

## Workshop:

# Managing Down: Pro Tips for Critical Conversations to Balance Team Performance and Wellness

Presented By:

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# Let's get to know **YOU**

- ✓ Are you a **People Manager**?
- ✓ How long have you been managing **others**?
- ✓ How many people do you directly **manage**?
- ✓ How large is your **entire team** (reporting directly/indirectly to you)?



# Time for a check-in

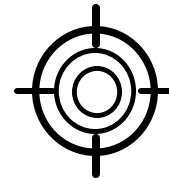
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- How often do you connect with your **direct reports**?
- What's your go-to approach to **motivate** and pull your team together?
- How do you approach sharing **developmental feedback** with a team member?
- How often do **you** ask team members (supervisor, peer or subordinate) for feedback?
- How do you **recognize or praise** the good work of your team members?
- At some point in the 6 months, have you spoken with each of your direct reports about their **aspirations** and **broader career development**?
- How would you manage **conflict** amongst your team?



# Types of conversations

1



## Goal & Expectation Setting

Align on what success looks like

2



## Developmental

Support growth and career progression

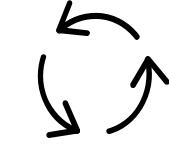
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## Performance

Give feedback, drive accountability, improve performance

4



## Alignment & Context

Provide the "why" and maintain clarity

5



## Wellbeing & Support

Show care, build trust, and offer support

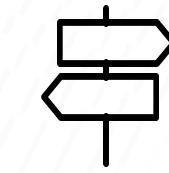
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## Motivation & Engagement

Tap into intrinsic motivators

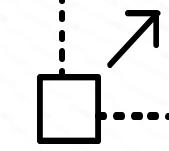
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## Conflict or Tension

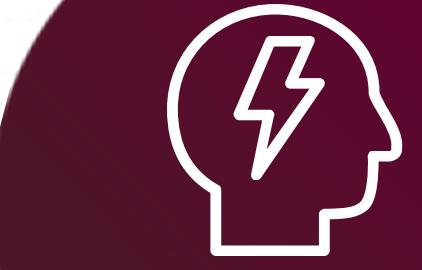
Address issues before they escalate

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## Career Transition

Manage moments of change

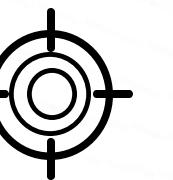


# What does this remind you of?

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# 1. Goal & Expectation Setting



*Align on what success looks like*

## Topics:

- Setting objectives (OKRs, KPIs)
- Clarifying responsibilities or role expectations
- Defining timelines or deliverables

## What to Do:

- Use SMART goals
- Co-create goals with the team
- Explain the “why” behind the goals
- Schedule regular check-ins to track progress and course correct

## Common Pitfalls:

- Vague or overly broad goals
- One-way communication (top-down)
- Not aligning goals with individual motivation
- No follow-up after setting goals



## 2. Developmental



*Support growth and career progression*

### Topics:

- Career aspirations
- Skills and capability building
- Coaching and mentoring
- Development plans and stretch assignments

### Common Pitfalls:

- Focusing only on short-term training, not long-term growth
- Assuming everyone wants upward mobility
- Skipping the conversation entirely due to workload
- Giving generic advice

### What to Do:

- Ask about career aspirations, even if they're not crystal clear yet
- Explore lateral growth, new skills, or passion projects
- Provide actionable next steps and opportunities
- Follow up on progress—show you're invested



# 3. Performance



*Give feedback, drive accountability, improve performance*

## Topics:

- Regular performance check-ins
- Constructive feedback
- Addressing underperformance
- Celebrating wins and achievements

## Common Pitfalls:

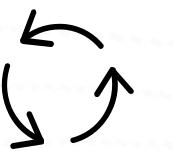
- Saving feedback for formal reviews only
- Sugarcoating or being overly harsh
- Making it personal instead of behavioral
- Not tying feedback to impact or outcomes

## What to Do:

- Deliver feedback in real time or as close to the event as possible
- Use a feedback framework (e.g., SBI: Situation, Behavior, Impact or Well, Better Next)
- Keep a balance: reinforce strengths and address gaps
- Agree on improvement actions and support needed



# 4. Alignment & Context



*Provide the “why” and maintain clarity*

## Topics:

- Explaining changes (strategy, team structure, priorities)
- Sharing company direction or leadership decisions
- Clarifying the team's role in the bigger picture

## Common Pitfalls:

- Sharing “what” without the “why”
- Communicating too late
- Being vague about implications for the team
- Assuming people already know

## What to Do:

- Break down complex changes in plain language
- Link strategy to the individual/team's role
- Create space for questions or concerns
- Be transparent about what is known vs unknown



# 5. Wellbeing & Support



*Show care, build trust, and offer support*

## Topics:

- Checking in on personal wellbeing or burnout
- Discussing workload or stress levels
- Life events impacting work
- Psychological safety check-ins

## What to Do:

- Ask open, empathetic questions: "How are you really doing?"
- Normalize conversations about wellbeing
- Listen without judgment or rushing to solve
- Respect privacy and boundaries; follow up gently

## Common Pitfalls:

- Avoiding the topic altogether
- Making assumptions about someone's state
- Offering solutions instead of listening
- Not creating a safe space



# 6. Motivation & Engagement



*Tap into intrinsic motivators*

## Topics:

- What drives the team member?
- How can work be made more meaningful?
- Recognition and appreciation (non-monetary)
- Job satisfaction pulse checks

