

THE BIG BOOK OF

350

One-on-One

Meeting
Questions



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Why One-on-One Meetings?

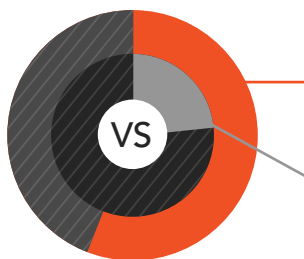
One-on-one meetings are becoming a critical component of the performance game. In our 2016 State of Employee Feedback report, 75.3 percent of companies surveyed used one-on-one meetings as a tool to give and receive feedback. These conversations are used as communication and development tools in the workplace... and they're used a lot.

While incredibly effective, one-on-one meetings present their challenges. The process can be intimidating, to both

employees and managers. You might not know what to discuss, or you might be overwhelmed with too many topics to discuss.

Whether you're new to one-on-one meetings or an old pro who's looking to pump new life into your meeting content, this ebook will give you the information you need to keep one-on-one meetings productive and effective.

Keep reading for 350 questions categorized into the most common workplace topics.



55% OF HIGHLY ENGAGED ORGANIZATIONS SAID EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE ONE-ON-ONES MONTHLY OR QUARTERLY, COMPARED TO ONLY **22%** OF DISENGAGED ORGANIZATIONS.

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Is this ebook for HR, employees, or managers?

This ebook is for everyone!



For HR

It's a great tool for HR pros to use to design company-wide performance initiatives. Organize and use the themes to hit on the most pressing topics at your company.



For Managers

The questions are ready-to-go for your employee one-on-ones. But hey, you've got performance conversations with your boss too! Don't forget to "Flip the Question" to prepare for your personal development conversations.



For Employees

We've written these questions from the perspective of the manager, but nearly all of them can be flipped and asked from an employee's perspective. We've included examples along the way on how to "Flip the Question."

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One-on-One Meeting Tips

Make your one-on-one conversations as productive as possible.

Keep it lightweight. There are lots of great questions in this book. But don't get crazy. We recommend keeping a one-on-one to five questions or less.

Be specific. Know exactly what feedback you want to share and be prepared to root your feedback in examples. It can be difficult to accept and activate feedback without a shared understanding

Prepare. Set time aside to think through your agenda items before the meeting. Provide some key talking points before the meeting and request that your employee does the same. Review your notes and action items from past one-on-ones and carry forward any open questions, ideas, or actions.

Gather additional feedback. Don't hesitate to ask peers and coworkers for feedback on your employee's performance.

Be honest. It's best to "say what you mean and mean what you say." These conversations are meant to help your employees grow and overcome challenges. Adopt a growth mindset - everyone can get better; nobody's potential is fixed.

Be kind. Feedback should come from a place of caring. Be considerate with your delivery in these conversations.

Be present. Both employees and managers are responsible for performance improvement. Take an active role in these conversations. Listen actively. Probe deeper with your questions. Turn your phone off.



MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS INCLUDED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS FOR YOUR ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS. YOU CAN START BY ASKING THESE QUESTIONS:

- What is the most important thing we need to discuss this month?
- What's on your mind? Are there any obstacles? Ideas to consider? Decisions to make?

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The Questions



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Career Growth & Development

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Alignment

Check in on the alignment among employee strengths, skills, goals, and job role. Greater alignment leads to better employee performance and higher engagement.

1. What are your favorite and least favorite parts of this job?
2. What do you wish you could do less often?
3. What do you wish you could do more often?
4. What is going well in your role?
5. What is not going well in your role?
6. What are the necessary skills needed in your role? How are you performing on and growing these skills?
7. Which of your strengths are under-utilized in your current role?
8. When was the last time you felt “flow” or “in the zone” fully using your strengths and losing yourself in your work?
9. What excites you the most about your day-to-day responsibilities?
10. What are your current career priorities and goals that most excite you?
11. Are the responsibilities of your role what you expected? Why/why not?
12. How do you think this job aligns with your personal values?
13. What makes you proud of the work you do?
14. How does this job align with your future career goals?
15. What ideas do you have about how we can match your talent to responsibilities?
16. What other areas of the team or the company could benefit from your strengths? How?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What tasks and projects are best aligned with my strengths?
- What are the most important skills needed in my role? How am I performing and improving on these skills?
- What other areas of the team or the company could benefit from my strengths? How?

