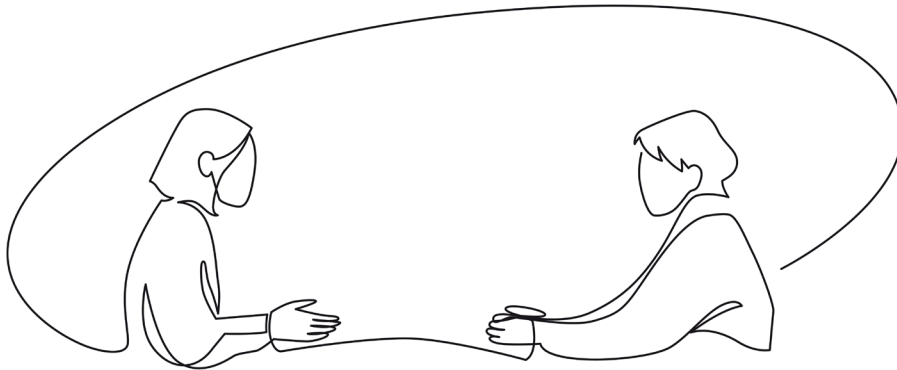


## The Importance of 1:1 Meetings/ Check Ins

One-on-one (1:1) meetings are a cornerstone of effective management and employee engagement. These dedicated sessions provide a unique and focused opportunity for managers and staff/team members to connect on a deeper level, fostering open communication, trust, and mutual understanding. Unlike status meetings, which focus on project updates and task progress, 1:1 meetings can and should be designed to explore broader topics such as career development, personal growth, and overall well-being.



### Why 1:1 Meetings Matter

1:1 meetings are crucial for several reasons:

- **Building Relationships:** They help build strong, trusting relationships between managers and staff members, which is essential for a positive work environment.
- **Providing Feedback:** These meetings offer a platform for continuous, two-way feedback, helping both parties understand each other's perspectives and improve performance.
- **Addressing Concerns:** They allow employees to voice concerns, discuss challenges, and seek guidance in a safe and supportive setting.
- **Fostering Development:** Managers can use this time to discuss career aspirations, identify development opportunities, and support their employees' growth.

## Avoiding the Status Meeting Trap

To ensure 1:1 meetings are productive and meaningful, it's important to steer clear of turning them into status updates. Here are some tips to keep your 1:1s focused on what truly matters:

- **Prepare Thoughtful Agendas:** Create agendas that include topics beyond daily tasks, such as career goals, skill development, and personal interests.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Encourage deeper conversations by asking questions that prompt reflection and discussion, rather than yes/no answers.
- **Balance the Conversation:** Ensure the meeting is a two-way dialogue, where both the manager and the employee have the opportunity to share and listen.
- **Follow Up on Action Items:** While it's important to address ongoing projects, make sure to also follow up on personal and professional development goals discussed in previous meetings.

By focusing on these elements, 1:1 meetings can become a powerful tool for enhancing employee engagement, satisfaction, and performance.

Remember that 1:1 meetings are bi-directional and they should be dialogues and conversations. Productive 1:1 meetings and check-ins take practice and intention to work well both parties involved. Below, we have provided some sample 1:1 questions that

- A staff member can ask a manager
- A manager can ask a staff member.

## **QUESTIONS A STAFF MEMBER CAN ASK A MANAGER**

### **Career growth and personal development**

- What steps can I take right now to progress my career with the organization?
- What mentorship opportunities are there available for me?
- Who in the organization do you think I can learn the most from?
- Who are your mentors? Who inspires you?
- Where do you see my role evolving in the next 6 months and 1 year?
- What learning and development opportunities are there within and outside of the organization?
- What's a skill you think I can learn that will help me do a better job?
- What skills do you think our team is lacking?
- How can I help train and support others in the team and organization?

### **Communication and feedback**

- What's something you feel unclear about on my work?
- How am I doing with this project/new initiative?
- When's the best time to get feedback on my work?
- Do you feel like I'm a team player? Do I collaborate well?
- Do you think I contribute enough in team meetings?
- What soft skills do you think I excel at most? What is my area of opportunity?
- What's an example of a situation I've handled well/ poorly?
- Where do you think my communication can be improved?
- Am I giving enough feedback to my peers?

### **Key priorities, individual and team productivity, and overall strategy**

- What can I do to help improve team productivity?
- What's something you wish we did better as a team?
- What's something we do well as a team?
- How are we progressing on our goals as a team?
- How can we improve the way our team collaborates?
- What initiative do you wish I took more ownership over?

## Supporting your manager and managing up

- How can I better support you?
- What's worrying you most?
- What are your biggest challenges leading the team?
- What are you most excited about in your day-to-day?
- What's your biggest challenge as a people leader?
- Is there anything I can do more or less of that would help you?
- What do you do to avoid burnout?

## QUESTIONS A MANAGER CAN ASK STAFF MEMBER

### **Growth and development**

- What are some of the work projects you're most proud of, and what do you think you might want to do next?
- What has been the work highlight/lowlight from the past week?
- What are your work and non-work highlights of the past month?
- Who's someone in the organization that you'd like to learn more from?
- What professional goals would you like to accomplish in the next quarter, 6 to 12 months, and what makes you say that?
- If you had 10% of your time to do a passion project at work, what would it be?
- Is your job what you expected when you accepted it? If not, where has it differed?
- What other roles here could you see yourself in down the line? Or what areas would you like to explore? What else can I be doing to help progress your career?
- What's one thing you'd like to do more of, outside of work this coming month?
- Imagine it's two years from now, and things have gone well: What has been your role in that? What does your role look like?

### **Communication and feedback**

- What's one thing we can do to improve the performance of the team?
- Are you happy with our level of communication? How would you change it?
- What's top of mind right now that we haven't talked about yet?
- If you were managing the team, what would you do differently?
- Who is doing a great job on the team? What have they done?
- Am I acting like the best manager you could wish for? What could I be doing better?
- When's the best time to give feedback on your work?
- Where has our communication faltered? Can you give me an example?
- Am I providing enough clarity on our direction?
- Where would you like me involved more or less in your day to day?
- What do you like about our one-on-one meetings? What can be improved?
- Are there any roles on the team that you feel unclear on?
- What are your top priorities this week?
- What's a problem we have on our team that I might not know about?
- What can I hold you accountable for next time we talk?
- How could we improve cross-functional collaboration at?

## Job satisfaction and motivation

- How are you feeling about your role?
- Do you feel like you're growing in your role? Tell me why/why not.
- What interests you about the project(s) you're currently working on, and why?
- What is your favorite/least favorite thing about your work right now?
- What's one thing we could change about work for you that would improve your personal life?
- What's something you're proud of that happened this week? This month? This quarter?
- What are you passionate about, personally or professionally?
- What makes you excited and motivated to work on a project?
- Do you feel adequately supported by other team members? What makes you say that?
- What's one thing you would recommend to improve our workplace culture?
- Do you find your physical work environment productive? Is there anything preventing you from being productive?
- How do you feel your work/life balance is? What would you want to change, if anything?
- Are there any goals we have on a organizational, division, team or individual level that you feel are entirely unattainable? If so, why?
- What's the best thing about working here?