments. Distinguish genuinely onsite work from habitual preferences.

Process — Invite perspectives without asking people to defend private arrangements. Acknowledge both invisible remote work and under-recognized onsite responsibilities.

Plan — Set role-appropriate outcomes, coverage expectations, and a transparent way to allocate development opportunities. Follow existing organizational policies.

Practice — Rehearse a check-in based on completed work, quality, collaboration, and support needed rather than appearance or response speed alone.

Progress — Examine who receives information, recognition, and stretch work; check whether coverage and customer needs are being met.

Discuss: What would fair evidence look like for different roles? The hybrid-work study does not establish that every role can be remote. Suggested signal: understandable performance criteria and visible recognition of all required contributions.

Case 12 | Flexibility With Clear Agreements

GOING WELL • Fairness and coordination • Research context [5, 8]

A team combines onsite and remote work successfully. It has agreed response windows, predictable coverage, shared decisions, and outcome-based check-ins. Customer work is reliable. A new employee asks how to learn from colleagues, exposing a gap that current team members had not noticed.

Pause — Recognize what is working while treating the newcomer's question as useful information.

Pinpoint — Identify the agreements supporting delivery and the informal learning that existing employees take for granted.

Process — Ask whose needs the arrangement meets and who faces obstacles. Avoid assuming one successful team arrangement automatically serves everyone.

Plan — Preserve effective coverage and add structured onboarding, accessible decision notes, and scheduled opportunities to learn together.

Practice — Rehearse a handoff across locations and a new employee asking for context. Rotate responsibility for making decisions visible.

Progress — Review delivery quality, onboarding progress, and access to support. Adjust the agreement as roles and team composition change.

Discuss: Which part of the success comes from location and which from coordination habits?
Suggested signal: new and established employees can obtain the information and support needed to meet their responsibilities.

Case 13 | The Near-Miss Nobody Mentions

CONCERN • Speaking up and accountability • Research context [4, 8]

An employee catches an incorrect order just before it reaches a customer. They correct it quietly because the last person who reported an error was embarrassed in a meeting. The same confusing screen remains in use, and the team assumes there is no problem.

Pause — Ensure any immediate risk is addressed through the established process. Reflection follows necessary protective action.

Pinpoint — Separate the incorrect entry, the confusing screen, the correction, and the fear of reporting. A low report count does not prove work is safe or accurate.

Process — The manager asks what made speaking up difficult and listens without arguing about intent. Thank the employee for identifying the issue.

Plan — Use the appropriate reporting route, assign an owner to investigate the confusing step, and agree when the team will hear what changed.

Practice — Rehearse: “I caught an error before release. Here is what happened, what I corrected, and what may recur.” The manager practices an open, accountable response.

Progress — Check whether the process changed and concerns receive follow-through. An initial rise in reports may reflect improved willingness to speak.

Discuss: What response would make the next person more or less likely to report? Serious misconduct or safety issues still require the proper process. Suggested signal: timely response and closure, not a target of zero reports.

Case 14 | Learn From a Successful Recovery

GOING WELL • Reflection and shared learning • Research context [8, 4]

A team handles an unexpected supplier delay without losing a customer commitment. Someone flags the risk early, colleagues test alternatives, and a manager authorizes a clear decision. Once the work is finished, everyone wants to rush to the next project.

Pause — Reserve a short review while the details are still fresh. Recognize the effort without glorifying emergency work.

Pinpoint — Reconstruct the useful sequence: early signal, shared information, options, decision authority, and timely customer communication.

Process — Ask what each person noticed, which contribution was overlooked, and whether the recovery depended on unsustainable extra hours.

Plan — Select one reusable habit, such as an earlier dependency check, and assign someone to test it on the next project.

Practice — Have another team member explain how they would use the habit in a different situation. Clarify where it would not apply.

Progress — Review whether the new habit prevents avoidable emergencies and improves response to unavoidable ones. Share the learning and acknowledge contributors.

