

Hybrid Working in action

10 questions you can ask during 1-2-1 conversations.

The manager-employee relationship is central to all things work. However, just like there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to Dynamic working, there isn't a single set of talking points that apply to every meeting. In a dynamic working environment, managers need to tailor their 1-2-1 conversations to get at the issues unique to individuals within your teams.

Here are some questions that you may want to add to your own 1-2-1 agenda.

1. Do you feel like you're able to maintain meaningful connections with your work friends?

While hybrid workers may occasionally meet peers on campus physical distance can have an isolating effect. It's important that you thoughtfully create opportunities for your teams to socialise. This could be face to face meetings every month, bringing teams together to collaborate on a project or celebrating the launch of a new service or course.

2. Are you facing any new challenges while working remotely that you didn't face in working in the office?

Ask a team member to say what they're struggling with while adjusting to hybrid working. As a manager, one of your most essential responsibilities is to help clear obstacles and support your team to be able to perform at their best. By asking this question you can work with them to identify solutions to the issues they are experiencing. Ask them to think of solutions rather than you giving all the answers. If they identify the way to resolve the issue themselves, they are more likely to own it.

3. Do you feel like you're clear on priorities and goals right now? If not, what questions do you have?

During the year, priorities and goals can shift. Cross-departmental initiatives might be side-lined or cancelled altogether, leaving members of your team feeling a little lost. Use your one-on-one meetings to address that ambiguity and help give direct reports greater clarity.

4. How are you feeling right now? What's your energy level? How is your stress level?

Communication tools like Teams help us work better together — but subtle emotional cues can get lost. One of the most challenging aspects of managing hybrid workers is knowing how your team is really feeling. Ask them to open up. You can put them at ease by sharing how *you're* feeling as well. Be honest.

5. Did you feel like you could take time for yourself during the workday this week?

Research on hybrid working shows that employees don't always feel comfortable stepping away from their desks. Periodically disconnecting during the workday for a walk or to eat lunch can make a big impact on employee mental health. Encourage team members to take time for themselves. If something is preventing them from doing that, ask what it is. Visit the [wellbeing intranet](#) page for more guidance and resources.

6. Do you feel supported in being able to adjust your work schedule to accommodate personal responsibilities?

Ask if a team member needs any adjustments to their schedule to manage their responsibilities at home. Those with childcaring responsibilities, caring for sick or otherwise dependent relatives may need that support. Staff can request to work flexibly or take time off for compassionate leave. Read the flexible working and compassionate leave policies [here](#).

7. What part of your role makes you feel confident and capable?

A sense of mastery, feeling confident and capable at what you do, is an important employee motivator. Exploring what motivates your team member can help you to understand what gives them energy and drive. By focusing on someone's strengths, you can look for ways to build performance and sustain resilience.

8. Are you experiencing any daily communication challenges? How would you like me to contact you?

Whether you're onsite or remote, communicating is a prerequisite for getting things done. Ask how they'd prefer for you to reach them, e.g. Teams, email, or via the chat function. Be clear on expectations for communicating to yourself and the team such as updating their status on Teams when unavailable, keeping cameras on in meetings and not multi-tasking when on a Teams call.

9. Are there specific projects or tasks that you feel are impacted by working in a hybrid way?

Check in with employees to see if there are any roadblocks you can help move aside. This could be communication breakdown or access to a system. It may mean that team members have to come onto campus more often for project meetings to ensure the project stays on track.

10. Do you feel like you're able to take the time to focus on your professional development?

With so much going on, it can be easy to side-line employee development. Avoid focussing solely on tasks and deadlines and ask about a team member's development goals, career aspirations or discuss opportunities for growth. This could be working on a new project, learning a new skill, developing their networks, coaching or mentoring. Visit the [OD intranet page](#) for a range of resources and development opportunities.