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Professional Development

Focus on opportunities for developing skills and increasing expertise.

1. Which of your skills would you like to develop further with coaching or training?
2. What do you want to learn about or experience but haven't yet had the opportunity to do so?
3. What new skills would you like to develop?
4. Are you interested in any professional development that would go beyond the role you're currently in or take you on a different path?
5. What obstacles are standing in the way of your development?
6. What types of professional development opportunities do you find most valuable: classroom setting, on-the-job training, hands-on experience, workshops and conferences, online learning, mentoring, etc.
7. What are you doing to improve your skills and expertise?
8. What are your education goals? What programs could help you further your education?
9. What training do we offer internally that could help you in your development?
10. After doing some research, what are five conferences, trainings, or other educational opportunities that interest you?
11. What local groups interest you for networking or skill development?
12. What qualities do you look for in a mentor?
13. Is there anyone in our organization you'd like as a mentor?
14. How would you want to benefit from a mentor?
15. What are you learning from your mentor?
16. What professional development goals can we set for you?
17. How have you improved on your development goals since our last meeting?
18. How have you been encouraged in the past to pursue your professional development?
19. What can you start/stop/keep doing to help you reach your development goals?
20. What was your last professional development experience? What did you learn? Was it worth the expense?
21. What could you teach others from your last professional development experience?
22. How will you use what you learned during your last professional development experience moving forward in your job?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What new skills would you like me to develop?
- What can you teach me about this skill, project, or task that will help my performance improve?
- What kind of professional development do you think would be most beneficial at this point in my career?
- Can you recommend any professional development opportunities?

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Career Advancement

Dig into career path and advancement opportunities for the present and future.

1. Where do you see yourself in two years? Five years? Ten years?
2. Look across the organization. What role do you want in two years? Five years? Ten years?
3. In the past six months, what have you done to move toward your ideal role/career?
4. In the next six months, what could you do to move toward your ideal role/career?
5. What role/career would let you use your strengths every day?
6. What are your biggest dreams?
7. What do you want your next position in this company to be?
8. What opportunities for advancement are you interested in?
9. What additional responsibilities would you like?
10. Are you interested in leading others?
11. What more are you wanting in your career right now?
12. What other areas of the company do you want to learn about?
13. Are there other roles in the company that you want to learn about?
14. How do your long-term goals align with your career advancement goals?
15. What skills are you developing to meet your career advancement goals?
16. What are you doing to achieve your career advancement goals?
17. What obstacles are preventing you from achieving your advancement goals?
18. How can we help develop your career further?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- Where do you see my career advancing in five years?
- What skills are needed to meet my career advancement goals?
- What do you think is holding me back from career advancement?

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Retention

Discover what elements will lead to high engagement and long-term retention.

1. What makes you happy with your job?
2. What makes you happy with this organization?
3. What attracted you to this job?
4. What attracted you to this organization?
5. What makes you stay in this job?
6. What makes you stay at this organization?
7. What would make you stay in this job and organization over the next two years? Five years? Ten years?
8. What things about this company, presently or in the future, would lead you to see yourself somewhere else?
9. When you see people leave our organization, why do you think they leave?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What can I do to make sure I stay at this organization over the next two years? Five years? Ten years?

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Feeling Valued

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Recognition

Recognition goes a long way! Discover preferences and perspectives so your recognition makes employees feel valued.

