

INSPIRE

On Leadership

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Ask Them How They're Doing

Employees want to work for leaders who are intentional about their expectations and who also care about how things are going for the employee. And, employees want to have conversations.

Whether you have a performance review process in your organization or not, I encourage you to weave in a conversational process like the one outlined below. At times, in the formality of the performance review process, leaders are too stiff and tell oriented.

In your conversation, you may consider questions like:

- 1) In general, how has this year been for you? What did you feel particularly good about? What did not go particularly well for you?
- 2) In what ways have you grown over the past year?
- 3) Where did you experience missed opportunities or disappointments?

A few tips as you go into the conversation

Going into this conversation, a few reminders for you:

- 1) Remember, this was their experience. Let them own it; allow them to do most of the talking.
- 2) As they share reflections, you will want to delve deeper:
 - > "Tell me more about that"
 - > "Can you share a couple of examples?"
 - > "How did that make you feel?"
 - > "What was the impact of that?"
- 3) After they have shared:
 - > Acknowledge their perspective, particularly where you have noted agreement.
 - > Add your perspective
 - > Avoid the phrase, "Now, let me tell you what I think."
 - > Instead, use the phrase "Let me add a few things that you didn't mention (or that I see differently)."

In my next column, I'll talk about planning and goal setting for the coming year.

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