WORKSHEET + WORKED EXAMPLE

Check the Expectations You Place on People

A checked assumption and a fairer next opportunity or support arrangement.

10-15 minutes | Expectation and opportunity reflection

Use it in three moves

1. Notice the expectation and the evidence behind it.
2. Examine how it influenced your own behavior.
3. Ask the person about an appropriate opportunity or support arrangement.

Which recent moment are you thinking about?

Use an observable situation.

What expectation was operating?

Be honest without treating the thought as a fact about the person.

What relevant evidence do you have?

Separate experience, hearsay, and absence of opportunity.

Check the Expectations You Place on People

YOUR WORKING NOTES / CONTINUED

What did your expectation lead you to do?

Look at opportunity, support, attention, and feedback.

What would you like to understand from them?

Leave room for a different preference or ambition.

What will you change and revisit?

Offer a supported opportunity, not an unasked-for test.

A question for me

What opportunity have I withheld without checking whether my assumption was true?

See one way through

FICTIONAL WORKED EXAMPLE / NOT THE ANSWER TO YOUR SITUATION

Which recent moment are you thinking about?

I asked the same experienced colleague to present again instead of inviting someone newer.

What expectation was operating?

I assumed the newer colleague would struggle with questions.

What relevant evidence do you have?

I have seen their written work, but I have not seen them present or asked whether they want to.

What did your expectation lead you to do?

I removed the opportunity before discussing what preparation might help.

What would you like to understand from them?

Would you like to present part of the next session? What support or practice would make that useful?

What will you change and revisit?

Invite them to choose whether to co-present, agree rehearsal time, and ask afterward what to keep or change.

The thinking behind it

A person should not have to live inside your first account of them. Make it possible for their experience and preferences to change your expectations.

The Pygmalion effect refers to research on expectations and outcomes. This original reflection makes a narrower practical move: examine how your expectations affect the opportunities and support you provide. It does not claim that positive belief guarantees performance.

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne