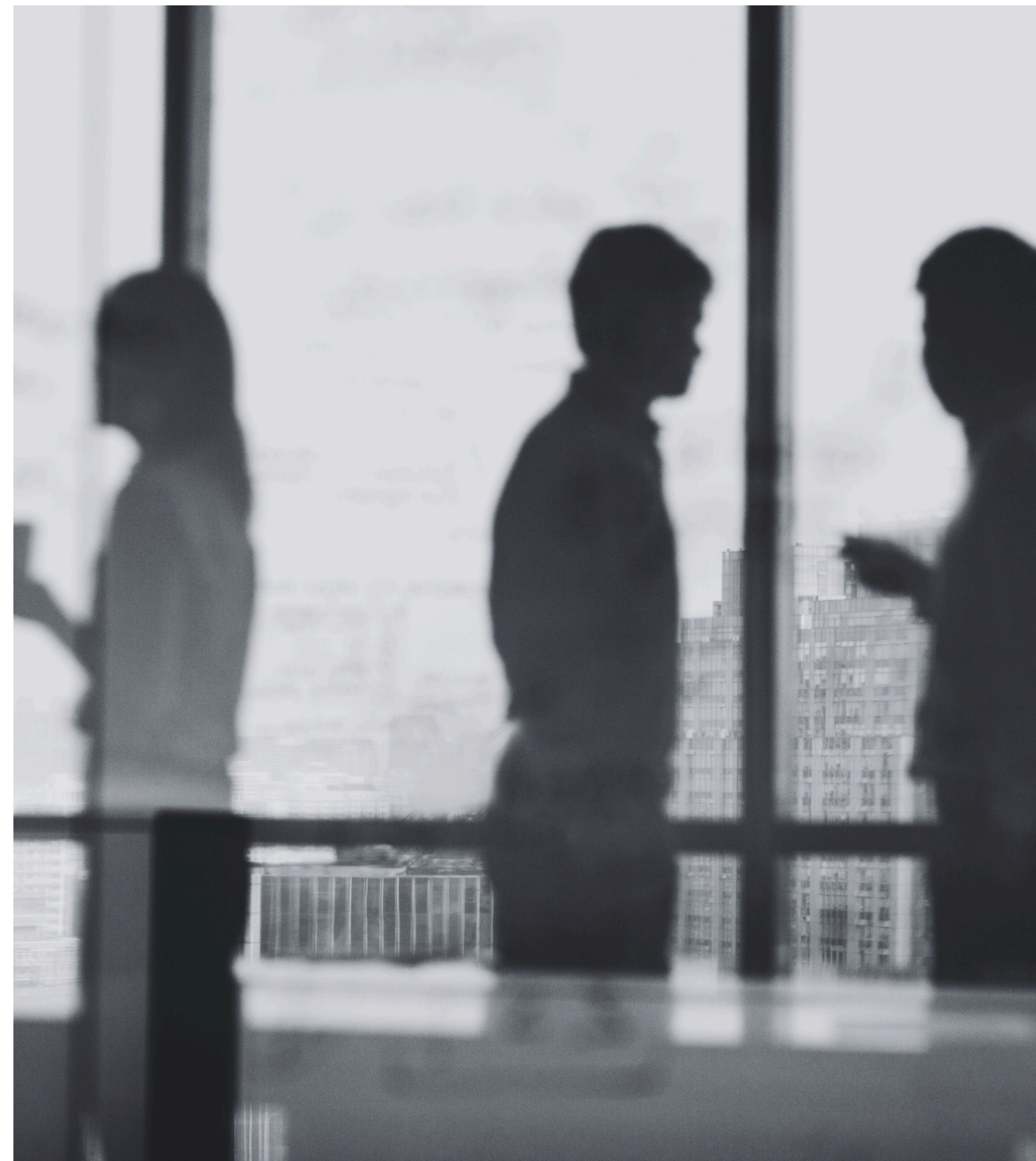




# Hidden Dynamics of Culture and Transformation Resource Pack





# What are hidden dynamics, how do they present, and how do you **surface** them?

Our experts share their insights and knowledge, providing **essential** information to support and equip you with practical strategies and tools to navigate workplace complexities.

# The Experts



**Nicole Hercus**

Encountas Executive Coach  
and Leadership Development  
and Culture Change Specialist



**David Lawson**

Encountas Executive Coach,  
Registered Psychologist, and  
OD Specialist



**Justin Simmonds**

Encountas Clinical  
Psychologist and Executive  
Coach



**Mary Lemonis**

Experienced Chief  
People Officer



## Inside hidden dynamics

What is happening in our teams is not always obvious or visible. Untapped potential, strategic capabilities, underlying tensions, power struggles, siloed behaviour, bullying, and communication breakdowns often stem from unaddressed dynamics that stay hidden beneath the surface.

If left unaddressed, these dynamics can lead to dysfunctional pockets of your workforce or entire work environment, hindering collaboration, culture change, and transformation. Hidden from plain sight can also include key strengths, capabilities, and opportunities to collaborate.



It's easy to do **nothing**, and it's **hard** to do things. And if you feel uncomfortable, tune into that. Because that **uncomfortableness** is telling you something, and it's usually something really **important**. So move towards that.

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**Justin Simmonds**

Encountas Clinical Psychologist  
and Executive Coach



# Early **signs** of hidden dynamics



## Decreased engagement

Individuals may exhibit minimal engagement in discussions, turn off cameras during meetings, or disengage from team interactions.



## Increased conflict

There may be a rise in instances of incivility, conflict, or arguments among team members.



## Behaviour changes

Individuals might start taking more leave, avoiding meetings, or showing signs of stress and frustration.



