READY-TO-USE TEMPLATE

One-to-Ones That Go Beyond Status Updates

A 30-minute agenda with an opening, useful questions, and a short shared record.

30 minutes | Manager–colleague 1:1 agenda

Use the supplied wording as it is, or change it together. The Word file and Notion template are editable. Keep only notes you need.

Before you meet

Send the invitation and let the other person add or replace topics.

This is time for what would help you, not a status interrogation. What would you like us to make room for? We can talk about the work, what is getting in the way, or where you want to grow. You do not need to prepare a report.

0-5 min · Arrive

Let them choose what to share; do not require a personal check-in.

What would make this time useful today? Would you like me to listen, think it through with you, or help with a practical decision?

Notes and changes for our situation

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WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

5-18 min · Follow what matters

Pick one or two questions. Follow the answer.

What has felt easier or harder since we last met?
Where are you having to work around the way things are set up?
What should I understand before I offer a view?
What is going well that you want to keep?

18-25 min · Make support concrete

The manager should leave with commitments too.

What can I clarify, remove, connect, or make time for?
What can you decide without waiting for me?
Is there something I am doing that makes the work harder? You can return to that question later.

Notes and changes for our situation

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WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

25-30 min · Close together

Read back the shared record and ask what should stay out of it.

What are we taking from this?
Agreed next step:
Owner:
Support I will provide:
When we will check back:
What we are not deciding today:

Between conversations

Protect the relationship by following through.

Do the thing you offered. If it becomes impossible, say so before the check-in and agree another route. At the next meeting, ask whether the support helped before moving to new topics.

The thinking behind it

A one-to-one shapes what someone believes they can bring to you. Your follow-through is part of the conversation, even when the meeting is over.

Read When Mattering Isn't Enough by Nic Payne

Keep the useful part

A shared record, not a transcript. Agree what belongs here and what should stay private.

Date / people / purpose

What we agreed

Next step / owner / support / date

What remains open

When we will return to it

What did their experience change in my understanding of the work?