

What is needed to enable ‘positive risk-taking’ to happen in reality?

Developing a *risk mindset*, particularly a focus on **taking risks for positive outcomes**, will be supported through implementing adaptations of the following components. This is not an exhaustive list, but you will benefit by considering how each applies to your specific risk decisions, whether they take the form of business, practice, or life experiences. Make your own notes following reflections on each component.

1. A genuine **person-centred** approach, where the client/service user/carer perspectives on risk hold a prominent and transparent place in the whole assessment and management process, counterbalancing any external predominance of fear and blame culture driven negativity.
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2. A focus on **strengths**, giving a more positive base on which to build potential plans that will support beneficial risk-taking. Considering the strengths and abilities of the client/service user/carer, and of any wider range of services potentially available (Note: strengths are resources).
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3. **Whole team consensus** (including across any wider network of connections) to think and work in a *positive risk-taking* way. Healthy discussions open up creative dialogue, which may present significant challenges to the more traditional ways of thinking and working. Disagreement should be welcomed, as people who pay lip-service to innovation never push the limits of what is routine and comfortable.
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4. Encouraging **shared responsibility** for defining the risks to be taken and decision-making regarding how it will be enacted. Those with an inflated perception of their own personal responsibility present the potential to close down discussion and deliver risk averse approaches.
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5. Clear articulation of **collective accountability** for decisions, and personal responsibilities for planned actions.
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6. High quality **supervision and support** are essential for discussing and refining ideas, as well as providing a reality check to prevent idealism overwhelming realism.
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7. **Appropriate tools** to support the process of individual and team decision-making (i.e. risk tools, checklists, etc.).
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8. Considered **timing** of risk decisions (e.g. time of day, specific days/anniversaries).
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9. Communicating **positive achievements**, as successful outcomes breed further confidence.
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10. Appropriate **crisis and contingency plans** for the ‘fears’ and possibilities of failure. Risk-taking should be pursued in a context of promoting safety not negligence.
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11. An integral part of the culture of ideas and **team training**. Supporting the creative challenge of doing things differently.
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12. Good systems for **recording and monitoring** decisions; with adequate resources to enable creative work to take precedence over ‘what usually just happens’.
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13. **Managerial support** from the organizational hierarchy, up to senior management and Board levels. Understanding of the rationale behind positive risk-taking needs to be vertical throughout the organisation, if it is to instil the confidence in people to take calculated risks.
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14. Organizational and team **culture** supporting a ‘can-do’ attitude, helping people to manage degrees of uncertainty.
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