



Make Work More Human

The People Side of Quality Improvement

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Director of Workplace Transformation at Results Washington

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What is fear?

An instinctive response to
a perceived threat to
physical or psychological safety.

Fear is a survival mechanism.



Psychological Threat = Physical Threat



Fight or Flight at Work



What scares people at work?



I asked, “What is the most important job of a leader?”

“To **eliminate fear** from the workplace,”
replied DES Director Chris Liu.



Less fear and more what??

Fear



?????

Love.

“There are **only two emotions: love and fear.**

All positive emotions come from love;
all negative emotions from fear.

From love flows
happiness, contentment, peace, and joy.
From fear comes
anger, hate, anxiety and guilt.”

~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, Psychiatrist

Love is...

a limbic connection that attunes us to each other, creating steadiness, positive regard, and care.

*If fear helps us survive,
love helps us thrive.*



My Hypothesis



*If we decrease “fear” and increase “love”
in the workplace, then we will deliver better value
to Washingtonians and make public service
deeply gratifying.*

Fear and Love Research Interviews

- 50 interviews.
- Self-selected participants.
- Responded to request for participants via email, social media, or listserv.
- 80% public employees; 20% privately employed.
- 76% Female; 24% Male.
- 50% leaders; 50% individual contributors.
- Method:
 - “Tell me a story about a time when you felt afraid at work.”
 - “Tell me a story about a time when you felt loved at work.”
- 70% One on One interviews/30% Group Workshops.
- Analysis: Review stories for topics, group, and identify common themes.

Fear Stories



“I didn’t know how to be
successful after a change.”

“I was betrayed.”

“I was humiliated.”

“I was not supported during
a personal crisis.”

A photograph of a man and a woman in business attire sitting at a table. The man, on the left, is older with grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and orange tie. He is looking down with a serious expression, his hands clasped. The woman, on the right, is younger with dark hair, wearing a dark blazer. She is looking down, holding a pen to her chin. The background is blurred, showing a window with a view of a city.

“Fear is not a management strategy.”

Individual Reflection

Recall a time when you felt
afraid at work.

With a partner:

**Describe a time when you felt
loved at work.**

*“Loved” could mean belonging, trust, care,
respect, empathy, acceptance, inclusion, etc.*

A diverse group of six young professionals (three women and three men) are gathered in a modern office setting. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. One man is sitting on the floor, holding a laptop. Another man is standing behind him, holding a white mug. A woman is sitting on a chair to the left, holding a white mug. Another woman is standing behind her, holding a clipboard. A third woman is sitting on the floor in the center, looking at the laptop. The background shows a modern office with large windows and a wooden wall.

Love Stories

“My leader **cared** about me.”

“My team was like a family.”

“I received support during
a personal crisis.”

Love is
an effective
management
strategy!



“But won’t love be too soft?”

High Commitment

Accountability

Responsibility

Not
effective

Fear

Love

Effective!

Neglect

Lenience

Low Commitment

Basic Advice for Teams to Increase Love

Demonstrate value for each other.

Greet each other. Look colleagues in the eye. Give your full attention. When meeting, minimize time on devices doing email/text. Show up to commitments.

Invest in building relationships.

Check in: “How are you in this present moment?” Get to know each other as people. Respect styles and preferences. Celebrate together. Share food.

Create trust and belonging.

Support team members when life happens. Give credit. Express appreciation. Pitch in. Follow through. Practice listening to understand. Value differences.

Work through challenges.

Suspend assumptions. Assume positive intent. Don’t triangulate. Work out issues directly. When trust is broken, work to repair trust. Forgive.

Basic Advice for Leaders to Increase Love

Be respectful.

Don't yell, bully, name call, humiliate, intimidate or denigrate your colleagues. Convey regard, care, belonging, trust, acceptance.

Be humble.

Intentionally level the hierarchy. Practice humble inquiry. Listen to understand. Show sincere interest in team members. Apologize for your mistakes. Seek to understand how others experience the team.

Have integrity.

Do what you say you will do. Be trustworthy. Keep the highest ethical standards. Become aware of and learn to manage your implicit biases. Treat team members fairly.

Create safety.

Intentionally break down siloes. Share mental models of care. Support healthy conflict. Intervene when someone chronically creates fear.



Each day we face challenges.
Will we put love or fear in action?



Hollie Jensen

Washington State's Director of Continuous Improvement

Challenge

Developing team members.

Love in Action

- Organized 1:1 Time
- A3 Thinking
- Reflection questions
- Principles



Jeff Canaan

Assistant Director, Workforce Support & Development

Challenge

Customer complaints

Budget threatened

Love in Action

- Respect: “Holding precious what it is to be human.” (Jon Miller’s translation)
- Facilitative leadership
- Taught listening to understand.
- Pursue customer satisfaction



Brent Chapman

Grounds Operations Manager and Horticulturist

Challenge

25% Budget cuts and staff reductions

0% Reduction in expectations

Love in Action

- Engaged staff in problem solving
- Welcomed staff creativity
- Tested innovative practices
- Adjusted to meet customer expectations



Photo by Austin Jenkins/Northwest News Network

Rick Garza

Director of the Liquor and Cannabis Board

Challenge

Public mistake by manager

Love in Action

Coached and supported her

Checked in on her.

“We are family, and you aren’t alone.”



24/7 Home Care Team

Challenge

Demanding, isolating work

Love in Action

Team's "Love Letters" in logbook



Workplace Learning and Performance Team

Challenge

On boarding new team members

Love in Action

- Manager's focused time and attention.
- Coffee in the café.
- Showed where to park.



More support for a loving,
human-centered workplace!





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“I Love You, Howard Behar”: Howard Schultz Pays Tribute to Former Starbucks President in Heartfelt Speech

Love in the workplace: Howard Schultz says it's what the world needs more of.

BY: JOHN LEVESQUE



Image Credit:

Howard Schultz and Howard Behar of Starbucks embrace on stage at the 2018 Seattle Business Magazine Executive Excellence Awards.

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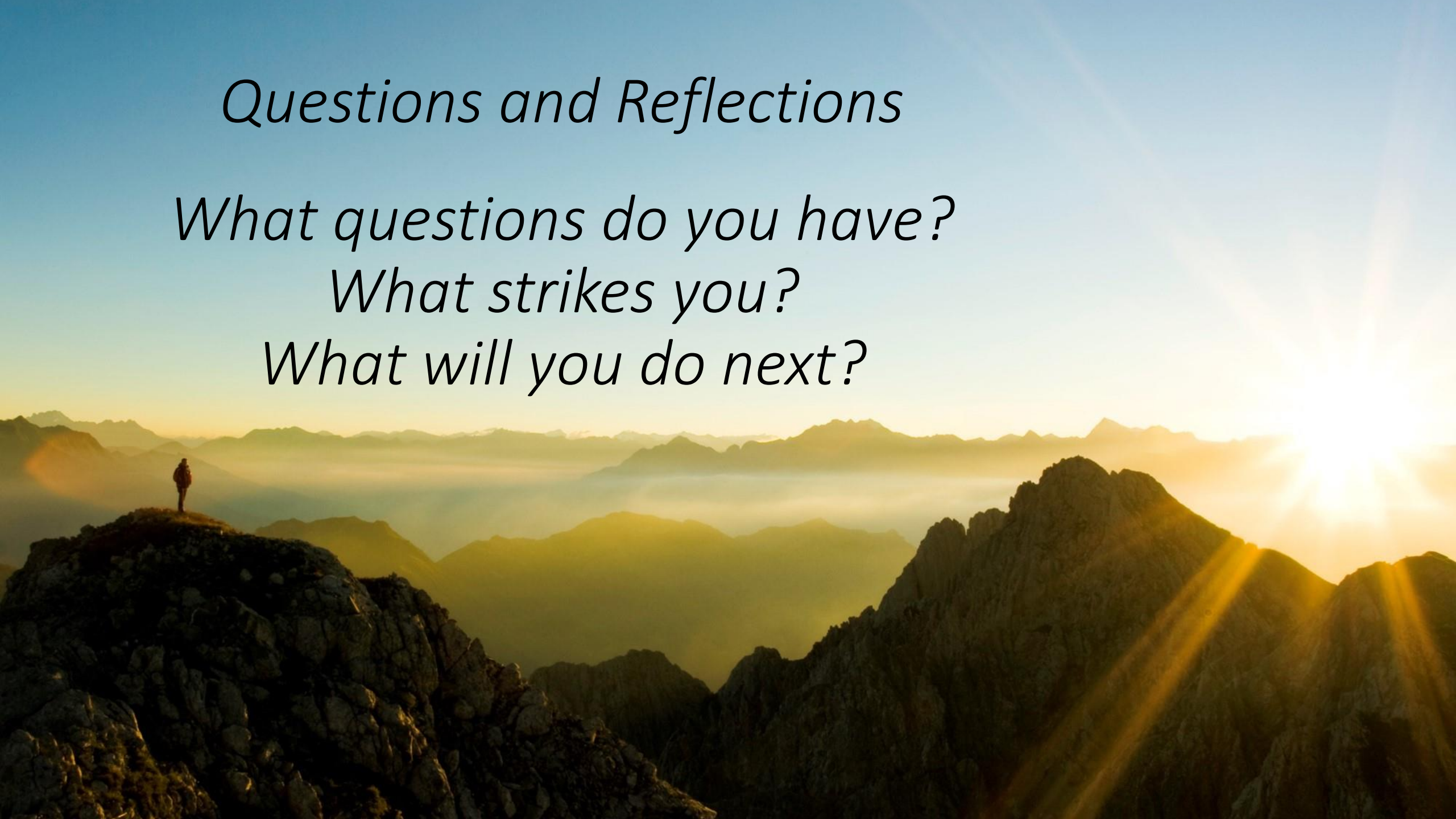


Questions and Reflections

What questions do you have?

What strikes you?

What will you do next?





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