

Performance Conversations - 5 tips for the 'little and often' approach

1. Closing the gap between manager and employee

Scheduling regular check-ins and updates of objectives can help in a large variety of ways. It closes the gap between line managers and their people. Keeping communication **open and frequent** helps your people feel more comfortable and more likely to stay loyal. Humanising performance management is ultimately about letting your people feel heard.

2. Increasing trust and engagement

Employee engagement is a high priority, especially as we all work through a time of great change. Many people currently working remotely may not return to office life much, or at all this year – so keeping your employees engaged in the process of not just working, but working with you, is vital.

Whether their motivation is to pay the bills or to achieve something in the workplace they're really proud of, **regular communication and frequent feedback** helps an employee and line manager stay aligned. Trust increases with open and honest communication, which is the foundation of retention, engagement, and productivity.

3. Improving performance in the short and long term

When we say regular check-ins, we do not mean micromanaging. This can be a huge morale drainer. But checking in regularly – anything from once a week to once a month – to take a look at **employee, team and organisational objectives**, and **checking in with your people to ask how they are really doing**, is a great way to keep things consistent.

It shows you care, your people will feel more invested in, and therefore likely to invest more in you. Performance improves through the use of **short-term goals and objectives**. Leaving objectives to be achieved only once a year means just that – they will happen once a year. Setting objectives every one, two or three months means more can be achieved over the same time period.

Hitting objectives can be a huge motivator, which does wonders for achievement and performance.

4. Providing a more holistic view of employees

Checking in on a regular basis gives you a more rounded view of your people. It can help you **understand how they cope in different situations**, their trigger points or stressors, as well as identifying where they excel. You'll get a clearer picture of how they cope under stress and pressure as well as the situations in which they thrive. **Every employee is different**, so more regular check-ins will help you gain a greater understanding of your people.

5. Changing communication for the better

Ultimately, this is all about communication. Whether we're living through a pandemic, working with dispersed teams, or it's just another day at the office, communication is one of the most important parts of working together.

Improving communication and using it as a way to increase trust can be a great stepping stone towards employee engagement, staff retention, and improving the wellbeing of your people.