IANR’s performance management conversations allow for open and honest two-way dialogue between employees and managers. During these conversations, you will focus on the employees’ past accomplishments, upcoming priorities, individual talents and strengths, challenges they may be facing, and what you can do to help them be their best.

Conversations take place 2x/year: once in the Fall, and once in the Spring.

Conversation Questions

1 What accomplishments have you had since the last time we met?

2 What will you accomplish before the next time we meet?

3 What are your natural strengths and talents? How can you further utilize these in your job and within our team?

4 What challenges are you facing today?

5 How can I help you be your best?
What accomplishments have you had since the last time we met?

Why is this question important to ask? What will you uncover by asking it? Take time to think about the accomplishments of this employee and how you can recognize them during your conversation.

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What If?

- What if they say “I don’t know”?
- What if their list of top accomplishments doesn't match with yours?

It is important to look for any differences in what you and your employee list as their most important accomplishments since you last met. If variances exist, discuss them. Why did they note what they did? Why did you? The two of you should be on the same page by the end of the discussion.
What will you accomplish before the next time we meet?

Think ahead to the next six months. What are the things you hope your employee will accomplish? What are the biggest priorities?

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What If?

- What if they have the same job duties every quarter? How could you measure continuous improvement or efficiency?
- What if their plan differs from yours?
- What if they don’t think they will be able to do what you ask?

It is important to look for any differences in what you and your employee list as their upcoming accomplishments. Again, if variances exist, discuss them. Why did they give one task priority over another? Why did you? By the end of the conversation, there should be a clear set of expectations that you both understand and agree upon.
3. What are your natural strengths and talents? How can you further utilize these in your job and within our team?

Research shows that employees are more productive and engaged when they focus on using and developing their strengths. What do you see as your employee’s strengths and talents? What unique contributions does he/she bring to your team?
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What If?
- What if your employee doesn’t know what he/she is good at?
- What if your employee is afraid to share what he/she would like to be more involved in? Or afraid to share the work he/she doesn’t enjoy?

Talking about what you’re good at can be difficult at first. Share your personal observations of where you saw your employees thrive and succeed. Think about ways to help them further harness those talents to make your team even stronger. Encourage your employees to share the things that energize them and drain them – understanding and hearing these thoughts will give you valuable insight into your team members.
What challenges are you facing today?

Listen to your employees share what obstacles might be standing in their way of performing their best or accomplishing a goal. What ways can you provide guidance and support? What challenges have you observed as their manager?

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What If?

- What if they say they don’t have any challenges?
- What if they have a challenge but I’m not sure how to help?
- What if they say that everything is fine, but I sense that it’s not?

It is important to let your employees talk about things that are getting in the way of them performing at their best. Sometimes you will find a solution. Sometimes that might not be possible. Listening to their point of view lets them know that you care.
How can I help you be your best?

What are ways that you can better encourage, support and guide your employees? Anticipate challenges and be prepared to share ways you can help.

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What If?

- What if they say they need nothing more from me?
- What if they tell me something I can’t do?
- What if I hear the same thing from several employees?

It is important to ask your employees how you can help and listen to what they have to say. Each employee is different. Maybe one needs a little more direction on a project, while another needs more time with you on a regular basis. Getting this information makes you a better manager as you can learn how to make a difference in your team’s performance.