



PAULA IN THE NEWS

50 Great One-on-One Meeting Questions for Managers and Employees

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The manager-employee relationship is central to all things work. As in any relationship, communication is essential.

[Weekly one-on-ones](#) give managers and direct reports the chance to share feedback, address challenges, and check in on [mental health](#). While discussion topics might include tactical, short-term items (like project updates), one-on-one meetings are also an opportunity to talk about the big picture.

When it comes time to set the meeting agenda, it's natural to feel at a loss for words. That's why we asked business leaders to share their favorite weekly one-on-one questions.

Manager One-on-One Questions

While some put the onus on direct reports to set the agenda, HR leaders say managers share that responsibility. Not every employee will be forthcoming about personal or team challenges, let alone career goals, without being asked. By giving the agenda thought ahead of time, both parties will get more out of the meeting.

“It's critical for managers to ask the right questions and stick to the agenda. Otherwise, the conversation can go off track, and the meeting's effectiveness will likely go to waste,” said Jagoda Wiczorek, HR Manager at [ResumeLab](#). “To counterbalance it, you need to prep your one-on-one questions to help you kickstart the conversation, steer the discussion, and ultimately provide you with enough information to gauge the employee's emotional, mental, and professional state.”

Others stressed the importance of managers regularly bringing up development. Surveys show that “[lack of growth opportunities](#)” ranks among employees' top reasons for leaving. Given the power dynamics involved, some reports might be wary of bringing up career goals. That's why managers should add [growth](#) to their one-on-one agendas on a monthly or quarterly basis.

“If we want our employees to be happy at work, we need to make sure that we offer them opportunities for continuous growth. In my questions, I try to get them to go a bit further beyond their comfort zones,” said Susan Norton, Senior Director of HR at [LiveCareer](#). “The goal for my team is to be challenged but not overwhelmed. I want to push them to take up new challenges but also offer support when needed,” Norton said.

Among the HR and business leaders we surveyed, the top manager one-on-one questions were:



Engagement and Morale

1. How are you feeling?
2. What were your work and non-work highlights last week?
3. Is there anything stressing you out right now? What is it?
4. Do you feel like you're able to disconnect after work? Why or why not?

Collaboration and Teamwork

5. Do you feel like the team is communicating effectively enough? If not, what's standing in the way?
6. Is there a problem on the team that I might not know about? What is it?
7. Do you feel like you're able to stay connected with everyone? Is there anything I can do to help?
8. Which team members do you wish you had more of a connection with?
9. Do you feel like you're able to ask others for help? Why or why not?

Growth

10. How do you feel like you're tracking on your growth goals?
11. Are there any new skills you'd like to learn?
12. Are you interested in any conferences or courses? Are you open to recommendations?
13. In your view, how have you grown since working here?
14. What part of the business would you like to learn more about?
15. Are there any specific software or tools you'd like to learn how to use?

Manager Feedback

16. What can I do to make your life easier?
17. Am I doing a good enough job bringing you into team decisions? Would you like to be more involved?
18. Do you feel like you're getting enough from our one-on-ones? Why or why not?
19. How would you like me to share feedback?
20. Would you like me to share more updates from the leadership team? If so, what kind of information would be helpful?

Productivity

21. What's your top priority right now?
22. What challenges do you face in your role that aren't visible to others?
23. What's your outlook on the next week? How about next month?
24. What roadblocks can I help you with?
25. Is there anything that frustrates you or keeps you from doing your best work? What is it?



Employee One-on-One Questions

It's easy to assume your manager knows what you're dealing with on a day-to-day basis. That's doubly true if you're remote. But managers have to juggle jam-packed calendars, reports' questions, and their own work — meaning they need your perspective on what's working and what isn't.

“Employees should ask about things that prevent them from realizing their objectives or slow them down. Whether you're a manager or in HR, you don't want bottlenecks to stand in their way,” Norton said. Though managers should try to identify some of those obstacles through questioning, it's a two-way street. Playing the part of “squeaky wheel” is one of the keys to [managing up](#) well. “If employees don't communicate their problems, we might not be aware of their struggles,” she said.

Similarly, while there's a time and a place for open-ended questions, be specific when asking your manager for feedback. [Giving constructive feedback](#) is easier when you're able to tie it to a particular topic or assignment.

“Put yourself in your manager's shoes. The obligation of having regular meetings where you're expected to give feedback can make you run for the hills,” said Paula McLeod, an executive coach and CEO of [Success by Design](#). “Don't just ask, ‘How am I doing?’ Instead, ask, ‘What's one thing I could do a little differently that would make me develop faster? Or make things easier for you? Or would get me promoted faster?’”

Among the HR and business leaders we surveyed, the top employee one-on-one questions were:

Engagement and Morale

26. How are you doing?
27. Looking ahead, what are you most hopeful for and worried about?
28. Is there anything about our team culture you wish you could change?
29. How do you avoid burnout?

Productivity

30. What's your highest priority right now? How can I help?
31. Right now, what do you need more of — quality or quantity?
32. Is there a process or project you'd like me to start owning? What is it?
33. What are your long-term goals for the team?
34. Are you thinking about expanding the team?
35. Is there anything I should prepare ahead of our next one-on-one?

Collaboration and Teamwork



36. Who would you like me to start talking to or working more with?
37. If I need help, what's the best way to get your input?
38. What part of my job would you like more visibility into?
39. What's your preferred way to receive updates?
40. What should I be mindful of when working with other teams?

Growth

41. What should I consider adding to my [growth plan](#)?
42. What upcoming conferences or events I should attend?
43. What technical skills should I work on?
44. Are there any soft skills I should develop?
45. In your view, what are my strengths?
46. What skill gaps do you see on our team?

Feedback

47. Is there anything I should be doing differently? Do you have examples?
48. Has anyone shared any feedback about my work? What was it?
49. How could I better contribute to our team meetings?
50. What are my blind spots?

Though they can feel routine, weekly one-on-ones are the most important meetings on your calendar. For managers, they're a way to ensure everyone feels engaged and productive. For everyone else, they're a chance to check in with the boss, build rapport, and maybe even set the stage for that next big promotion.

“If you think these meetings are all about you, you're wrong. These meetings are a chance to build your relationship with one of the most important people in your life,” McLeod said. “Whatever you do, don't cancel it.”

To see how Lattice's software empowers teams to get more out of their one-on-ones, schedule a [product tour](#).

Sample one-on-one questions provided by [Amica](#), [CareerAddict](#), [Chilli Fruit](#), [Chanty](#), [Designer Sheds](#), [Employment King](#), [Etias](#), [Eu Natural](#), [House Method](#), [Infinity Dish](#), [Joe Mull & Associates](#), [LiveCareer](#), [Lock Search Group](#), [Majesty Coffee](#), [Moxie HR Strategies](#), [My Corporation](#), [My Mixify](#), [NuLeaf Naturals](#), [Number for Live Person](#), [Online Degree](#), [Postali](#), [PrizeRebel](#), [Rebate Key](#), [Resume.io](#), [ResumeLab](#), [The Rosenstein Group](#), [Simpleeye](#), [SJD Taxi](#), [Solitaired](#), [Speechly](#), [Success by Design](#), [Summit Search](#), [Translation Equipment HQ](#), [Sobanco](#), [Stratex](#), and [Upperkey](#).