# PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY FOR EMPLOYEES
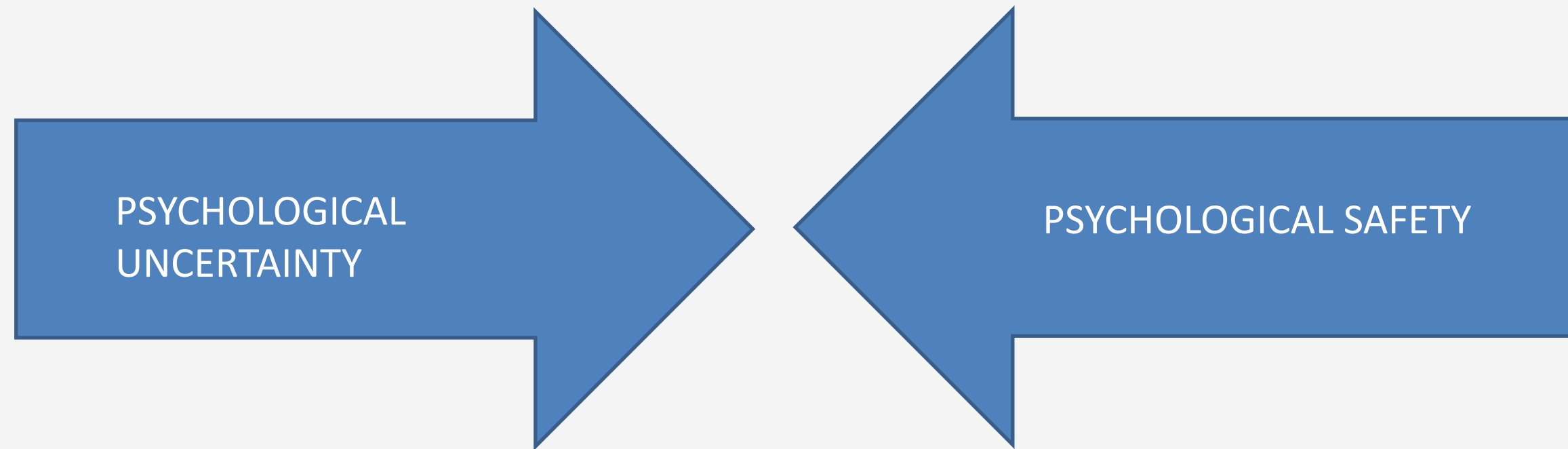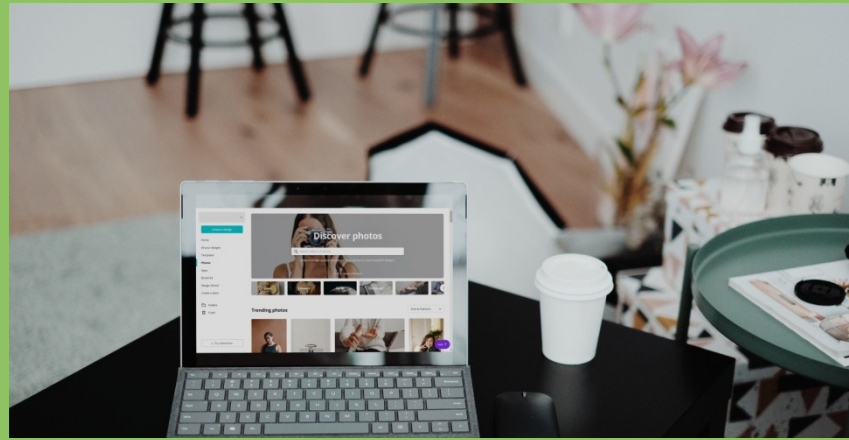
Traditional notion of leadership has been that it's a "mind" job and there is no room for "heart".

# Have you ever wondered:

Why some organizations are more successful than others in creating effective teams?

Why some organizations seem to have innovation woven in their culture?

Why some organizations like Google are voted as the best place to work for 10 years in a row?
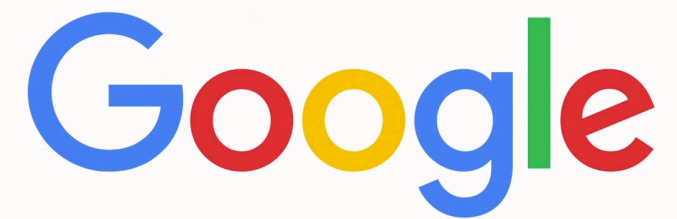
In a knowledge economy competitive edge comes from innovation.

And innovation happens by leveraging the passion and capabilities of people to solve complex problems.

# GOOGLE'S PROJECT ARISTOTLE

## What makes a successful team?

People Operations (HR)

- Dubbed Project Aristotle
- 2 year study
- 200+ interviews
- 250 attributes
- 180+ active Google teams

Google spent two years studying 180 teams conducting interviews and analyzing 250 different team combinations and attributes to help codify the secret to team effectiveness.