1. What makes you feel valued at work? Undervalued?
2. Overall, do you feel recognized for your contributions?
3. How are you being praised in the workplace? What praise have you received recently?
4. How do you like to be recognized?
5. Which is more important to you as a form of recognition: additional responsibilities, more time off, cash, or job title?
6. Do you prefer public or private recognition?
7. What type of work or accomplishments do you most want to be recognized?
8. Which recognition or rewards are most exciting or impactful to you?
(i.e. Hand-written thank you note, Starbucks drink, snacks, a nice gift, time-off, gift cards, a free massage, plane tickets, cash, etc.)
9. Whose recognition means the most to you?
10. What projects or contributions have you not received recognition for that you thought you should have?
11. Who have you recognized recently? For what?
12. How do you make your coworkers feel appreciated?
13. What can be done to improve recognition in our workplace?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What outputs are most valued by you? By the team? By the organization?
- Can I share with you the type of recognition I like to receive?
- Why wasn't I recognized for this project or task?
- How do you like to be recognized?

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Benefits & Compensation

Better understand the opportunities and goals for benefits and compensation.

1. How do you feel about your current compensation? (salaries/benefits/bonuses/etc.)
2. What compensation goals do you have for yourself in the next five years? Ten years?
3. Do you understand your opportunity for bonuses?
4. What questions do you have about the bonuses available?
5. What questions do you have about how compensation is addressed in our organization?
6. Do you understand the benefits we have available?
7. What questions do you have about the benefits you are currently receiving?
8. How could the organization help you better utilize our benefits?
9. What other benefits would you be interested in us adding to our benefits package?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What compensation goals are reasonable for me to have for the next five years? Ten years?
- How does our organization address compensation?
- Can you help me understand our benefits and how I can better utilize them?

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Goals & Alignment

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Short-Term Goals

Explore past goal progress and the goals to attain in the next month or quarter.

1. What were the highlights of your past month/quarter?
2. What did not go well last month/quarter?
3. What accomplishment are you most proud of so far this year/quarter?
4. What are your goals for the upcoming month/quarter?
5. How are you tracking your progress on your goals?
6. What kind of support do you need to achieve your goals?
7. Are there any goals that will be challenging for you to accomplish this month/quarter?
8. What obstacles are in the way of you achieving your goals this month/quarter?
9. What work on your plate is most in line with your short-term goals?
10. What work distracts you from your short-term goals?
11. What can you start/stop/keep doing to reach your goals?
12. What circumstances helped or hindered you in meeting your goals this month/quarter?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What were my highlights from last quarter?
- What did not go well last quarter?
- What do you think is keeping me from hitting my goals?
- How could I better achieve my goals?

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Long-Term Goals

Look past this month or quarter to long-term goals.

1. What are your goals for the next year?
2. What do you see yourself doing in two years? Five years? Ten years?
3. How often do you think about your long-term goals?
4. What inspired these goals?
5. What does your role, our team, and our organization look like when we're accomplishing these long-term goals?
6. Do you feel your long-term goals are attainable and realistic?
7. How will you measure or track your progress on these goals?
8. What steps will you take to attain these goals?
9. What work is most in line with your long-term goals?
10. What professional development opportunities are most in line with your long-term goals?
11. What goals will be challenging for you to accomplish?
12. What obstacles stand in the way of accomplishing your long-term goals?
13. Who here do you lean on to help set long-term goals?
14. Who outside of this workplace do you rely on to help set goals for the future?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What sort of long-term goals should I set for the next two years? Five years? Ten years?
- Do you think my long-term goals are attainable and realistic?
- What professional development opportunities could help me achieve my goals?
- What obstacles could stand in the way of me accomplishing my long-term goals?

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Alignment with Organizational Goals, Mission & Values

Determine if there's alignment among employees' work and goals and the organization's goals, mission, and values.

