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1 to 1 Meetings “How to get them right”



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Session Objectives

At the end of this session you will be able to:

- Explain the difference between a 1 to 1 meeting and a performance review / appraisal.
- Explain the 1 to 1 meeting process, its purpose and the benefits to you and the staff member.
- Demonstrate how to conduct a 1 to 1 meeting.

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Session Overview

- 1 to 1 Overview
- Common Topics You May Wish To Cover
- Active Listening
- Getting Started
- Wrapping Up The 1 to 1 Meeting

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1 to 1 Overview

- A 1 to 1 meeting is a great tool for managers and employees
- The meeting enables you to check the team's morale
- You get to know the people you are working with better
- The meeting can be used for high-level things like career development and continuous learning
- Employee feedback is extremely important for managers
- Effective meetings are one of the best ways to seek feedback (as well as give it)
- Learn to do 1 to 1s the right way so employees can be engaged and let them know that you value them
- You must decide how often you do them (recommended at least quarterly)
- There is no fixed time - it is what works best for you and them. 30 - 45 mins is probably good
- If you're not having 1 to 1s, you're missing out on valuable feedback and the opportunity to support and motivate your staff
- There should be no fixed agenda. Consider it a free-form meeting compared to a structured appraisal

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1 to 1 Overview

- Do **NOT** use the discussion as a performance review - this is not the purpose of the meeting
- The employee should be the focus of the meeting - you should only talk for 10% of the time
- In the office / outside of the office - it is what works best
- You want a natural conversation around whatever matters to the employee
- The process encourages a culture of continuous feedback
- Lastly and very importantly, personal conversations help build strong relationships based on understanding and respect. When you listen, you will be trusted more. It is therefore more likely that the employee will be motivated to work hard and prove themselves.

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Work habits - You want to understand how each of your team members operate. Once you learn their productive modes, you can support them to work more efficiently. Here are some questions regarding work habits:

- Which part of the day do you feel most productive?
- When do you feel that your energy and focus are at the lowest level?
- What are the changes that can be made so you can take the best out of a work day?
- What were your biggest time wasters or roadblocks last week or the week before?
- What do you do when you get stuck on something?
- What is your process of getting unstuck?
- Who is the team member you turn to for help?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Team Collaboration and relations - You can increase team productivity by improving the interpersonal relationship amongst team members. Ask the right questions to uncover the hidden challenges and opportunities:

- Who inspires you in the team? Whose opinions do you respect? What have they done?
- Is there anybody in the team that you find difficult to work with? Can you tell me why?
- What do you think about the amount of feedback in our team? When do others give feedback to you? Would you like to hear more feedback from other team members and me?
- What do you think would help us work together better? Do you have any suggestions for improvement in the way we work together?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Team's Happiness - Personal happiness has an undeniable impact on productivity and engagement. When is a better time to dig into a happiness issue than a 1 to 1 conversation? Grab the opportunity so you can help your team be happier at work. Here are some questions you can use:

- Are you happy working here? Are you happy with your recent work? Why or why not?
- What keeps you engaged with your daily work? What can I do to help make daily tasks more engaging?
- What kind of projects do you enjoy working on? What motivates you to work on a project? Can you name 3 things we can do to help so you can enjoy your job more?
- What is the best accomplishment you have had since you joined the business? Do you feel appreciated for it?
- What are the things that worry you? Is there anything specific on your mind? Have you ever felt undervalued here? If so why?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Short-term Goals - Your team's feedback on their short-term goals will keep you aligned with their progress as well as their frustrations. It is healthy to address frustrations. Ask questions such as:

- How is your work going? What can we do to help?
- What bottlenecks are you facing? What can we do to fix the problems?
- Are there any projects that you would be interested in working on next?
- What do you want to achieve in the next 3 - 6 months?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Long-term Goals - Long-term goals are important to a person's sense of fulfilment and happiness. Your staff want to see that they are making progress towards their big life goals. You want to learn about their goals and whether their current job fits into their goals. Here are some questions you can use:

- What do you want to achieve in the next 3 years?
- How do you think about your progress on your big goals? What needs to be done to move towards the goals? What can we do to help?
- Which part of the work here do you feel is most relevant to your long-term goals? What kinds of projects do you want to take part in to move toward your goals?
- What role in the organisation do you want to work towards and what do you think you need to improve on to help make you appropriately qualified?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Personal Development - You want to find out if your team members view learning and development the same way as you do. Some of the following questions can help you learn more about their motivation:

- Do you feel you are learning at work? What are the things you learned lately? What are the areas you want to learn about?
- Whom in the team do you want to learn from? Whom do you get valuable feedback from?
- Do you think that you receive enough feedback? Is feedback helpful for your personal development? What can I do to help you get the feedback you want?
- Would you like more coaching? What aspect of your job do you want more help and coaching on?
- Are there any professional qualifications that you wish to undertake and how would they help you and the organisation?

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Common Topics You May Wish To Cover

Manager Improvement - It is crucial for you to know how your team thinks about you and your management style. It is challenging to get honest feedback specifically about you from a direct report. Set the right tone and choose your questions wisely. Here are some examples:

- What can I do as a manager to make your work easier?
- What do you like about my management style? What do you dislike?
- What is the percentage of my involvement in your daily tasks? Would you prefer if I had more or less involvement?
- How can I support you better?
- What is something I could have done better? What are the situations that I could have helped more with but didn't?
- Do you think I treat you fairly?

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Active Listening

You should listen to your employee's insight carefully. It is important to remember that you don't just listen to be polite. You want to really understand what is being shared. Active listening involves:

- Asking clarifying questions, something like: **“Let me know if I understand you correctly. Do you mean that you would rather see me being less involved in your daily tasks?”**
- Paraphrasing the giver's view, such as: **“So you're saying that I should give you more autonomy in making decisions regarding your daily tasks”**
- Acknowledge their feelings, for example: **“I understand your strong feeling about your independence at work”**

Clarifying questions and reaffirmation bring you closer to what is being expressed. By showing your recognition and respect toward someone, you are building a stronger and deeper relationship with them.

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Getting Started

When you set up a 1 to 1 with an employee for the first time, make sure that you explain the concept. Give him / her a short description and some suggestions for the first session. Don't forget to mention that the sessions will be recurring. Here is an example:

"I plan to start doing 1 to 1s in our team. Just informal conversations to get more feedback from you. We can talk about anything. Your role in the business. Your development. What is bothering you. Your progress, or anything else that you find important. I suggest we start next Tuesday, the 9th at 10am. Then we can talk about having regular catch ups. Let me know if you have any questions"

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Wrapping Up The 1 to 1 Meeting

- At the end of the 1 to 1, you should wrap up the talking points. It is also essential to suggest an action plan for the next meeting.
- Check with the employee that there is nothing left unsaid that they want to cover.
- Make notes about the discussion points and the action plan. You want to make sure that you can easily review the items and act on what is needed. Make sure you do the legwork before the next meeting.
- Also remember to make it happen for the next meeting.