

Guide to Regular Performance Conversations

Performance conversations don't have to feel formal or high-pressure. In fact, regular 1:1s are one of the most effective ways to support growth, align goals, and strengthen working relationships.

This guide provides a simple structure and helpful resources for managers and employees to hold meaningful, effective check-ins—whether you're just getting started or looking to make your conversations more impactful.

Establish a Rhythm and Commit:

Even if you already hold regular 1:1s, it's important to designate at least one structured quarterly meeting focused specifically on performance and development. Managers should schedule a recurring meeting titled "Performance Check-In" and include a discussion outline like the one provided below.

If you haven't already, be sure to establish at least one informal 1:1 each month between managers and employees. These ongoing conversations help build trust, identify needs early, and keep goals on track.

Come Prepared for the Meeting:

The meeting can be structured however you prefer, but ideally, employees come prepared to discuss the following with their manager:

1. What are 1-2 accomplishments you are most proud of from this past quarter?
2. What are 1-2 accomplishments you will focus on next quarter?
3. What support do you need from your manager next quarter to be successful?

It is strongly recommended that managers and employees keep notes about their performance conversations throughout the year. You can use whatever method works best for you, such as a Word document, email, Teams, or Workday's feedback tools. Click [here](#) to view the job aid on how to access and use Workday's feedback features.

For information and resources on setting meaningful, strength-based goals, click [here](#).

Additional Topics to Discuss:

1. What have you felt good about accomplishing in the past few months?
2. What do you like most about your role?
3. What has been frustrating or unclear about the work you do?
4. What is the status of your goals, action plans, and follow-up items?
5. How are your professional relationships going?
6. How can your manager best help you to be successful?
7. What can your manager do to help our team/work unit to be more effective?

Discussing Career Goals:

While employees are responsible for their career growth, they are encouraged to complete the Individual Career Development Plan linked [here](#) and use it as a starting point for conversations with their manager.

MANAGERS: Use Questions During Check-Ins to Coach:

Coaching “unlocks people’s potential to maximize their own performance” (John Whitmore, 2011). The best way to do this is by asking open-ended questions that guide the individual to come up with a solution on their own. So instead of telling a person what they *should* do, use the phrases such as:

- Have you considered...?
- What other choices do you have?
- I wonder what might happen if...?
- What contributions can you make to set the team up to succeed?
- What can you do to change things?
- What else can you try?
- What will you have to do to get there?
- What can I do to help?

We highly recommend Michael Bungay Stanier’s best-selling book: “The Coaching Habit” to gain valuable knowledge and guidance on coaching. Link to the book can be found [here](#).

Using the Four-Point Framework to Give Feedback:

Feedback is essential for performance and growth and it is important you follow a framework like the “Four-Point Formula” to guide you to deliver feedback that is specific, objective, and actionable:

1. **Open with a question:** Begin with a short, permission-based question that prepares the recipient. Example: “Do you have a few minutes to discuss that project update?”
2. **Give a Data Point:** Share specific, observable facts without exaggeration or judgment. Replace vague terms like “be better” with examples. Example: “You committed to sending the report by Tuesday, but I received it Thursday.”
3. **Show Impact:** Explain how the behavior or action affected you, the team, or the work. Example: “Because the report was late, I couldn’t finalize the presentation on time.”
4. **End with a Question:** Invite collaboration and reflection. Example: “How do you see it?” or “What’s your perspective on this?”

Why It Works: This framework makes feedback feel constructive, collaborative, and less intimidating while fostering accountability. Learn more by watching LeaAnn Renniger’s Ted Training Video (5 mins) linked [here](#).

Visit our Feedback Resources webpage linked [here](#) to help you turn feedback into a powerful tool for development, building stronger connections, and boosting engagement.