

# Easy Employee Check-ins: It's Possible!

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It sounds crazy, doesn't it? But there is a way.

Would you like to see...

- Your managers lead their teams more effectively?
- Your employees more engaged in their work?
- Everyone more focused on the priority issues related to their jobs?

These things aren't as out of reach as they may appear. Sometimes, all you need is a bit of clarity. And about 10 minutes.

## **STEP 1: CREATE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS**

Before you can reasonably expect each team member to stay focused on priority issues, you'll need to make sure they understand what those priority issues are. You'll also need to clarify what behaviors will bring about the desired results, as well as how to measure and report back on progress, challenges, and successes.

Here's how to make those things happen.

**a) Define what success looks like**

For each team member, define the critical results you need them to deliver. We're not talking about all of the things they could potentially do, but those key results that, when delivered, address a majority of the contributions needed from that role.

**b) Determine key behaviors**

For each of the critical results, define the driving behaviors behind it. Again, this doesn't need to encompass ALL behaviors that contribute to the results, but those one or two actions that when performed consistently will ensure that results are delivered.

**c) Establish ways to measure progress**

Make it easy for everyone to know when the behavior is being performed effectively and efficiently. For each driving behavior, identify how it can be objectively measured. This measurement becomes your performance indicator. Of course, not all behaviors are easy to put numbers to. Sometimes, you'll just have to agree that certain behaviors will be discussed.

**d) Encourage self-reporting**

Nobody should be more invested in the success of a position than the person filling that role. Give each employee the responsibility to self-track and self-report their results to their direct supervisor. Don't overcomplicate this part. The last thing you want is for employee self-tracking to turn into another full-time job. Two critical results with two driving behaviors is a great place to be.

**STEP 2: FIND 10 MINUTES**

Anyone on your team with direct reports should commit to giving each person 10 minutes of their focused, one-on-one attention every week.

It doesn't sound like much, but that 10 minutes can have a huge impact on performance and results. The key is what you do with the time.

*A 10-minute agenda for leaders and direct reports:*

- What was your biggest success of the week?
- What was your biggest challenge of the week?
- What were the results of your work this week? (Depending on the nature of your performance indicators, you may want to only include this question once a month.)
- If you could only accomplish one thing over the next week, what does it need to be?
- Did you accomplish your one critical thing from the last week?

That may sound like a lot to get through in 10 minutes, but if you direct each team member to come with the answers already identified, they can definitely address all of them in 10 minutes.

**Keep it simple. And consistent.**

If your 10-minute check-ins regularly become half-hour meetings, you're not making the best use of your shared time. And someone will start making excuses as to why they can't happen. Keep these weekly check-ins to 10 minutes and everyone will be willing to participate regularly.

Of course, there will be issues that arise requiring more than a 10-minute conversation. This is good! But don't try to cram the discussion into your allotted 10 minutes. Scheduling a separate meeting to get more in-depth with the topics will help address employee concerns, refine processes, and continue to move everyone in the right direction.

It's amazing what happens when we consistently spend a little bit of time discussing priority issues. Communications improve, attitudes improve, and results improve.

Who knew a few targeted minutes could do so much? Start having weekly check-ins with your team and see what 10 minutes can do for you.