

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

EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

This is your opportunity to highlight what you accomplished over the past six months. You do not need to list everything you achieved, but focus on the projects or tasks that were your biggest priority; most proud of achieving; had a significant impact; or has been most beneficial to the department/team.

Ideas to keep the answer fresh:

- What took a significant amount of time or took a lot of effort to get accomplished?
- What have you helped with that was a step in a much bigger process, so if you missed your step, others would be impacted?
- What have you helped make more efficient or effective?

Ideas to keep the conversation fresh:

- Tell me how your job contributes to the overall mission of the university.
- Do you have the tools you need to accomplish your goals for the next six months?
- What are the primary drivers for your success in your job?

MANAGER

Things to think about

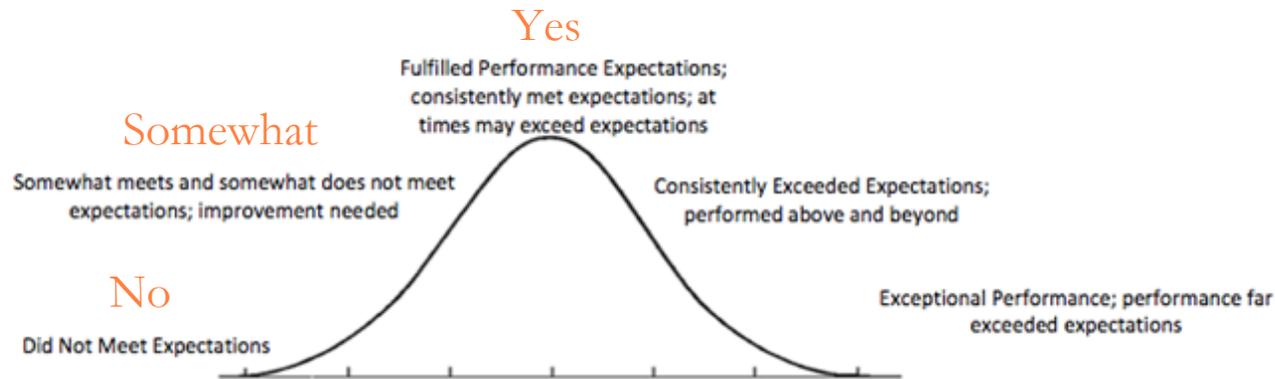
Why is this question important? What will you uncover by asking it? Take time to think about the accomplishments of this employee and how you can recognize them during your conversation.

What if

What if they say “I don’t know”? How can you help them articulate their accomplishments? What if their list of top accomplishments does not match with yours?

It is important to look for any differences in what you and your employee list as their most important accomplishments. If variances exist, discuss them. Why did they note what they did? Why did you?

2. Do we (me and my supervisor) think my accomplishments align with what is expected (most needed) for this position and our unit's priorities?
Yes, Somewhat, or No. Explain.



EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

Are we on the same page with how I should be spending my time?
Why or why not? What are the expectations for this position?
Remember that priorities and workload shift throughout the year.
It is okay to be flexible and adjust your goals as necessary.

MANAGER

Things to think about

What are the most needed contributions from this position? Is this employee doing those things? If not, discuss it with the employee.

It could be that the employee needed to cover for someone else instead of working on their own work. Also acknowledge the effort and contribution of filling in to meet the unit's most pressing needs.

By the end of the discussion, the two of you should be on the same page on what work the employee needs to be focused on doing.

3. What will you accomplish before the next time we meet?

EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

Think ahead to the next six months. What are the things you will be working on? What projects or tasks will require most of your time and/or will have the biggest impact? Work with your supervisor to clearly define what is expected of you in your current job.

Ideas to keep the answer fresh:

List your upcoming top priorities or goals. Do you have any new or innovative ideas? Are there process changes that affect your work?

This should be a collaborative discussion with your manager to ensure you are aligned on upcoming priorities. Remember that priorities and workload shift throughout the year. It is okay to be flexible and adjust your goals as necessary.

Ideas to keep the conversation fresh:

- What is the biggest change you want to make this year?
- What are your professional goals?
- What motivates you to do your best? What demotivates you?
- Check the job description once a year and adjust it as needed.

MANAGER

Things to think about

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

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 do not 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 priorities. 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.

4. What are your natural strengths and talents?

How can you further utilize these in your job and within our team?

EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

During which tasks/projects were you "in your zone?" Which part of your job gives you the most energy? What traits helped you succeed? What are ways you can further develop and invest in your strengths and talents? How can we further tap into your strengths to help our team?

Ideas to keep the answer fresh:

If you have taken the StrengthsFinder assessment, you can pick one or two themes to highlight each conversation period. Think about what you are good at and what you like to do within your current job? What energizes you? Think about recent accomplishments. What traits helped you succeed? Is there a project or task you would like to be more involved with? What are ways you can further develop and invest in your strengths and talents? Ask your manager what they see as your strengths on the team.

Ideas to keep the conversation fresh:

- What skills or interests do you have that we have not made the most of?
- What are some areas you would like to improve over the next year?
- What motivates you to do your best at work, how have you used these skills over the past year to achieve your work goals?
- What are some key strengths that are utilized in your job?

MANAGER

Things to think about

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 contribution does he/she bring to your team? How else could they use their strengths and talents to benefit the unit?

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? Talking about what you are good at can be difficult at first. Share your personal observations of where you see your employee 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. Understanding and hearing these thoughts will give you valuable insight into your team members.

5. What challenges are you facing today?

EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

Are there things that are keeping you from performing at your best? What are they? Be honest and forthcoming about your challenges. What could be better? What solutions do you have? Are there parts of your job do you find draining? Can you find a partner and/or use one of your strengths to help? How can you find a work around, if possible? Be prepared for an open, honest discussion and input from your manager on how to overcome obstacles.

Ideas to keep the answer fresh:

Identify things that can be improved. Do not say nothing. Even if you think there is no solution, it is helpful to make your manager aware of the challenge, so you both think through possible solutions.

Ideas to keep the conversation fresh:

- Do you feel like the team is working well? If not what should change to make the team more effective? If yes, why?
- What changes would you like to see in the workplace?
- What hurdles in the workplace are causing your job to be more difficult?
- What hurdles are making it more difficult for you to reach your goal?
- Are there skills are you missing? How do you think we should go about filling those voids?

MANAGER

Things to think about

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?

What if

What if they say they do not have any challenges? What if they have a challenge but I am not sure how to help? What if they say that everything is fine, but I sense that it is 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.

6. How can I help you be your best?

EMPLOYEE

Things to think about

It is important to let our managers know how they can help us be our best and/or what support you need the most. Is there something they could do to help you be more effective? If so, this is your chance to discuss.

Ideas for employee to keep the answer fresh:

What support do you need most from your manager? Do you need more guidance on a project that has been assigned to you? Do you need more frequent interaction with them just to touch base? This is your chance to let them know how they can help you perform at your best.

Ideas to keep the conversation fresh:

- What are some things I can do to improve communication?
- What are some things you can do to improve communication?
- What are some areas I can improve that will help you in your job over the next year?
- How would you like to receive feedback from me?
- What are primary drivers of success within our department?

MANAGER

Things to think about

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

What if

What if they say they need nothing more from me? What if they tell me something I cannot 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.