

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS: BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

One-on-one meetings are a forum for communication from supervisor to employee, as well as from employee to supervisor. When employees are informed the feeling of involvement increases, along with the sense of ownership that results in job satisfaction and productivity. The employee's role is to take responsibility for what they need from you as their supervisor. The supervisor's responsibility is to provide support and add value that helps the employee perform well.

Following is a list of ten of the best practices for having a positive and productive one-on-one conversation.

1. **Schedule weekly or bi-weekly:** schedule the frequency based on the number of team members, and on the individual needs of each person.
2. **Limit to 30 – 60 minutes:** take into consideration how many team members you have and the needs of each and your own capacity to get your work done.
3. **Schedule gaps:** if you decide to schedule several 1:1's in a row, leave 10-15 minutes between each one.
4. **Ensure privacy:** avoid public places if possible. Use your office or cubicle, or a conference room if necessary, to ensure privacy and avoid interruptions.
5. **Make them a habit:** avoid canceling a 1:1 unless absolutely necessary. Pick a schedule and stick to it in order to make them a habit and part of both your regular work rhythms.
6. **Be prepared:** consider the team member's work and projects, review the notes and actions from the last 1:1 meeting, and determine any feedback you want to give.
7. **Be flexible:** sometimes it's necessary to go deep into a particular topic. It's okay if you need to abandon the regular agenda on occasion.
8. **Take handwritten notes:** Typing may be easier but is often more distracting. Take notes of only the most important points, actions, and decisions.
9. **Coach more:** coaching isn't always the answer, but coaching puts more power and responsibility into their hands to figure out solutions to problems.
10. **Remote is okay:** if you have team members who work remotely, connect with them over a video, versus the phone, as feasible.