

# How to hold 121 meetings with your team members

## How to make the most of the Leaders Lab guide ‘How to hold 121 meetings with your team members’:

We recommend holding regular one-to-one meetings (no less often than monthly) throughout the year in which you and your employee discuss two things:

- *what* the person’s goals and targets are, and his or her progress towards these
- *how* they are feeling, behaving, fitting in with the team and enjoying their work.

These meetings are *in addition to* any work-in-progress meetings that you may have every week and month with your team. They are your opportunity to work ‘on’ the business with your immediate reports, and to give them the gift of your time and attention, rather than just working ‘in’ the business alongside them.

Use this guide as a starting point for changing your approach to one-to-one meetings with your team members. Good luck!

For more information on this topic, contact the Leaders Lab team on 01865 881056 or email [info@leaderslab.co.uk](mailto:info@leaderslab.co.uk).

# 121 meetings with your team members

## The four essential principles

- **Time efficient** - This is a short, 30-to-40-minute meeting with a clear agenda, to discuss:
  - personal updates, if any, and
  - progress against performance objectives. It is *not* for work in progress.
- **Privacy** - The location is private and the information confidential.
- **Diary rules** - Block the time out, don't cancel, no interruptions.
- **Record** - Both parties always keep notes. The next step is written down. Review and completion times are agreed and in diaries.

## Frequency

- Minimum is a monthly meeting. Weekly / fortnightly for active performance improvement.

## The process - first time

1. **Explain** why you are setting up regular 121s:
  - a. A regular check on their wellbeing in the job.
  - b. Help them raise their business performance / work on their technical skills.
  - c. Spend time with them to help move their career forward.
2. **Review** their current performance (against role accountabilities) and level of success:
  - a. Revisit role accountabilities.
  - b. Agree key measures between you.
  - c. Review performance against last period goals.
  - d. Agree next step goals.
  - e. Set SMART goals with them for each area of accountability.

## A template for 121 meetings

Remember these are intended to happen frequently, no less than monthly and to cover both the 'how' (wellbeing, feelings, behaviours, culture etc) and the 'what' (objectives etc). Use a coaching style - ask non-directive questions and let your team member provide the answers.

### Wellbeing ('how'):

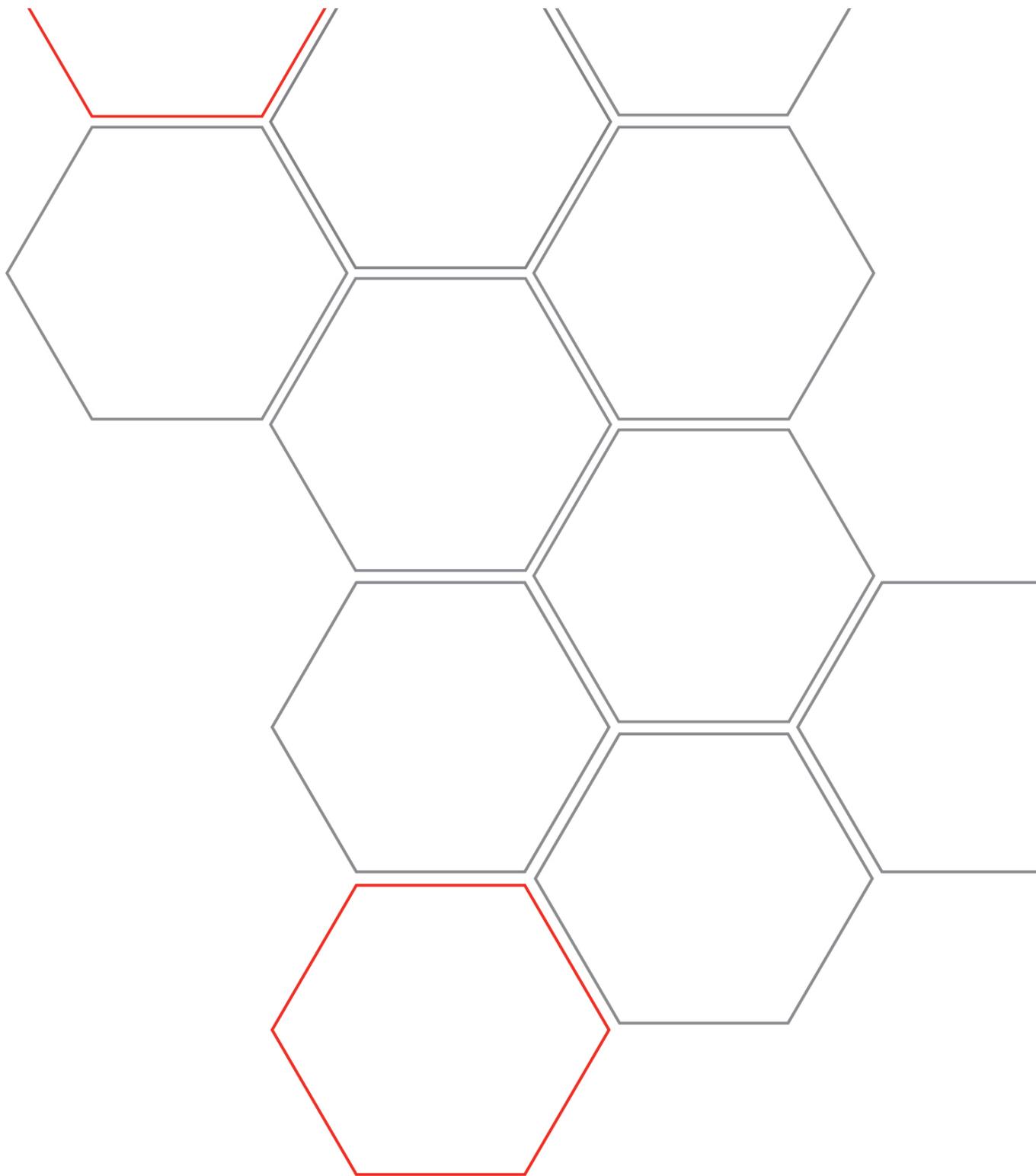
Some open questions to try asking in the 'how' (vs the 'what') part of your 121 meetings.

Don't try to ask all of them - this is for guidance only, not a script!

1. What has gone well since we last met?
2. If we can only process one issue at our meeting, what would it be?
3. What is currently troubling you?
4. What is a real pain in the neck?
5. How are you feeling about the job right now?
6. What's most interesting / fun about the job?
7. What's irksome or a real pain in the neck?
8. How can I help with any of the above?
9. To what extent are you getting the time / attention / help you need from me?
10. How would you like to develop your role over the next year or so?
11. What development or training would you like?
12. What would make you (even) more satisfied than you are now?

### Job Related ('what'):

1. Revisit role accountabilities.
2. Agree / review key measures
3. Review performance against last period goals.
4. Agree next step goals for each area of accountability.



# LeadersLab



T: 01865 881056  
E: [info@leaderslab.co.uk](mailto:info@leaderslab.co.uk)  
W: [www.leaderslab.co.uk](http://www.leaderslab.co.uk)  
@BeABetterLeader

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