The interesting thing was that the answer wasn't:
• Those with the most senior people
• Those with the highest IQ
• Those that made the least mistakes

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**

Team members feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other

**DEPENDABILITY**

Team members get things done on time and meet Google's high bar for excellence

**STRUCTURE AND CLARITY**

Team members have clear roles, plans and goals

**MEANING**

Work is personally important to team members

**IMPACT**

Team members think their work matters and creates change

# People on teams with higher psychological safety:

• Have a higher sense of belongingness

• Are less likely to leave Google

• Harness the power of diverse people and ideas

• Are able to bring in more revenue

• Are rated twice as effective by the executives

WHAT A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE CULTURE LOOKS LIKE?

❑ No need to look good

❑ Whole self at work

❑ Default trust

❑ Place for all voices

❑ It is about candour and creating space for productive disagreement and open exchange of ideas.

Psychological safety does not mean low accountability

Psychological safety is not equal to:

Politeness

Agreeing with one another

Being nice

Avoiding conflict

# What if leaders create a culture where?

Overcome their barriers to change

Be open about their doubts and concerns

Call out the elephant of the room without the fear of being sidelined

See their mistakes not as problems but as opportunities for growth
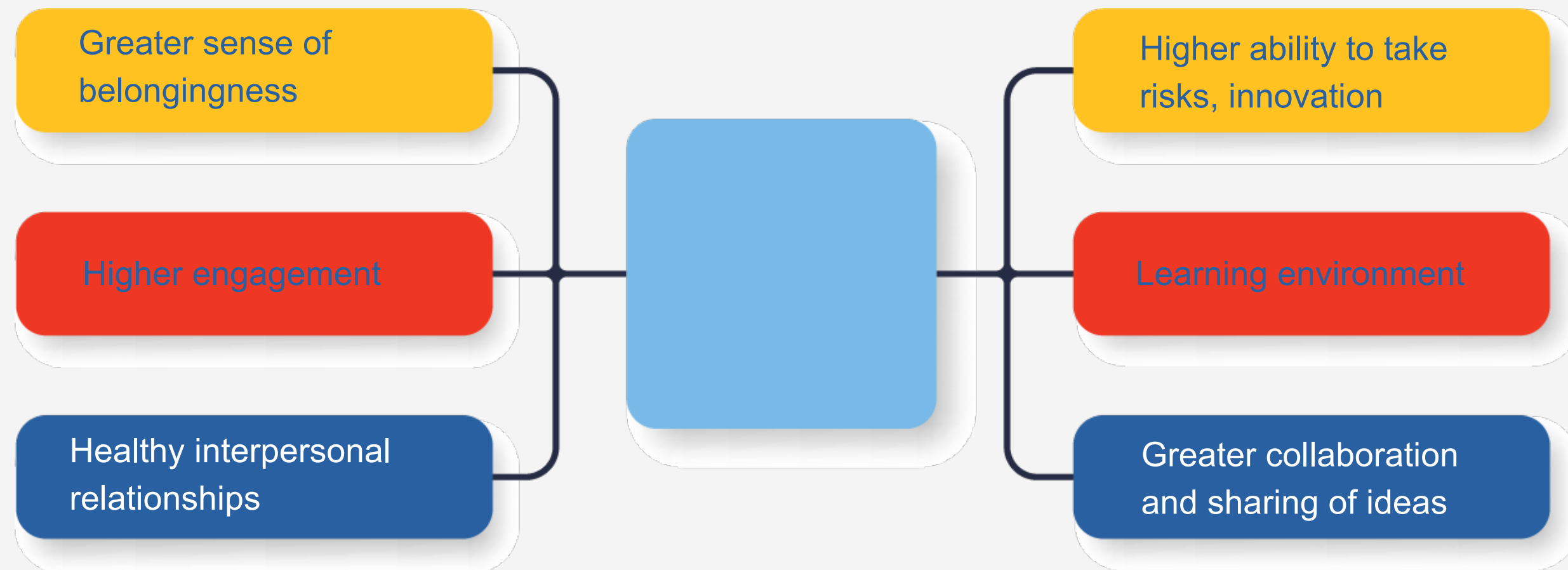
# CURRENT PANDEMIC SITUATION

- Covid-19 is a threat to everyone alike

- We want to reach out for reassurance, support and interaction

- It has limited our options - loss of choice and control increases stress and frustration.

Yet some individuals fare better than others even in a crisis!

- Be approachable

- Show respect even to juniors

- Acknowledge small contribution

- Be present, listen without distraction

- Facilitate participation, seek input

- Prioritizing effectiveness over efficiency

- Be open to being questioned

- Instill fearlessness and curiosity as team norms

- Encourage judicious risk taking and a culture of

failing forward

- Focus on larger team good than self centered

interests

- Be truthful with compassion, transforming feedback

- Focus on team learning and team performance

# THANK YOU!