Discuss: Are we learning prevention as well as recovery? A successful rescue can hide fragile staffing or poor planning. Suggested signal: earlier risk identification, practical follow-through, and fewer repeat disruptions.

Four-Hour Practice Experience

Proposed 240-minute format, including two ten-minute breaks. Confirm group size and delivery arrangements before scheduling. This deeper format provides rehearsal and feedback; it is not a requirement to share personal experiences.

0:00–0:15 | Welcome, participation agreements, and a private “Which P?” reflection.

0:15–0:35 | Workplace reality: identify one concern and one practice going well; separate observations from assumptions.

0:35–1:00 | Pause and Pinpoint: practice a pause, then identify the visible issue and possible roots.

1:00–1:20 | Process: listen, test assumptions, own your part, and identify direction within professional boundaries.

1:20–1:30 | Break.

1:30–1:50 | Plan: name a next step, owner, authority, support, and review point.

1:50–2:20 | Challenge-case rehearsal: pairs or triads work through all six P’s, receive feedback, and repeat the difficult moment.

2:20–2:45 | Paired success case: identify what worked, what enabled it, and what should be repeated or protected.

2:45–2:55 | Break.

2:55–3:25 | Second rehearsal: select a feedback, delegation, or cross-team conversation appropriate to the group.

3:25–3:45 | Workplace transfer: each person chooses a practice; leaders identify a supporting change within their authority.

3:45–4:00 | Progress: share optional commitments, clarify follow-up, and rehearse the reset question.

Facilitator preparation

Select the paired cases in advance, prepare accessible copies, confirm organizational reporting routes, and arrange a way for people to participate without disclosing personal information. Establish how leaders will receive systemic concerns and who will respond.

The First Week of Practice

Use one manageable practice in real work. The following is a suggested reinforcement sequence, not a promise of organizational change in seven days. Participants keep personal reflections; any shared progress discussion stays focused on work behavior and support.

A seven-day application bridge

Day 1 — Choose: Name one recurring moment and the behavior you want to practice.

Example: ask for a priority decision before accepting conflicting commitments.

Day 2 — Notice: Identify the cue that usually triggers your reaction. Try the pause and record only what is useful to you.

Day 3 — Clarify: Separate the facts, assumptions, and missing information. Ask one question that helps you pinpoint the issue.

Day 4 — Rehearse: Practice the difficult sentence with a willing colleague or privately. Include a clear request.

Day 5 — Apply: Use the next step in a suitable real situation. Notice what happened, including what went well.

Day 6 — Adjust: Identify one obstacle within your control and one needing leadership support. Ask for that support.

Day 7 — Review: What did you try? What changed toward your direction? Does the plan need more practice or adjustment? Keep or choose an appropriate practice.

A manager's ten-minute check-in

Ask for an optional work example (2 minutes). Listen for facts, assumptions, and the P that helped (3 minutes). Agree on one behavior and one needed support or decision (3 minutes). Name the next review point and offer specific recognition (2 minutes). Do not demand private reflections or use the conversation as an unannounced evaluation.

A 30-Day Progress Review

Before delivery, select one or two relevant indicators and use information the organization already gathers where possible. Record a starting point, an owner, and a review point. Review learning and work conditions together; avoid adding a burdensome reporting system.

Week 2 | Check application

Ask whether people had a realistic opportunity to practice. Look at an example of a clearer request, handoff, decision, or recognition conversation. Leaders check whether promised support or priority changes actually happened.

Week 3 | Reinforce what works

Discuss a success and a difficulty. Repeat a short scenario where needed. Identify whether the obstacle is skill, unclear expectations, capacity, authority, or an unresolved process issue; choose a response that fits.

Week 4 | Review and decide

Compare examples with the starting point. What will the team continue, change, or stop? Who owns the next action? Share a practical lesson while protecting personal information. Follow up on unresolved system issues.

