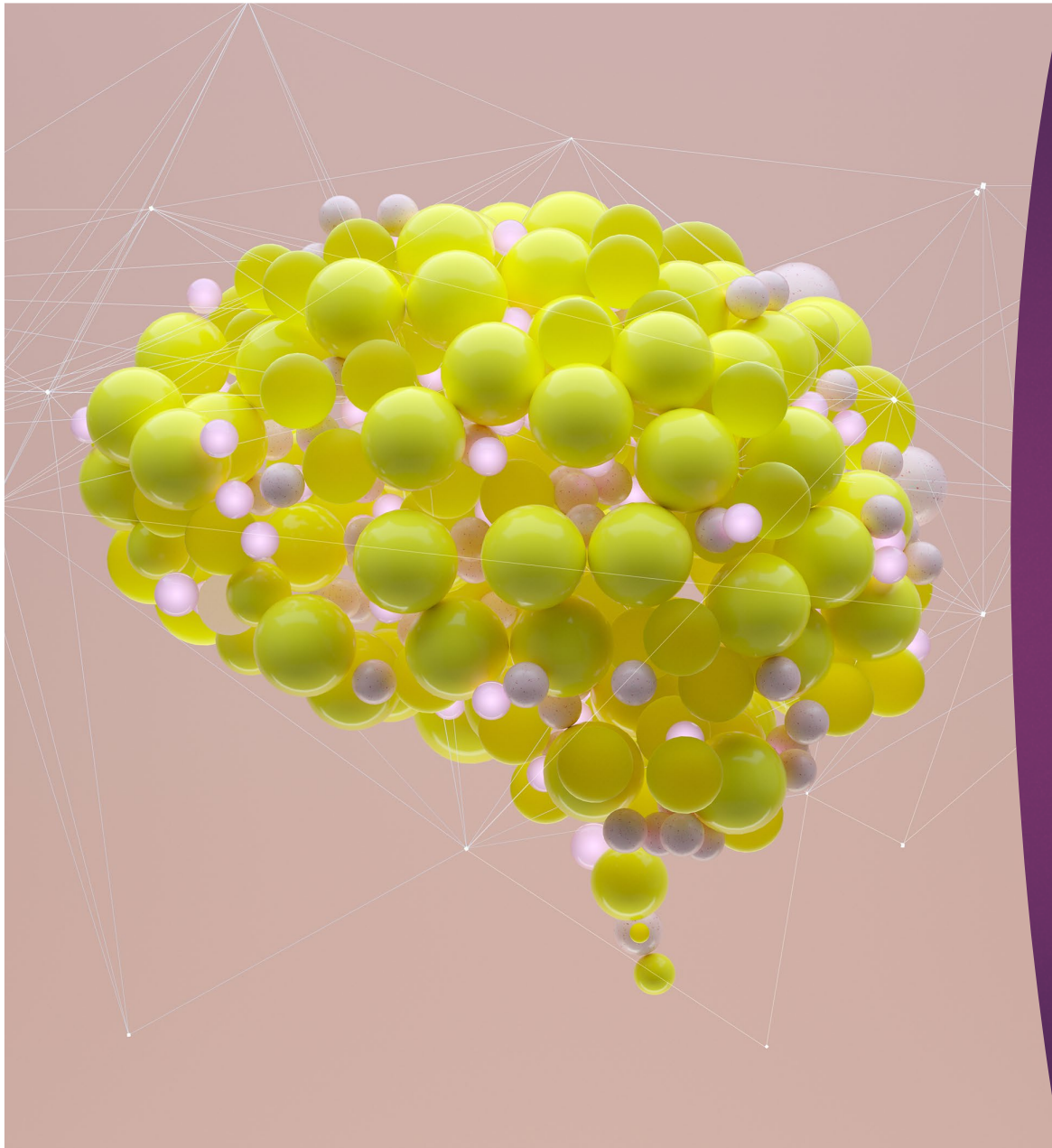




The Psychology of Leadership

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ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, COURT SERVICES

NIAGARA REGION

Hi! 🖐️ I'm Miranda.

