Leadership coaching · Aide-mémoire

The line-management conversation.

A one-to-one is one of the few regular times you and a colleague can step back from the day-to-day and talk about how things are going and what comes next. This card helps you get more from the time you already give it.

Before the meeting

- Decide what the meeting is for. Is it mainly about their development, agreeing priorities, or a concern you need to raise?
- Share your agenda and ask for theirs, so you both come prepared.
- Review the actions and notes from last time, so the meeting picks up where the last one ended.
- Protect the time. Cancelling tells a colleague the meeting does not matter.

During the meeting

- Start by listening. “What’s been on your mind? What’s gone well?”
- Ask questions that go further. “What’s hardest right now? What would you most like to be different by the time we next meet?”
- Balance challenge with support. Agree a stretching goal and the help needed to reach it.
- Raise concerns early and clearly, and kindly. If you are vague, your colleague is left guessing.
- Allow silences. A pause often gives a colleague the time they need to think.

After the meeting

- Write down the agreed actions for both of you, short enough to remember.
- Follow up with a short note or a quick check-in, so they know the conversation mattered.
- Reflect honestly. What did I learn? What helped? What would I do differently?
- Notice what these meetings tell you about your own leadership.

Clarity

Be clear about purpose, expectations and next steps.

Care

Pay attention to the person as well as the work. That is how trust builds.

Challenge

Set goals that stretch people, and explain why.

Culture

Use each meeting to show what your school values.

azimuth

© José Picardo, Azimuth · hello@azimuth.org.uk