Choose evidence that fits the practice

Priorities: clearer commitments and fewer late surprises, alongside delivery quality. Feedback: a specific expectation and agreed follow-through. Handoffs: fewer missing-information requests and restarts. Delegation: appropriate decisions made without unnecessary approval. Learning: usable work samples after feedback. Recognition: specific contributions acknowledged across roles. Speaking up: timely responses and completed corrective actions.

Interpret progress responsibly

Attendance and satisfaction show participation and reaction; they do not establish behavior change. A stronger example shows the situation, what the person did, and what followed. Ask what else changed, such as staffing or demand. Without an appropriate evaluation design, do not attribute retention, productivity, revenue, or other business changes to this workshop alone.

Progress, not perfection or performance, invites honest learning rather than personal judgment. It does not remove organizational standards for safe, accurate, respectful work.

Organization Discovery & Adaptation

Use these questions before creating a client-specific edition. Record the agreed answers in that organization's working copy and keep this sector master reusable.

Purpose and current reality

What business or leadership need prompted the workshop? What should people do differently afterward? What is already going well and should be protected? What work examples or existing measures support those observations? Which prior training, policies, tools, or supports should this experience build on?

People, roles, and authority

Who will attend, and what decisions can they make? Are owners, managers, and employees learning together or separately? Which roles, work locations, schedules, languages, and accessibility needs must the examples reflect? Who can change workload, priorities, or resources when those issues arise?

Scenarios and professional boundaries

Which two or three cases resemble participants' work? What terms, customer situations, and processes need adapting? Remove names and identifiable incidents. What can participants choose to keep private? What are the actual limits of confidentiality? What existing routes handle safety, misconduct, employee assistance, or concerns beyond the facilitator's role?

Delivery and follow-through

Choose the two-hour overview or four-hour practice format; confirm group size, space or virtual tools, breaks, and materials. Name the logistics contact, organizational sponsor, and follow-up owner. Agree on a first-week check-in, a 30-day review, and one or two appropriate indicators.

Protect the core; tailor the application

Retain From Pause to Progress™, the EMBRACE Model™, the six P's in order, signature language, and educational purpose. Adapt the opening, examples, reflection prompts, role language, practice, supports, and measures. Confirm selected package materials separately; this guide does not mean a separate participant workbook, card set, or reflection series has already been produced.

Research Sources & Reading Notes

The numbered links connect the research overview and scenario context to public sources. Publication years identify the sources; scenarios, dialogue, activities, and proposed progress measures are original teaching material. The studies differ in population and design, and their findings should not be treated as universal or as validation of EMBRACE.

[1] Gallup — Global Employee Engagement Continues Decline (2026)

Global workforce survey reporting. Useful for discussing manager support and engagement; broad patterns cannot diagnose one team.

[2] Microsoft WorkLab — Breaking down the infinite workday (2025)

Aggregated Microsoft 365 telemetry and a knowledge-worker survey. Telemetry excludes education and EU tenants; its interruption headline concerns high-volume users.

[3] Gallup & Workhuman — Employee Retention Depends on Getting Recognition Right (2024)

Longitudinal employee research on recognition and turnover. An association over time does not isolate a causal effect.

[4] Edmondson — Managing the risk of learning: Psychological safety in work teams (2002)

Research synthesis and field examples on interpersonal risk and team learning. Use for discussing help-seeking and responses to concerns.

[5] Bloom, Han & Liang — Hybrid working from home improves retention without damaging performance (2024)

Randomized trial at Trip.com in particular graduate roles. Relevant to testing flexible-work arrangements; generalization to other roles needs care.

[6] Brynjolfsson, Li & Raymond — Generative AI at Work (published 2025)

Study of an AI-assistant rollout in customer support. Effects varied across workers and tasks; the published average is not a universal productivity expectation.

[7] World Economic Forum — The Future of Jobs Report 2025: Key findings

Employer survey on expected workforce change and skills. Captures expectations and priorities, not certain outcomes.

[8] Tannenbaum & Cerasoli — Do team and individual debriefs enhance performance? A meta-analysis (2013)

Meta-analysis of individual and team debriefs. Supports reflection on experience; does not test these particular exercises.