

Leader Tool- Strategies for checking in with your people

COVID-19 continues to challenge leaders as we constantly strive to adapt to ever-changing circumstances and the uncertainty this creates. We know that leadership in the best of times can be a challenge. We also know that right now being a leader can be tough. It's also tough for your people. Many leaders ask themselves "What can I do more of?" or "what can I do better to support my people?". These are great questions that can help you become a better leader for your people and teams. There is enormous power in asking the right questions and as a leader, you can help actively shape behaviours and create positive outcomes for your people.

One of the simplest things that you can do as a leader to create the greatest meaningful impact is to check in with your people and ask – "how are you doing?"

This simple question and communication approach can have a profoundly positive impact on a person. RU OK Day reminds us of the importance of checking in on how people are doing and coping, do we need to wait for September 10th to ask the question, can we do it regularly? As a leader through COVID-19, frequently checking in on your people helps build a sense of connection, shared purpose and can positively impact your culture to grow through the pandemic. A simple demonstration that you are willing to listen to someone, even if they are expressing some negative thoughts and feelings, can help them regain a sense of perspective and that someone cares.

Regular - make a check-in conversation a regular part of your leadership communication style. Over time, your people will acquire the habit of checking in with other team members until it becomes a normal part of your conversations and culture.

Range - it's natural for humans to feel a range of emotions. Through COVID-19, we have experienced both positive and negative thoughts or feelings. Negative feelings and emotions have their place, but they should not dominate our worldview, working style or communication approach. Remember, its rare to see purely negative emotions. Take a step back to help name *all* of the feelings being experienced.

Engaged - be present in the conversation and engage your active listening skills. Think about how good it feels when someone really listens to you - it can be all too rare. Remind yourself that you don't need to try and solve their problems. It's often enough to sit back and listen to their concerns, worries, fears, frustrations or negative emotions.

Attention - make sure that you take time to pause and reflect on the feedback your people share with you. Are there any common words, phrases or even issues that seem to be a trend? Are these common trends, something within our ability to control or influence? Help your people to find solutions to these challenges and tackle one thing at a time if this is possible.



Self-care - it's hard to always be 'on', and as leaders, the feeling of pressure to always be there for our people can be common. Remember that in order to support others, we need to make sure that we've taken the time and energy to invest in recharging our own batteries and store of resilience. Make sure to do the things that help you feel recharged and refreshed.

We are here to support you so that you can better support your people. If you have any further questions or would like to discuss a specific concern contact our Manager Support Hotline or your Relationship Manager on how AccessEAP can assist your organisation and your people. As always, as your EAP we are here to support your people whatever the nature of their concerns, please contact **AccessEAP** on **1800 818 728**.

