

The One-on-One

QUICK LOOK

Schedule a regular meeting with each team member to make space for important conversations.

Summary

A one-on-one meeting is a cornerstone management practice – it's a multifunctional tool that accomplishes a wide variety of goals. When it's done well (and consistently), it gives you a platform to:

- Strengthen your connections
- Offer support
- Coach for development
- Solve problems
- Give and receive feedback
- Provide affirmation and encouragement

One-on-one meetings are a regular, protected space to have conversations that matter with your team members. While having an open-door policy may work sometimes, many conversations need a dedicated time and place or they simply won't happen with the regularity that they need to.

Key Actions

There are two primary types of one-on-ones you'll want to put on the calendar, outlined below.



Tactical One-on-One

- **Purpose:** Focused on the work, this one-on-one is all about making progress on task-related goals.
- **Frequency:** Schedule a 15-minute meeting once a week. Adjust the time and frequency as needed.

- **Agenda:** Ask three simple questions:
 - What are the most important tasks you need to focus on this week?
 - What challenges do you anticipate?
 - What do you need from me to move forward?



Growth One-on-One

- **Purpose:** Focused on the person, this one-on-one is all about making a connection and supporting the continued health, growth, and engagement of your team member.
- **Frequency:** Schedule a 60-minute meeting once a month. Adjust as needed.
- **Agenda:** The employee owns the agenda for this one. Let them know that this is their time to talk about whatever they choose. Here are a few guiding questions you could offer them:
 - What's been going well at work recently?
 - What are some frustrations or challenges that have come up?

- If you could change one thing about your job or work experience, what would it be?
- What have you been learning recently? What would you like to learn more about?
- What opportunities and experiences do you need to prepare for your future career goals?
- What do you need from me?



Tips

- Put on your coach's hat for these meetings. Stay curious, listen actively, and ask good questions that help create clarity and prompt new ways of thinking.
- Don't feel the pressure to have all the answers. They're going to bring all kinds of challenges and issues into these conversations, and you won't be an expert in all of those areas. It's okay to say, "I'm not sure. Let's figure this out together."
- Diligently protect this time on your calendar. Show your team member that they're valuable by actively valuing the time you have scheduled with them.

