

1:1 Guide for Managers

Dedicating time for regular one-on-one connections with your team is one of the best ways to support them, especially when working remotely.

01. Prepare for the 1:1.

- **Schedule a standing weekly meeting with each person you support.**

This meeting can be 30 minutes or longer, or more or less frequent, depending on what you both need. Times of change, before critical project milestones, or during someone's onboarding period are good times to consider longer or more frequent 1:1s.

- **Don't miss 1:1s and try not to reschedule unless requested by the person you support.**

Make sure you're having 1:1s with everyone and in a format (location, structure) and time that works for them.

- **Keep a shared agenda document and/or use a 1:1 Workplace Group where you can both add topics.**

Link to other documents you may use in your 1:1 including goals, expectations, roadmaps, or career plans.

- **Empower the people you support.**

Ask them to contribute agenda topics. Add any topics you have for them after they've added theirs. Some people may not know what is important to cover, so be prepared to ask questions to understand work blockers or areas where a status update is needed.

- **Review actions items.**

Review actions items from the last 1:1 and make sure you have completed the actions you both committed to.

02. During the 1:1.

- **Check-in (5-15min)**

How are you? How are you feeling about your work this week? What are you excited about / apprehensive about?

Showing deep care for people helps you build trust and better understand someone's experience. Ask open-ended questions, and then LISTEN. Be open to changing the agenda of the 1:1 if needed, based on how the person is feeling and what support they need in the moment.

- **Provide support on near-term work (15-30min)**

What's been going well/not so well this week? Why?

Focus on areas in the work or relationships where you can help. Help people get to solutions by asking open-ended questions, and ask what specific things you can do to help unblock if needed. Ask about projects that are coming up and what they might need from you as they get started.

Additional Questions:

- *What roadblocks are you running into? How can I help?*
- *What work has given you the most energy?*
- *What work are you finding most challenging? How can I help?*
- *What are some risks that could prohibit you from keeping the work moving?*

- **Ongoing Feedback (10-30min)**

You may not be able to give and receive feedback every week, but the goal is to be as timely as possible.

- **Giving Recognition:**

You did really great work on [project or meeting or presentation] this week. I noticed that you [name specific behaviors you observed that you know they have been working on].

1:1s are also a great time to recognize people for improvement in areas they have been working on, or successes in XFN relationships, or other project or career-related milestones. Tie recognition to the impact it had, and reinforce that these are behaviors they should keep doing.

- **Giving Constructive Feedback:**

This week I observed an area of growth for you that I'd like to talk about./ This week I got feedback from one of your peers on an area of growth for you that I'd like to discuss.

It's critically important for everyone to get the ongoing feedback they need to improve. Be specific, and emphasize support for the person's growth.

Constructive example:

- *One of your peers noted that you missed a deadline this week that slowed down their own work. I'd like to hear how you experienced this, can you tell me a bit more? [if feedback is needed] – Although it's normal to adjust timelines as many things can be out of our control, I'd like to see you communicate any delays more proactively. That looks like [describe expected behavior]. I'm giving you this feedback because we have high expectations, and I know you can reach them.*

- **Asking for Feedback:**

It's important for me to get honest feedback from you. I want to make sure I am supporting you as well as I can. What are 1-2 ways I could support you better?

Asking for feedback helps you improve, and it sets the tone for an open and honest feedback relationship. Remember to thank them for feedback, and find ways for them to see you put their feedback into action.

Additional Questions:

- *What is one thing I did this week that I could have improved?*
- *What do you wish I did more/less of?*

03. After the 1:1.

- **Periodically ask how your 1:1s are going.**

What, if anything, might need to change about the length, frequency, or agenda for these meetings?

- **Reflect on the 1:1.**

Ask yourself:

- *“How much did I listen vs. talk?”*
- *“Were my feedback examples specific?”*
- *“Did I follow up on the things I promised?”*
- *“Did I understand and clarify the different types of support the person needs from me to execute?”*
- *“Where is my relationship with this person? What could I do differently to strengthen it (if anything)?”*