

# Q11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.

## Help Me Review My Contributions

There are few things more important to an employee than knowing that they are progressing at work. Feedback is vital and beneficial to both an employer and an employee.

The best managers recognize that honest, positive and constructive performance feedback provides time to discuss an employee's progress and growth. Feedback can help employees understand themselves better and give them a clear perspective on how their contributions make a difference to the organization.

Less than half of employees in Gallup's global database strongly agree that someone has talked with them about their progress in the last six months.



This element has an impact on productivity and safety. When a manager regularly checks in on their employees' progress, team members are more likely to believe that they get paid fairly, more likely to stay with the company, less likely to have accidents and more than twice as likely to recommend the company to others as a great place to work.

Teams in Gallup's top quartile on this item experience **14%** higher productivity and **64%** fewer accidents than bottom-quartile teams.

**The best employers provide informal and formal feedback on an employee's progress on a regular and consistent basis.**

The best managers know that for employees to grow in their jobs, they must first know where they stand. They need to know where they are in their professional journey, and they need to understand how they can get to their goals.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I regularly show my team members how far they have come in their professional development?
- ✓ How do I lead conversations about progress?  
Do I lead with positive intent and emphasize the employee is doing well, or do I tend to focus only on weaknesses?
- ✓ Am I helping my team understand its progress?  
How so?

## Three Characteristics of the Most Effective Performance Feedback

- 1 **Strengths-Based** Focus on improving strengths and managing weaknesses.
- 2 **Engagement-Focused** Ensure that your employees' workplace needs are met.
- 3 **Performance-Oriented** Concentrate on making sure that performance outcomes are clear and objective.

## Individualizing Your Feedback Approach

Employees might feel anxious when they hear the words “performance review.” They might anticipate a harsh conversation full of examples about when they didn’t meet expectations. If so, they are likely to dread their performance review, and they might have negative feelings associated with feedback. As a manager, you can change this perception among employees by helping them realize that this review should be a positive interaction involving praise, constructive feedback and an opportunity to set a career path.

## Engaging Conversations

You can’t move forward if you don’t even know where you are located on a path. Likewise, for an employee to develop, they must first understand their progression. This understanding helps motivate employees to move forward and allows for redirection, if necessary. Great managers know this and are sure to ask their employees about their progress often. Questions like the ones listed below help employees feel like someone is helping them navigate their professional career:

- What were our team’s greatest accomplishments this past year?
- How do you think we are doing as a team? Where do we excel? Where do we need some help?
- What topics should our team address at our midyear review?
- How do we determine if we are successful?
- How often should we get together as a group to talk about progress?
- What have been your greatest accomplishments this past year?
- Tell me about your past three months here. How about the past six months? The past year? Where have you been, where are you now, and where do you want to go?
- How often should we get together to talk about your progress?
- What do you appreciate about how I give you feedback? What could I do differently?
- Are you surprised at any of the feedback I’ve given you? Do you think it is fair?
- Are there things that help you accomplish your work? What distracts you from accomplishing tasks?
- How do you think you have performed since our last discussion about your performance?

## Best Practices

Great managers recognize that feedback is essential to an employee’s engagement and success on the job. The most effective managers modify their feedback to fit the employee’s personality, the circumstances and their potential. High-performance managers help employees know how they are performing in their roles by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Clarify what each employee needs to accomplish related to tasks, priorities and metrics.
- Develop and track team performance metrics. Celebrate when employees achieve their performance goals.
- Spend time with each employee individually to learn their goals, and help this person chart their progress.
- Find creative ways to help employees reach their goals. Check on their progress and provide constructive and positive feedback on a regular basis.
- Provide honest, direct feedback. When employees do great work, praise them — and when they could have done work better, provide constructive feedback.
- Make sure employees feel continuously successful but always challenged to do more. Look for opportunities to help employees feel challenged.
- Don’t be afraid to let your employees try something on their own. If they make mistakes, coach them through what to do next time.