20+ years with Niagara Region

Background in Social Services, Psychology & Business Admin

Former SAEO leader → now Associate Director, Court Services

Passionate about leadership, people, culture & change

Thrive in creativity, growth, and supporting others to shine

Still figuring out what I want to be when I grow up — and loving the journey.

Agenda

Motivation Theories

- Maslow's Hierarchy & Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Leader-Member Dynamics

- Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) & Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Psychological Safety & Culture

- Fostering innovation and trust in teams.

Why Psychology Matters in Leadership



Leadership is fundamentally about people



People are driven by thoughts, emotions, needs & motivations



Improved communication, trust & relationships, engagement & motivation, as well as team culture & performance



Better psychology → better leadership

Leadership is not just strategic — it's deeply human.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- ▶ Abraham Maslow -1943 –
“**A Theory of Human Motivation**”
- ▶ **ALL** people have needs that **must** be satisfied
- ▶ Needs on **the bottom of the pyramid must be met before needs on the next level can be addressed**



Workplace & Leadership Interpretation

- ▶ Physiological → tools, workload, rest
- ▶ Safety → job security, fairness, trust
- ▶ Belonging → inclusion, connection
- ▶ Esteem → recognition, autonomy
- ▶ Self-Actualization → growth, purpose, mastery

Leadership Application

- ▶ Physiological & Safety: stability, structure, workload balance
- ▶ Belonging: culture, team rituals, connection
- ▶ Esteem: recognition, autonomy, trust
- ▶ Self-Actualization: mastery, growth, purpose

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Two-Factor Theory Overview

Motivators

Achievement
Growth
Meaning

Hygiene Factors

Pay
Policies
Working Conditions

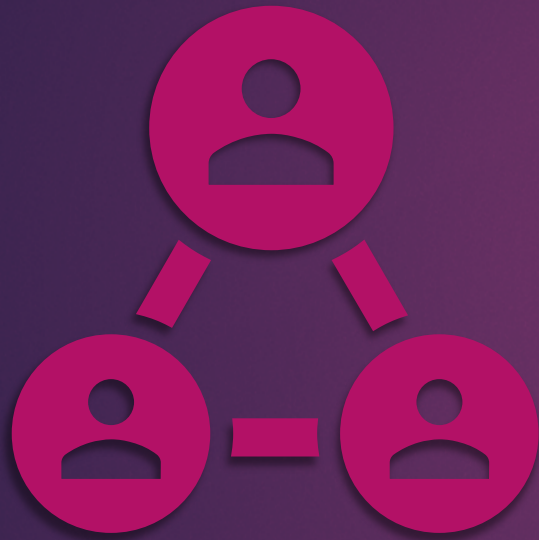


Pizza parties
are a Band-Aid
on a bullet hole



Leadership Application

- ▶ Strengthen Motivators → Recognition, Growth, Challenge
- ▶ Improve Hygiene → Fairness, Clear Policy
- ▶ Separate “Inspire” vs “Prevent Burnout”
- ▶ Manage both with intention



Leader–Member Exchange (LMX)