## Alliance formation

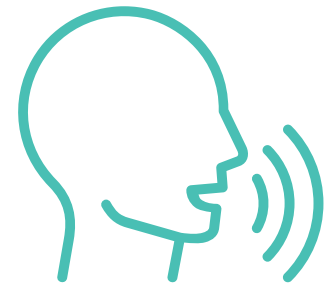
Employees may seek alliances and engage in hallway conversations as a means of finding safety and support.

# What to look out for



## Poorly managed change initiatives

Organisations undergoing significant changes without clear plans or communication strategies may disrupt individuals' sense of agency and autonomy.



## Lack of recognition and safety

Employees may feel their contributions are undervalued or that their safety in the workplace is compromised, leading to feelings of insecurity and fear.



## Disconnected leadership

HR practitioners and leaders may struggle to balance individual needs with organisational goals, leading to challenges in effectively addressing hidden dynamics within the organisation.



## Resistance to dialogue

Leaders or teams may resist engaging in open and honest conversations about workplace issues, hindering efforts to surface hidden dynamics and address underlying concerns.

# How to **surface** hidden dynamics

When engaging in a review with clients, the below driving **principles** guide our process:



## Transparency

Share objectives and constraints openly with the team to ensure clarity and understanding. Maintain confidentiality to address concerns and foster trust among team members. Be transparent about findings and the exploration process to encourage participation and collaboration.



## Curiosity

Conduct thorough analysis beyond surface-level observations to uncover key dynamics, themes, and challenges. Stay open-minded and curious, exploring the underlying reasons behind team dynamics and behaviours. Approach findings with a genuine intent to learn and understand, promoting continuous improvement and growth.



## Neutrality

Strive for neutrality to create an environment where diverse viewpoints are valued and respected. Set aside personal biases and preconceptions, focusing on data and observations to inform decisions. Maintain openness and space for discussions, allowing for constructive dialogue and resolution of issues.



## Process

Define clear objectives aligned with organisational goals to create a safe and supportive environment for all team members. Communicate the process effectively to ensure understanding and engagement from key stakeholders. Implement a phased approach with structured support to guide the team through each stage of the process effectively.



# How to **address** hidden dynamics



## Encourage communication

Create opportunities for individuals and teams to connect and share their thoughts and concerns in a safe, respected, and supportive environment.



## Establish feedback mechanisms

Implement ongoing surveys and feedback channels to gather anonymous input from employees and identify areas of concern.



## Foster a culture of transparency

Encourage leaders and HR practitioners to address hidden dynamics openly and transparently, demonstrating neutrality, a commitment to resolving issues, and supporting employee well-being.



## Build capability, provide support and resources

Offer resources such as training, coaching, or counselling to help individuals and teams navigate workplace challenges and build resilience and internal capabilities.



We often, in organisations, talk about what we're doing, but we find it much more **challenging** to talk about how we're doing it. And yet how is **intrinsically** linked to our **success**, our **productivity**, our **well-being**, all of it.

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**Nicole Hercus**

Encountas Executive Coach and Leadership  
Development and Culture Change Specialist





**How to surface  
hidden dynamics  
safely, both as  
individuals, as  
leaders, and as an  
organisation.**

# For individuals



## Personal reflection and listening

Recognise your own tolerance for hearing different perspectives and your reactivity. Slow down to listen more deeply, ask questions, and be more curious.



## Cultivate curiosity

Be curious about your own reactions and motivations. Check in before reacting, and ask a question to clarify. Understand the difference between the intention of an individual and the impact they may have on you.



## Give and embrace feedback

Provide feedback to others. Give permission to others to provide feedback to you. Be open to feedback and learning from others, even if it challenges your initial ideas.



## Embrace diversity

Understand that feeling uncomfortable or challenged in a conversation might signal an opportunity for growth and improvement.

# For leaders



## Open dialogue and participation

Create a safe space for team members to share their perspectives and concerns openly. Set the stage and frame issues in a way that invites participation and discussion.



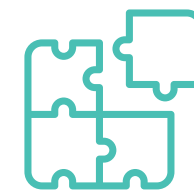
## Engagement and accessibility

Prioritise spending time with people and actively listening to what's going on. Engage in "manage by walking about" practices to foster a culture of accessibility and encourage employees to share their thoughts and concerns.



## Early intervention and leveraging expertise

Recognise and share with teams the importance of addressing hidden dynamics early to prevent more significant issues later on. Seek support and help from colleagues, internal, or external experts when needed.



## Individual and organisational contribution

Help individuals understand the broader significance of their conversations and contributions within the organisation. Emphasising the interconnectedness of individual actions and organisational outcomes encourages individuals to see themselves as part of a larger, collective effort.

# For organisations



## Expectations and frameworks

Embed a values or behavioural framework that sets clear expectations for individuals and teams and embed in all communications and team meetings. Leaders role model this behaviour and seek feedback if not demonstrated. Create safe feedback mechanisms to surface unseen dynamics.



## Accountability

Encourage peer-to-peer accountability and provide the scaffolding necessary for these conversations to occur effectively. Create permission to provide peer-to-peer feedback.



## Navigate relationships

Foster a culture and build capability across all employees where individuals feel empowered and supported to negotiate their own relationships and call out hidden dynamics.



## Utilise support

Seek external support, whether through colleagues, internal experts, or external consultants, to provide valuable perspectives and resources for addressing hidden dynamics.



Be **curious** and **patient**. Create a space, be ready to hear, and be curious about what it means.  
Don't rush to **judgement**.

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**David Lawson**

Encountas Executive Coach, Registered  
Psychologist, and OD Specialist





# Questions? Want to dive deeper?

We're here to help.  
[connect@encountas.com](mailto:connect@encountas.com)

