

EFFECTIVE ONE-ON-ONES: POWERFUL QUESTIONS TO DESIGN POWERFUL ALLIANCES

These aren't easy questions or conversations to have. It's completely normal if some of these conversations make you or the person you're talking with a little uncomfortable.

What makes the questions powerful, however, is that if you really spend time digging into each question, you'll end up with significantly more clarity for the alliances that you have in your life.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH A MANAGER:

- What do I want / expect from you in this relationship?
- What do you want / expect from me in this relationship?
- What would be the best use of our one-on-one time together?
- What do you see as possible for me?
- What do you want to see me doing more of? Less of?
- What do you see as my strengths? As my weaknesses?
- What one thing could I change that would have the biggest impact on my growth?
- What would it take for me reach the next level of my impact on the team / company?
- What's one piece of feedback that you have for me?

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH SOMEONE YOU'RE MANAGING OR LEADING:

- What do you see for yourself in the next 6 months? 1 year? 3 years?
- Followup: What would getting there open up for you?
- What's important to you that you don't normally talk about?
- What's most important for you in a good manager?
- What is hard for you that you feel should be easy? Easy that you feel should be hard?
- When do I fail as a leader?
- When do I show up as a leader?
- What impact do I have on you or on the team that I might not know about?
- What's one piece of feedback that you have for me?

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH SOMEONE YOU'RE MENTORING OR COACHING:

- What would be the best use of our one-on-one time together?
- What would you find most valuable in supporting your growth?
- What's most important for me (as a mentor or coach) about this relationship?
- What has to be true for this relationship to keep continuing?
- What does your inner critic say that sometimes holds you back?
- What do I see as possible for you?
- What one thing would make the biggest impact on your mentee's growth?

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH A PEER OR TEAMMATE:

- What assumptions do you have about me that get in the way of a productive relationship?
- What assumptions do I have about you that get in the way of a productive relationship?
- What do we most want for the team? For the other person?
- What are we not doing that you think we should? That we're doing that you think we shouldn't?
- What would our ideal way of working together look like?
- What are your preferences and my preferences for how to exchange feedback?
- What are your current career goals? What are mine?
- Followup: How might we support each other in our goals?

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH A PROJECT STAKEHOLDER:

- What makes this project important for you?
- What's most important to get right for you about this project?
- Followup: What's important about those aspects for you? What are the core values behind those areas?
- What parts of the project are you most concerned about?
- What assumptions do you have about this project or about me working on it?
- Who else has a strong stake in this project?