1. Do you understand how your personal goals align with team goals?
2. How do you see your goals and our team goals aligning with the organization's mission?
3. What do you think our organization's most important goals are?
4. Are you able to state what our organization's mission and values are?
5. What questions do you have about the company's mission or values?
6. How does your job benefit or connect to our overall company mission?
7. How do you demonstrate organizational values at work on a daily basis?
8. How do your personal values align with our company values?
9. Are there company values that resonate better or worse with you?
10. How could our team or organization better live our mission or values?
11. What ways could we improve our organization's mission and value statements?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- How do my goals align with our team and organizational goals?
- What are our organization's most important goals?
- How does the work I do align with our organization's mission and values?
- Can I share an idea on how our team/organization could better live out our mission or values?

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Job Performance

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Progress Check

Stay up-to-date with progress on current responsibilities and projects.

1. How are your projects or tasks going?
2. How do the projects or tasks you are working on align with your goals?
3. Do you have clarity regarding your responsibilities?
4. How are you prioritizing your projects or tasks?
5. How will you, the team, and the company benefit from this project or task?
6. How will you evaluate the success of this project or your work?
7. What do you want to learn from this project? What have you learned so far?
8. What is keeping you from accomplishing your work? What are the roadblocks or bottlenecks?
9. What could keep you from completing your projects or tasks on time?
10. How will you ensure your projects and tasks are completed on time?
11. What would help you complete your projects or tasks? (e.g. additional resources, coaching, assistance, etc.)
12. Was the project a success?
13. Did you complete your work successfully?
14. What went well? What could have gone better?
15. What could we change in the future to improve these types of projects or tasks?
16. What other projects or tasks would you like to work on?
17. How can you contribute to other projects or tasks for which our team is responsible?
18. How do you think you've done on the three key areas we discussed in your last progress check?
19. What do you think will be the keys to your success over the next four months?
20. What worries or concerns do you have about your ability to be successful in the coming months?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- Can I update you on my project or tasks?
- Which of my projects or tasks is the highest priority to our company?
- How will my success be measured on this project?
- Why do you think I'm having trouble with this project?
- What other projects or tasks can I work on?

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Tools, Resources & Environment

Make sure all the logistics are covered so your employees can be productive, stay motivated, and produce high-quality work.

1. Do you have the resources and tools you need to perform your job?
2. What resources and tools help you the most?
3. Which resources and tools do you use most often?
4. Are there tools your colleagues use that you don't know how to use or have access to?
5. What resources and tools could help you perform your job better?
6. Are there any resources or tools that you find useless?
7. Do you have all the information needed to do your job effectively?
8. What technology could improve your workspace?
9. Is your workspace comfortable and supportive of your health?
10. What is your preferred work environment? (i.e. open common areas, cubes, enclosed office, etc.)
11. Do you prefer different work environments for different types of work? Explain.
12. What could be improved in your work environment to help you produce high-quality work more efficiently?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- Are there resources and tools I'm not using that could help me perform my job better?
- How could I get the information I need to do my job more effectively?
- What changes can I make to my work environment to improve my productivity and quality of work?

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Process & Workflow

Determine if work is happening as efficiently as possible and what can be done to help.

1. How are you accomplishing this project or task? (i.e. timing, tools/resources, process/steps, etc.)
2. Do you have the information you need to complete your tasks?
3. What activities take up the most time of your day or week?
4. What distractions or interruptions keep you from getting your work done?
5. What mental thoughts or roadblocks get in the way of your success?
6. What part of your working routine keeps you the most productive? Least?
7. What part of the day/week do you have the most energy and focus?
8. What aspects of your work environment help you focus?
9. What type of work takes the most focus and energy?
10. What are the biggest time wasters for you each week?
11. What causes you to lose focus or energy?
12. What do you do when you feel unfocused or unmotivated? What could help you bounce back quicker?
13. In an ideal, productive day at work for you, what tasks could you accomplish?
14. Which coworkers do you admire for their productivity and efficiency? What behaviors do you notice in their work styles?
15. What changes can you make to become more productive at work?
16. What tools could help your productivity?
17. How can your schedule be changed to help your productivity?
18. How can your work environment be changed to help your productivity?
19. How can I help you become more efficient?
20. How can I help you become more effective in your role?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What has your process been for accomplishing a similar task or project?
- How can I minimize the time I spend on this activity?
- Do you have suggestions for how to handle distractions and interruptions?
- How can I better organize my work schedule to improve productivity?