## What to Do:

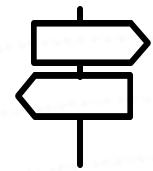
- Ask: "What makes work meaningful for you?"
- Tailor recognition (public/private, verbal/tangible)
- Notice and acknowledge effort, not just outcomes
- Regularly pulse-check engagement levels

## Common Pitfalls:

- Assuming money is the only motivator
- Ignoring intrinsic drivers (e.g., purpose, autonomy, challenge)
- Giving generic praise
- Not asking how people want to be recognized



# 7. Conflict or Tension



*Address issues before they escalate*

## Topics:

- Peer conflicts
- Miscommunications
- Team dynamic or behavior concerns

## What to Do:

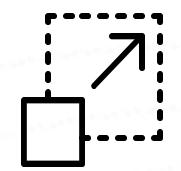
- Address issues early with curiosity, not accusation
- Use neutral language and focus on shared outcomes
- Facilitate, don't dictate, resolution
- Support healthy team dynamics and rebuild trust

## Common Pitfalls:

- Avoiding the issue until it festers
- Taking sides or assigning blame too quickly
- Minimizing emotional impact
- Not setting boundaries for respectful dialogue



# 8. Career Transition



*Address issues before they escalate*

## Topics:

- Promotion readiness
- Internal transfers or new roles
- Exits and resignations (stay conversations, offboarding)

## Common Pitfalls:

- Treating it like a transaction, not a transition
- Failing to honor the person's contributions
- Not planning for knowledge transfer
- Avoiding stay conversations when early warning signs show

## What to Do:

- Celebrate milestones (promotion, role change, or exit)
- Have honest conversations about readiness or fit
- Offer support for the next step (internal or external)
- If someone is leaving, ask for feedback and part respectfully

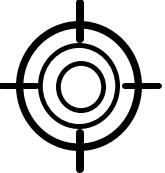
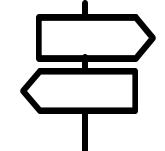
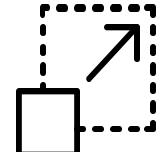


# How some conversations might go...

When people are curious  
about the reality of parenting

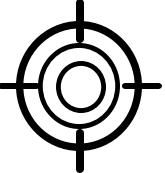
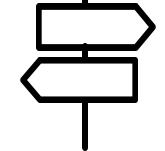
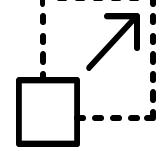


# Which is the most difficult?

- 1  **Goal & Expectation Setting**  
*Align on what success looks like*
- 2  **Developmental**  
*Support growth and career progression*
- 3  **Performance**  
*Give feedback, drive accountability, improve performance*
- 4  **Alignment & Context**  
*Provide the “why” and maintain clarity*
- 5  **Wellbeing & Support**  
*Show care, build trust, and offer support*
- 6  **Motivation & Engagement**  
*Tap into intrinsic motivators*
- 7  **Conflict or Tension**  
*Address issues before they escalate*
- 8  **Career Transition**  
*Manage moments of change*



# Which is the most overlooked?

- 1**  **Goal & Expectation Setting**  
*Align on what success looks like*
- 2**  **Developmental**  
*Support growth and career progression*
- 3**  **Performance**  
*Give feedback, drive accountability, improve performance*
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# Unscheduled or Ad Hoc

Type	Where It Happens	What It's About	Tip for Managers
<b>Quick Check-ins</b>	Hallways, end of meetings, chat	Project updates, light support	Keep it short, genuine, and regular
<b>Mood or Pulse Reads</b>	Informal huddles, coffee runs	Emotional cues, team energy	Ask open questions, observe body language
<b>Post-Meeting Side Chats</b>	Walking out, quick calls	Clarification, emotional debrief	Be curious, not corrective
<b>Real-time Feedback</b>	Right after tasks, live work	Praise or improvements	Deliver close to the moment, balance tone
<b>"In the Flow" Collabs</b>	Work sessions, creative jams	Brainstorming, co-creating	Stay present, encourage experimentation
<b>Micro Mentoring Moments</b>	Lunch, casual convos, shared rides	Career, soft coaching	Share stories, listen more than advise
<b>Safe Space Moments</b>	Closed-door chats, "got a minute?"	Personal or emotional issues	Hold confidentiality, lead with empathy
<b>Decision Nudges</b>	Chat ping, during execution	Guidance on choices	Phrase as a question or offer, not command
<b>Urgent/Crisis Moments</b>	Immediate in-person or call	Escalations, personal issues	Stay calm, provide clarity and support
<b>Spontaneous Recognition</b>	Chat, Slack, in person	Celebrating effort or wins	Be specific, tie to impact



# Takeaway Tips

## Prepare

- Identify traits and personality
- Gather history & context
- Learn their aspirations
- Understand their challenges
- Role Playing helps

## Be Aware

- Treat others how you would like to be treated
- Empathy vs Sympathy
- It's ok to take a break and reschedule
- Conversations can be hard for both sides
- Mirroring is real

## Don't Assume

- Perception is not always Reality
- If you are not sure, ask!
- Don't coerce if sharing is difficult

Presented By:

 accenture

# THANK YOU

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**“The greatest gap in life is the one between knowing and doing.”**

**– John Maxwell**