

In our book we mention these 6 conversation areas that as a leader you may often find yourself in:

They are:

1. Setting Goals
2. Reviewing progress
3. Addressing problems
4. Addressing weaknesses
5. Exploring and shaping further progress
6. Committing to action

We'll now take them one at a time. The tables below show the question or statement on the left, as well as the purpose or impact of that question or statement on the right. These questions and statements assume a 'coaching' style, where you will encourage the person to come up with their own goals and actions towards them. If you are not clear about when it's best to do this, please read Chapter 11 on strengths focused coaching.

Printing these pages allows you to take them with you to one-to-one meetings with your staff. You can use them to guide you until you become familiar enough with them not to need the notes any more.

## Setting Goals:

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>What will success look like?</i>	1. <i>Clear description of success.</i>
2. <i>How will you/we measure it?</i>	2. <i>Ditto</i>
3. <i>What will be good about achieving it?</i>	3. <i>Enhances motivation</i>
4. <i>When would you ideally like to be there?</i>	4. <i>Puts success within a specific time-frame.</i>
5. <i>How clear are you about your role and actions.</i>	5. <i>Clarity on how to achieve success</i>
6. <i>How confident do you feel about achieving this? (Competence)</i>	6. <i>Measures and develops confidence/competence.</i>
7. <i>How enthusiastic do you feel about your role? (Energy)</i>	7. <i>Measures and enhances motivation/energy.</i>
8. <i>(If needed) How can we increase your clarity, confidence and enthusiasm?</i>	8. <i>Enhances confidence/competence and motivation/energy.</i>
9. <i>How well does your role play to your strengths?</i>	9. <i>Aligning goal with strengths (if these have been identified).</i>
10. <i>How could we make more of your strengths in achieving this goal?</i>	10. <i>Enhancing alignment between goal and strengths</i>
11. <i>What weaknesses might show up that are important?</i>	11. <i>Identifying important weaknesses.</i>
12. <i>How can we manage these best? What strengths can you use to do it?</i>	12. <i>Plan to manage weaknesses</i>

## Reviewing progress

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>What has been going particularly well?</i>	1. <i>Clear identification of successes and generation of accompanying energy.</i>
2. <i>How did you achieve this? What were the key elements in succeeding with this?</i>	2. <i>Builds clarity on ingredients for success and builds confidence/competence.</i>
3. <i>What difference has it made? What's been the positive impact?</i>	3. <i>Identifies important details and enhances motivation/energy.</i>
4. <i>What did you particularly enjoy about it?</i>	4. <i>Identifies alignment with strengths and enhances motivation/energy.</i>
5. <i>On a scale of 1-10, how on track are you?</i>	5. <i>Clear measurement to monitor progress now and later.</i>
6. <i>What else has helped you do this well?</i>	6. <i>Identifying important support, resources or strengths.</i>
7. <i>Summarise the above points with: 'So from what you've told me it sounds like you've been really good at .....' or 'This sounds like another great example of your strength of....'</i>	7. <i>Enhances confidence/competence and motivation/energy.</i>
8. <i>What/who could help you get even further with this?</i>	8. <i>Identifies further relevant support, resources or actions for further success.</i>
9. <i>What strengths do you have that could help?</i>	9. <i>Alignment with strengths.</i>

## Addressing problems

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>What has been the problem?</i>	1. <i>If needed, allows the person a space to vent.</i>
2. <i>What's been difficult?</i>	2. <i>Ditto.</i>
3. <i>How has this problem impacted you, and others?</i>	3. <i>Ditto, and identifies relative significance of the problem.</i>
4. <i>What has helped you get through it so far?</i>	4. <i>Identifies strengths and resources or relevant support. Enhances confidence.</i>
5. <i>When you have had difficulties like this in the past, what got you through it?</i>	5. <i>Identifies strengths and resources or relevant support. Enhances confidence.</i>
6. <i>If you could remove this problem, how would things ideally be instead?</i>	6. <i>Identifies a clear preferred future/goal.</i>
7. <i>On a scale of 1-10, how close to that are you now?</i>	7. <i>Clarifies the distance to travel.</i>
8. <i>What progress have you already made?</i>	8. <i>Clarifies distance already travelled. Enhances confidence.</i>
9. <i>How did you achieve this existing progress?</i>	9. <i>Clarifies strengths, resources or relevant support. Enhances confidence.</i>
10. <i>Have you ever been higher on this scale?</i>	10. <i>Identifies any earlier successes/progress.</i>
11. <i>What was different then? How did you do that?</i>	11. <i>Identifies strengths and resources or relevant support. Enhances confidence/motivation.</i>

## Addressing weaknesses

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>What has gone less well than you would have hoped?</i>	1. <i>Can identify important performance gaps and motivation issues. May allow useful venting.</i>
2. <i>How do you feel about doing this kind of task? What specifically do you dislike? What aspect of it drains you?</i>	2. <i>May allow useful venting. Identifies draining tasks – i.e. weaknesses.</i>
3. <i>What strengths could you deploy more to improve this situation?</i>	3. <i>Approaches weakness from a strength. Enhances confidence/energy.</i>
4. <i>What other options do we have on improving this situation?</i>	4. <i>Identifies a range of options to manage a weakness. E.g. role sharing, delegation, upskilling etc.</i>
5. <i>Who else can help that has relevant skills, knowledge, strengths?</i>	5. <i>Identifies strengths, resources or relevant support of others that could potentially be tapped into.</i>

## Exploring and shaping further progress

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>What would be the signs of a step forward from where you are now?</i>	1. <i>Clear identification of success criteria for progress. Builds personal ownership of solution.</i>
2. <i>When would you ideally like to be there?</i>	2. <i>Puts success within a specific time-frame</i>
3. <i>What are all the different ways you could get there? What other options do you have?</i>	3. <i>Creates options and therefore more potential to succeed. Builds on personal ownership of solution.</i>
4. <i>What else? (repeat)</i>	4. <i>Stretches thinking beyond the obvious first ideas.</i>
5. <i>What would others say you could do? (Stipulate some key stakeholders in their situation or experts in the field)?</i>	5. <i>Stretches thinking beyond the obvious first ideas. Encourages other perspectives.</i>
6. <i>Which of your strengths could you best deploy here? How would you use it?</i>	6. <i>Explores potential for aligning solutions with strengths. Stretches thinking on options. May enhance confidence /motivation.</i>
7. <i>Would you like some further suggestions from me?</i>	7. <i>Offers any useful ideas, but only <u>after</u> the person has built their own. (Maintaining personal ownership of solution).</i>

## Committing To Action

Question or statement	Purpose or impact of the question or statement
1. <i>Which of these options would you like to commit to?</i>	1. <i>Clear identification of preferred options. Builds personal ownership of steps forward.</i>
2. <i>When would you ideally like to have them done by?</i>	2. <i>Puts success within a specific time-frame</i>
3. <i>How confident do you feel about getting them done? 1-10?</i>	3. <i>Measures confidence.</i>
4. <i>(If needed) how could you increase your confidence?</i>	4. <i>Enhances confidence.</i>
5. <i>How enthusiastic do you feel about doing these things?</i>	5. <i>Measures motivation/energy/enjoyment.</i>
6. <i>What will be good about doing this?</i>	6. <i>Enhances energy/motivation?</i>
7. <i>(If needed) how could you increase your enthusiasm?</i>	7. <i>Enhances energy /motivation /enjoyment?</i>
8. <i>What support could you get from others?</i>	8. <i>Can enhance confidence</i>
9. <i>Who else needs to know about your plans?</i>	9. <i>Can enhance support &amp; confidence</i>