

The Conversation Process Every Manager Should Follow in Employee Reviews

Effective employee reviews aren't something leaders do *at* employees; reviews are something that leaders do *with* employees. Use these questions to gauge and establish employee alignment within your organization, then follow up accordingly to solicit feedback from employees in regards to how they're managed.

This gives the employee the chance to provide upward feedback in a conversational dialogue, rather than a formal review setup, and gives managers and employees great insight into each perspective.

Ask this first...



Follow up with this...

What are your personal, professional goals?

What's one key strength you think I should leverage more in my role to support your goals?

This starts off the conversation by asking the employee about themselves so they can recall their goals and begin the conversation on a positive note. By following their answer with a question about your key strength and how it impacts their goals, you allow the employee to make a connection between you as their manager and what they want out of life and their career.

You don't have to put them on the spot with these questions, send them out in advance so they can make that connection and explain it to you in the review. This fosters an alignment in the manager-employee relationship and sets a positive tone for the rest of the review.

Ask this first...



Follow up with this...

Can you please explain to me what you believe the company goals, vision and strategy are?

What's one thing I can do to help us be more effective in reaching our goals?

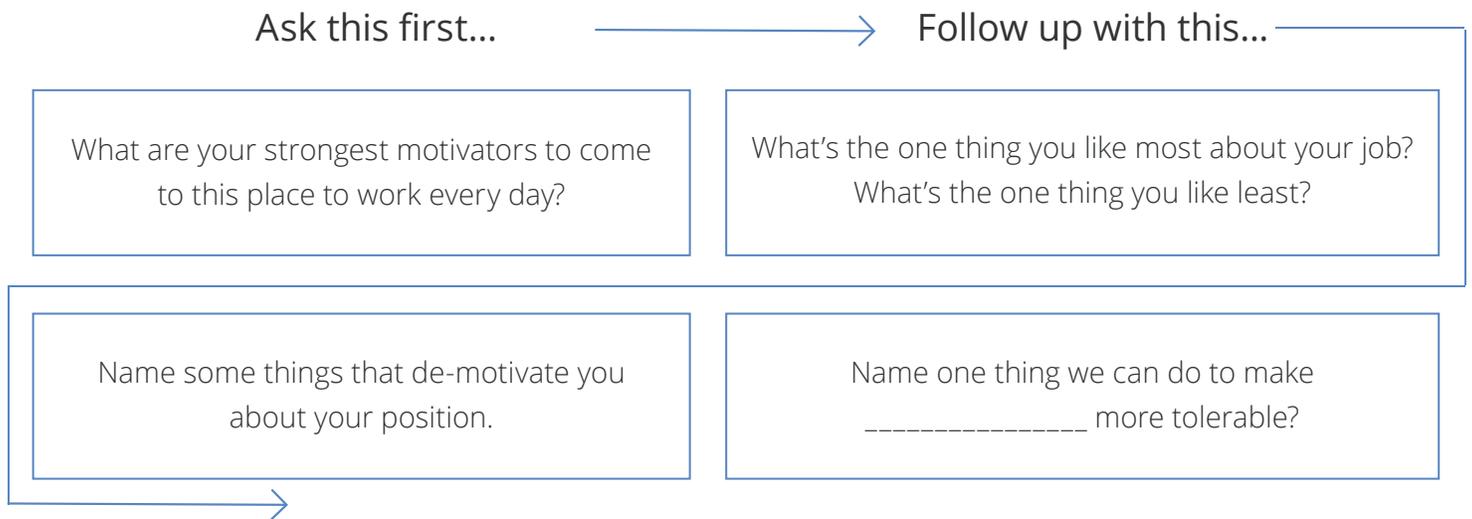
Do you understand your personal role in the company goals, vision and strategy?

What's one thing I can do to better support you in your role?



Research shows only 29% of employees can correctly identify their company's strategy out of six choices. With 70% of all employees misaligned with a company's strategic direction, this question *has* to be asked. It must be done exactly after the employee has identified their own personal and professional goals so they can begin to align them with those of their organization. By following their answer with a question about how you, as their manager, can support the entire team, it allows them to analyze the big picture.

By moving to this set of questions, we enable the employee to move from the big picture perspective to their position *within* it. Bring the conversation full circle by inviting the employee to give specific examples of how you, other managers or other members of the team can support their role. Research shows that supportive managers can result in cost savings for lower turnover and lower stress, [according to Purdue Krannert School of Management](#).



Encourage them to be completely honest and transparent in their answers. Most of us generally can say our strongest motivator to come to work every day is to make enough money to pay our bills and survive. So that's why we ask "to come to this place".

Something to consider: companies using employee incentive programs report a 79% success rate in achieving their established goals when the correct reward is offered. Use the following question to lead into what de-motivates the employee so you can begin brainstorming ideas to make the situation better.

Many causes of demotivation can be: micromanagement, lack of progress, job insecurity, lack of recourse for poor performance, poor communication, unpleasant coworkers, boredom, etc. No matter what the case, you want to bring those aspects of de-motivation to light and identify ways they can become more tolerable.

Ask this first...

Follow up with this...

Do you understand why we use the processes and practices in place?

What's one thing I can do to be more effective at _____?

What would you change about those processes and practices?

What's one thing you liked and one thing you thought could be improved about...?

The Boston Consulting Group found that procedures in organizations have increased anywhere from 50% to 350% over the last 15 years and managers spend 40% of their time writing reports and 30% to 60% of it in coordination meetings.

Too much process and procedure can hamper productivity, but how do you know which ones to get rid of? Ask! However, encourage employees to elaborate on areas where leadership can be more effective in the process so you know exactly which parts aren't working or holding them back or you can clear up any misconceptions.

Employee Notes:
