

*how to*

# Hold Effective 1x1s With Your Team

A step-by-step guide to the most important  
process of being a people manager

"ORGANIZATIONS HAVE STRUGGLED TO INSPIRE AND DEVELOP EMPLOYEES BECAUSE THEIR APPROACH LEADS TO UNCLEAR AND MISALIGNED EXPECTATIONS, INEFFECTIVE AND INFREQUENT FEEDBACK, AND UNFAIR OR MISSING EVALUATION PRACTICES"

-IT'S THE MANAGER BY JIM CLIFTON, TIM HARTER

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## To set your team up for success you need to:

1. Establish Expectations
2. Remove Roadblocks
3. Drive Accountability
4. Continually Coach
5. Build Relationships

## Why a 1x1?

A one-on-one gives you dedicated, private time with a specific team member to ensure you are setting them up for success.

## What if I Chat With My Team Regularly?

You need intentional, routine, one-on-one time with each of your team members that directly report to you. In passing communication on the floor, via email or chat does not suffice when it comes to the core elements to setting your team up for success.

## How Often Should I Hold 1x1s?

A 1x1 should be held every 1-3 weeks depending on the individual, scope of the role, and how much change is happening. **High change = high touch.** The 1x1 cadence may need to shift throughout the year to meet the needs of the business. For example, if the company just launched a new product or acquired another company. Also, each person on your team will have a different preference. Some will prefer to meet weekly while others every other week.

YOUR TEAM 1X1S SHOULD BE THE LAST THING THAT GETS RESCHEDULED. IT'S TEMPTING & NATURAL TO WANT TO RESCHEDULE THOSE FIRST, BUT YOUR TEAM SHOULD BE YOUR PRIORITY. ALSO, BE SURE TO SHOW UP ON TIME! HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME SENDS A STRONG MESSAGE ABOUT HOW IMPORTANT YOUR TEAM IS TO YOU.

## What Time of Day/Week Should I Hold 1x1s?

I recommend spreading out your 1x1s, so you can be sure to give each team member your best self. Pick a time of day when you can give your team focused attention. Whatever you choose, stay consistent.

## How do I Hold Effective 1x1s?

### START WITH A WRITTEN PROCESS

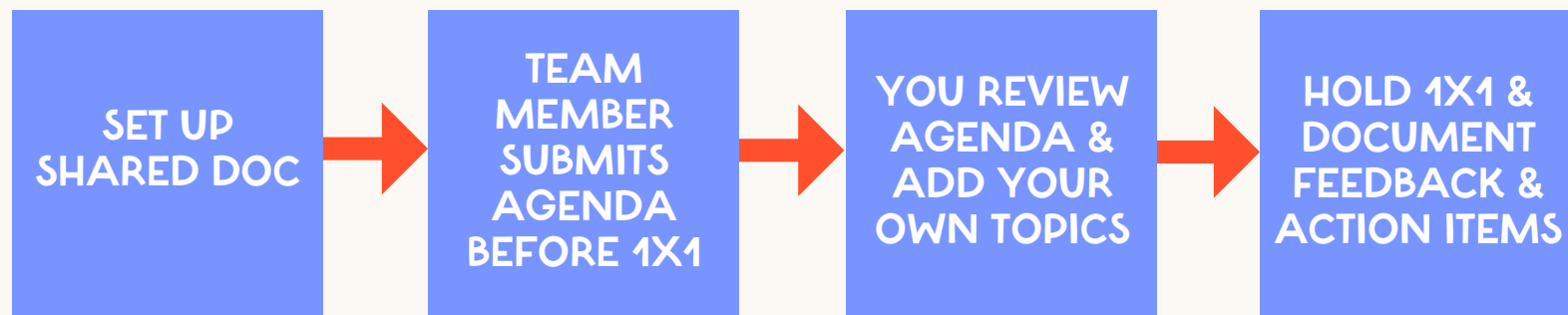
How are you documenting your communication? If your company doesn't have a recommended system, I suggest going simple and using a shared document like a Google Doc.

Use this shared doc in between meetings to document topics to discuss and follow up on action items.

A shared doc format allows you to keep a history of performance, so you are prepared for both promotion and possible performance management situations: PIP, terminations.

If your team is having trouble finding topics to discuss, use the bullet points on their job description and the goals they are working on. Going through their expectations will bring about plenty to discuss.

If you are managing more junior individual contributors, you'll need to train them on how to come prepared for each 1x1. It will take time!



## GO THROUGH THE AGENDA

Start with your team member's list of things to discuss. Then go through yours. Make sure to spend time on each bullet point. This a great time to help develop your team member's independent problem-solving skills if any of the agenda items are things they could be doing on their own.

## ENSURE CLARITY

Always ask "is there anything you need more clarity on?" or some version of that. This is when you want to ensure that you and your team member are fully aligned. Clarity is the #1 driver of high-performance.

## REMOVE ROADBLOCKS

Once you've aligned, find out what resources your team member needs to meet their goals. What roadblocks are they facing? What can you help with?

## DRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

1X1s are a great time to drive productivity. Use this opportunity to dive into metrics. If your team doesn't have metrics, you need to develop them. How do you know if person is performing or not? Get specific. Where are they going off track? Is there a risk of a deadline not being met?

***be sure to check out the mini drop on holding 1x1s***

## PERFORMANCE COACH

Use this time to provide feedback on what's going well and where they can improve. When you performance coach be sure to give steps and resources for their development. You want corrective feedback to be provided in a timely manner and it needs to be specific. When you sugarcoat the feedback, you hamper the development of the team member and you don't have accurate documentation should you need it in the future. Performance coaching can seem scary or confrontational, but you are helping them become a better performer just like a coach would an athlete. They can't fix what they aren't aware of.

MY SECRET TO PERFORMANCE COACHING: I DIDN'T LOVE GIVING DIRECT FEEDBACK ON PERFORMANCE MISTAKES AS A NEW MANAGER. I KNEW I NEEDED SOMETHING TO GUIDE ME, SO I FOUND CLIFTONSTRENGTHS. IT WAS A GAME CHANGER. THE REPORT PROVIDES YOU AN INSIDE LOOK INTO HOW EACH OF YOUR TEAM OPERATES GIVING YOU A SET OF INFORMATION & LANGUAGE TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK IN A NON-THREATNING WAY. THE ASSESSMENT IS ALL ABOUT WHAT'S RIGHT WITH PEOPLE. I RECOMMEND EACH OF YOUR TEAM TAKES THE FULL 34 OPTION.

## BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Use this time to check-in with your team member. How are they doing. Keep notes on what they say. Are they headed to Hawaii on vacation? Is their niece due in 4 months? If someone is starting to behave differently, these check-ins can help you uncover root causes.

# Hi!

## I'm Erin!

I develop people managers. I'm so excited you are investing in yourself, your career, and in being a more effective manager for your team. You are one of the few managers (32% to be exact) taking managing people seriously. I'm really proud of you for that! Being a people manager can feel overwhelming and lonely at times. In an ideal world, you would have someone like me in your company to walk alongside you. But I know that's not always the case, so I'm really glad we found each other! Make sure to check out everything Manager Material has to develop you into a high-performing manager!

