

CONDUCTING ENGAGING CONVERSATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS

IMPORTANCE

In addition to conducting the State of the Team conversation to discuss Gallup Q¹² survey results and set goals, managers should hold recurring engagement conversations with each person and with their team. The manager can use these conversations to build engagement and drive performance.

Frequent engaging conversations should:

1. Help individuals and teams understand and appreciate each other's strengths.
2. Allow managers to ensure that team members have everything they need to accomplish their goals and maintain accountability.
3. Provide an opportunity for recognition — an essential component of growth.
4. Create an environment of collaboration that fosters employee engagement.

The best managers know the importance of connecting with each of their employees. The depth and authenticity of these ongoing conversations will help determine the managers' ability to create high levels of engagement and sustained business success over time.

GUIDELINES

Gallup has identified the following engaging conversations for individuals and for teams that managers should lead on a regular basis:

1. Understand and Appreciate Strengths
2. Build Engagement and Collaboration
3. Drive Performance

Use the information on the following pages to better understand the purpose of these three conversations and to find questions that will help you lead them.

Listening is a critical part of these conversations. Think of the 80/20 rule: Effective managers listen 80% of the time and talk 20% of the time. Managers need to create an environment that encourages involvement from all of their employees.

AT A GLANCE

There are three types of engaging conversations for individuals and teams:

1. Understand and Appreciate Strengths
2. Build Engagement and Collaboration
3. Drive Performance

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1. Understand and Appreciate Strengths

TEAM CONVERSATION		INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION	
PURPOSE	The purpose of this team conversation is to appreciate the team’s individual and collective talents and strengths. Understanding, appreciating, and applying team member’s strengths affects the team’s ability to achieve excellence and maximize each person’s natural talents and strengths.	PURPOSE	The purpose of this individual conversation is to appreciate each team member’s unique talents and strengths and the valuable contribution he or she brings to the team.
ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to help team members harness their individual and collective talents and intentionally bring them to life daily.	ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to identify the right talent for the role, task, or project, and then focus, nurture, and develop that talent.
KEY QUESTIONS	<p>What are the unique talents and strengths that you bring to the team?</p> <p>What are some of the most valuable contributions you make to the team?</p> <p>Are there any “missed” opportunities or areas of value that we are not using?</p> <p>How can others on the team draw out the best you?</p> <p>What are our collective strengths as a team?</p> <p>What are our potential blind spots?</p> <p>How can we use our collective strengths to achieve our performance goals or address the challenges we face?</p> <p>What can other team members count on you to bring to your role?</p>	KEY QUESTIONS	<p>What are your strengths? What do you do best?</p> <p>What talents and strengths do you use in your current role?</p> <p>What do you believe is your unique contribution to the team?</p> <p>How can I help you use your talents and strengths more in your role?</p> <p>What do you enjoy most in your current role?</p> <p>Are there activities or other parts of your role that you want to do more frequently?</p> <p>Do you have talents and strengths that you would like to use more often?</p>

2. Build Engagement and Collaboration

TEAM CONVERSATION		INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION	
PURPOSE	The purpose of this team conversation is to build a collaborative and engaging work environment.	PURPOSE	The purpose of this individual conversation is to build engagement. Building engagement creates engaged employees who are involved in, enthusiastic about, and committed to their work and who contribute to their organization in a positive manner.
ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to ensure alignment of responsibilities and expectations and to encourage each team member to take ownership for his or her personal engagement and the team's collective engagement.	ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to define the right performance outcomes, communicate expectations, and identify what excites, motivates, and engages each team member.
KEY QUESTIONS	<p>How engaged is our team right now?</p> <p>How do we define each of the engagement items as a team?</p> <p>How does this item affect our team's ability to reach our performance goals?</p> <p>What are the things that positively affect this engagement item?</p> <p>What are the things that get in the way of positively affecting this engagement item?</p> <p>What elements of our work culture are facilitating growth in engagement?</p> <p>When we achieve team goals, how would you like to be recognized?</p> <p>What do you think I expect of the team this year?</p>	KEY QUESTIONS	<p>What do you believe you are paid to do?</p> <p>Are there things that get in the way of meeting the responsibilities of your role?</p> <p>How can I help you be successful in your role?</p> <p>What parts or activities of your current role energize you?</p> <p>What do you want to accomplish in the next month? What about the next six months?</p> <p>What do you think I expect of you this year?</p> <p>What do you expect of me as your manager this year?</p> <p>When you achieve your goals, how do you like to be recognized?</p>

3. Drive Performance

TEAM CONVERSATION		INDIVIDUAL CONVERSATION	
PURPOSE	The purpose of this team conversation is to drive team performance.	PURPOSE	The purpose of this individual conversation is to drive individual performance.
ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to clarify performance expectations, and then help the team recognize, develop, and use their individual and collective talents and strengths to accomplish their goals.	ROLE OF THE MANAGER	The role of the manager is to help each team member use his or her talents and strengths to learn, grow, and improve his or her performance.
KEY QUESTIONS	<p>What are the most important performance goals or challenges that we need to achieve or overcome as a team?</p> <p>What are three to four critical tasks that we need to complete to achieve our performance goal?</p> <p>In which area do you think you can have the greatest effect? Which of the tasks are aligned to your talents and strengths?</p> <p>Looking at our collective team strengths, are there any partnerships that can be created to help us complete the tasks?</p> <p>What else can we do to facilitate success in reaching our performance goals?</p>	KEY QUESTIONS	<p>Which of your talents or strengths boost (or contributes to) your performance?</p> <p>What is the greatest challenge you are facing at work?</p> <p>Which of your talents or strengths could you use to help you address this challenge?</p> <p>Are there opportunities you would like to pursue to help you learn and grow?</p> <p>What is the best way for you to measure your progress? How can we track your development?</p> <p>How often should you and I meet to discuss how things are going?</p>

The Gallup Employee Engagement Center offers additional products you can purchase to learn more about managing for improved engagement and high performance. Visit the Gallup Employee Engagement Center Dashboard to learn more.

STEPS TO CHECK

- ✓ The best practice for building engagement is for managers to hold regular, ongoing engagement conversations with individuals and with their team.
- ✓ Connect with each of employee. The depth and authenticity of the conversations will significantly effect the ability to create high levels of engagement and sustained business success over time.
- ✓ Remember the 80/20 rule: Listen 80% of the time, and talk 20% of the time. Encourage collaboration with employees during each of the three engaging conversations.
- ✓ Use Gallup's key questions to help guide discussion in team and individual engagement conversations.