

Successful Career Conversations

Quick Tips for Managers

Create a Safe Space

- Select a quiet, confidential space (for both virtual and in-person meetings) to avoid distraction and support openness.
- Set the tone of the meeting with questions like, “I’m curious about how you want to grow while you work with us?” as this will help to clarify that this is a conversation about getting to know the individual, not their performance.
- Begin with encouragement by thanking the employee for taking the time to meet with you and expressing appreciation for their contributions.
- Share any important points you know from previous conversations with the employee about their career goals and professional development so far.

Embrace Curiosity

- Approach the conversation with a coaching mindset, emphasizing guidance and support and exploring ideas that inspire the employee to take meaningful action.
- Listen actively by maintaining eye contact and nodding to show engagement.
- Prioritize curiosity to demonstrate employee value, foster stronger relationships, and improve retention.
- Utilize open-ended questions to encourage open dialogue: What did you learn about yourself as you prepared for this conversation? What has been most fulfilling about your

role so far? What growth or learning opportunities are you interested in exploring further?

Provide Constructive Guidance

- Share current and future opportunities for growth within the company - including training, development and employment - and how to explore and prepare for these.
- Provide tools and feedback to help employees identify strengths, talents, interests, preferences, dislikes, and areas for development.
- Discuss next steps and co-create an actionable plan for skill development, mentorship, or training programs.
- Be open about what is and is not within your power - you are able to provide information, support and guidance, but are not able to make guarantees.

Invite Follow Up & Build/Maintain Trust

- Review and summarize key takeaways to ensure mutual understanding of next steps for both you and your employee.
- Reaffirm your commitment to supporting their growth and share how you intend to do this moving forward.
- Invite the employee to follow up with you in an agreed-upon amount of time to track progress and determine next steps - career development is ongoing!

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