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Workload

Walk the fine line between being ready for new responsibilities and drowning in stress.

1. How are you doing? Are you feeling stressed?
2. Do you feel the time you are allotted per task is too little, too much, or just right?
3. Is the work you're doing interesting?
4. Do you feel challenged by your responsibilities?
5. What work is too demanding or causing burn out?
6. Do you feel balance in the types of tasks you are doing?
7. Do you feel over-worked, under-worked, or just right?
8. Are you ready to take on new responsibilities?
9. How can I help alleviate your workload?
10. What work could be shifted off your plate?
11. What work could we delegate to someone else, so you can take on new, more challenging responsibilities?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- How can I avoid burnout?
- What can I add to my plate for a greater challenge?
- Is there anything else you need me to do?
- Could we delegate some of my work to someone else?

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Performance & Behavioral Improvement

Discover what's hindering top performance. Dive into what behaviors are enhancing and detracting from performance.

1. How did you perform on your goals?
2. How do you think you could improve as an employee?
3. How can I help keep you accountable for achieving goals and results?
4. How will you keep yourself accountable for meeting goals, deadlines, and results?
5. How are you being efficient/inefficient with your time?
6. What actions can be taken to help improve your performance in the future?
7. What steps have you taken to improve your performance?
8. How have you seen your performance improve?
9. What areas of performance are in need of improvement?
10. How can we take action? (Include specific and measurable objectives that are relevant and time-bound; include meeting dates and a final review of outcomes and measured improvements.)
11. Discuss current satisfaction in your current performance and areas you would like to improve.
12. What specific training and/or professional development do you feel would enhance your job performance and job satisfaction?
13. What is a recent situation you wish you had handled differently? What would you have changed?
14. What behaviors do you bring to your work and to the team that have a positive impact?
15. What are other situations you can use these strengths?
16. What behaviors do you need to improve or continue to grow?
17. How will you practice improving these behaviors?
18. How would you advise someone else who is working on these behaviors?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- How could I improve as an employee?
- How can I keep myself accountable for meeting goals, deadlines, and results?
- How could I have handled a recent situation differently?
- What behaviors do you think I need to improve to see growth?

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Organizational Feedback

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Company Culture & Improvement

Find out what works and doesn't work in your culture. Maximize your conversation to uncover how your organization can improve.

1. How do you feel about our company culture?
2. How can we improve our company culture?
3. What other companies do you admire for their culture?
4. How can we be more like these companies?
5. What is your favorite thing about our company culture?
6. What is your least favorite thing about our company culture?
7. How is our company loyal to its employees?
8. What makes you proud to say you work here?
9. What is fun/not fun about working here?
10. What do you most enjoy about working here?
What do you not enjoy about working here?
11. How can we compete in the market better, in your opinion?
12. What are our obvious shortcomings?
13. If you could change one thing about our company, what would it be?
14. How could we be more creative or innovative as a company?
15. Can you provide one suggestion to help improve one of our products or services?
16. What are the primary risks or issues with our products or services that we should work to resolve?
17. If you owned the company, what would you do differently?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What can I do to get the most out of my experience here?
- What do you enjoy about working here the most?
- How can we compete in the market better, in your opinion?
- Can I share an idea on how our company could be more creative or innovative?
- What aspects of our culture am I not taking advantage of?

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Change Management

Ensure change is being managed effectively and opportunities for change are maximized.