Leader-Member Exchange

Three Basic Roles



Role Taking

When a new member enters the team



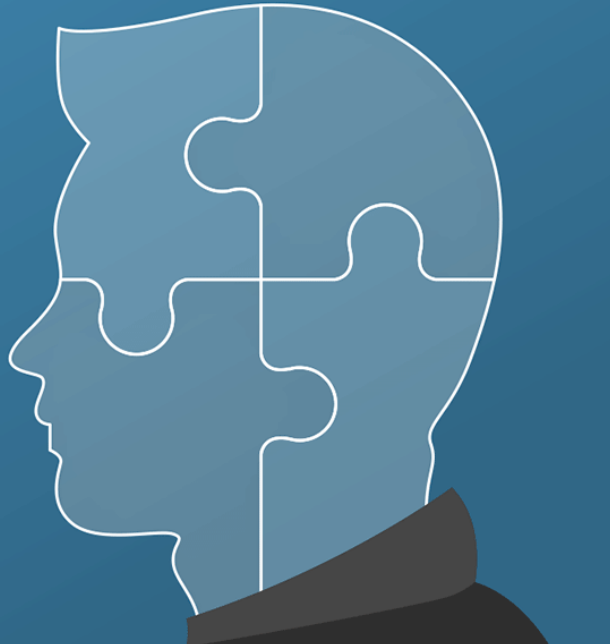
Role Making

Assessing reliability of current member



Routinization

Managers and Members work together

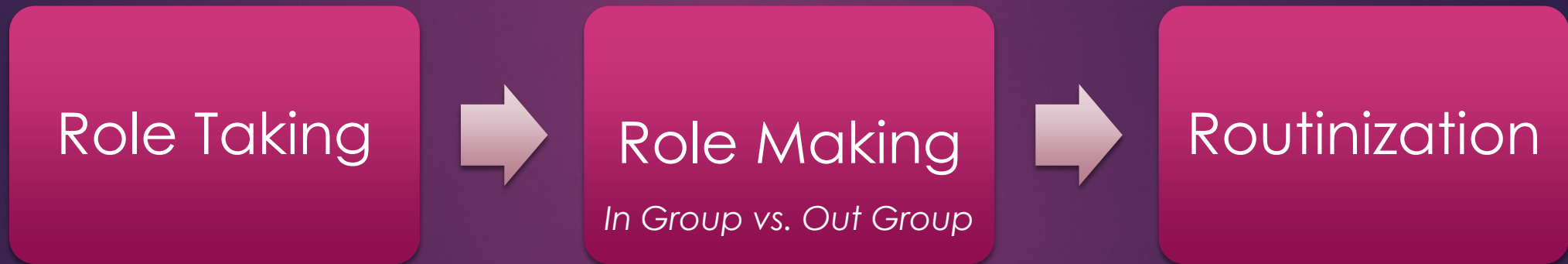


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LMX Theory & Relationship Dynamics

In-Group Vs. Out-Group

LMX Theory - Stages



Theory and Relationship Dynamics

In Group

- High Trust
- Shared Goals
- Flexibility
- Discretionary Effort

Out Group

- Limited Communication
- Narrow Roles
- Less Input



Leadership Application

Identify Out-Group

Offer development & trust

Encourage inclusion

Build consistency

Self- Determination Theory (SDT)

Self Determination Theory

People thrive when 3 needs are met:



Autonomy – Ownership & Decision Making



Competence – Mastery & Skill Growth



Relatedness – Belonging & Connection

Everything we do as leaders either supports or erodes these needs

Leadership Application

- ▶ Provide Context, not control
- ▶ Coach in real time
- ▶ Recognize growth
- ▶ Celebrate all wins, big and small
- ▶ Foster Connection
- ▶ Make sure everyone understands the IMPACT & PURPOSE

Empowered people don't need to be pushed — they need to be trusted.



Psychological Safety & Culture

Importance and Impact

COME SEE ME NOW

High-Performing Teams Make Mistakes

Fear shuts down communication



Safety opens it up

Leadership Application

- 1 Listen to understand
- 2 Model vulnerability
- 3 Respond with respect
- 4 Normalize learning

“Tell me more about that”

Reflection & Closing

A blue wooden boat is beached on a sandy shore. The ocean is a deep blue, and the sky is a lighter blue with some wispy clouds. The boat is positioned in the lower right foreground, angled towards the left. The background shows the horizon line where the sea meets the sky.

Leadership is not about being in
charge. Leadership is about taking
care of those in your charge.

Simon Sinek

“ quote fancy

Table Discussion

💭 What's one THING you will do differently as a leader next week?

*Leadership grows when we pause, reflect,
and choose to lead differently*



Questions?
Comments?
Reflections?

THANK YOU!

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Niagara Region

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