1. Why do you think we're making this change?
2. How will this change impact your role and our team?
3. How do you think we'll benefit from this change?
4. What will be difficult about this change?
5. How could we better communicate changes that happen in our organization?
6. How can we make this change a smooth transition for you and our team?
7. What skills or information do you have that could help us navigate through the transition?
8. As we make this change, what are we forgetting? What do we need to address first?
9. What other changes do you think would benefit the organization or the team?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- Why are we making this change?
- How will this change impact my role and our team?
- How can I help us navigate through this transition?

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Corporate Social Responsibility

Discuss your CSR initiatives and opportunities to align work with meaning.

1. What causes are most important to you?
2. What do you believe our company's social responsibility is to the community, both locally and globally?
3. Are you aware of the CSR programs available to you?
4. What questions do you have about our CSR programs?
5. What opportunities do you or our team have to contribute to our CSR initiatives?
6. What are the goals of our CSR initiatives? What results do you see?
7. How could we better broadcast the CSR programs we have available within the company?
8. How could we better position our CSR programs internally and externally?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What's our company's approach to CSR?
- What CSR programs are available to employees?
- What can our team do to give back to our community?
- How can I impact our CSR programs?

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Relationships

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Team Camaraderie & Coworker Relationships

Dive into the behaviors of your team and optimize their productivity, improve teamwork, and increase engagement.

1. Who has helped you succeed in your responsibilities? How?
2. Who have you helped succeed with their work? How?
3. How is teamwork encouraged in our organization?
4. What is your definition of teamwork?
5. How can we improve our level of teamwork?
6. What kind of team building activities would you like to see in the workplace?
7. What constructive feedback have your peers given you?
8. Which of your team members do you depend on and trust the most? Why?
9. How can you increase trust with your coworkers?
10. How can I help you build trust with your coworkers?
11. What do you expect from your coworkers?
12. How can your coworkers count on you?
13. Do you feel connected or disconnected to the team? In what way?
14. What can you do to improve your relationships with your coworkers?
15. What do you admire in your team members?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- How can I help my coworkers succeed?
- What kind of team building activities can we do in our workplace?
- How can I build trust with my coworkers?
- How should I leverage my team in my role?

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Manager Expectations & Effectiveness

Build a solid manager-employee relationship by understanding leadership styles, strengths, and expectations.

1. Who are some leaders you admire? Why do you admire them?
2. What type of leadership style do you prefer?
3. What type of leadership style resonates negatively with you?
4. What kind of support do you expect from a manager?
5. Do you want more or less direction from me on your work? Why?
6. What can I do to help you be more effective and engaged?
7. What do you like/dislike about my management style?
8. How can I improve as your manager?
9. What do you want to know about me?
10. How am I setting you up for success?
11. If you were me, what would you do differently?
12. How can I help you manage your direct reports better?
13. What areas are you struggling with in managing your team?
14. What ideas do you have on growing as a manager?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- Who are some leaders you admire? Why do you admire them?
- What's your leadership style?
- Why am I getting more or less direction from you on my work?
- Can I share what I like/dislike in a manager?

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Work-Life Balance

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Work-Life Balance

Find a good balance between home and work to keep stress down and engagement up.

1. How do you feel about your work-life balance right now?
2. How could you maintain balance between your work and personal life?
3. How can I make your work-life balance better?
4. What parts of your job negatively affect your personal life?
5. What parts of your personal life negatively affect your work performance?
6. How does your time management affect your progress at work? At home?
7. How often are you able to satisfy both your job and personal responsibilities?

Flip the Question!

Here's how you ask questions from the employee perspective.



- What advice do you have on improving my work-life balance?
- What resources could help me better balance my personal and professional life?
- When (if at all) do you think it's necessary for me to address work responsibilities after hours?

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Take Your One-On-One Meetings Online

Ditch the paper and pen, and conduct effective one-on-one manager-employee meetings online.

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- Customize meeting templates to fit your culture
- Allow HR, managers, or employees to initiate cycles at their convenience
- Empower managers to encourage more frequent conversations

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