



THE
ENGAGING
LEADER

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Go the extra mile

Self-Coaching Guide

 HOGAN

Who Can Use This Guide?

The Engaging Leader Report Self-Coaching Guide is targeted at managers concerned with personal and team development, as well as executive coaches, HR practitioners and psychologists who will be providing feedback, coaching, and preparing development plans around the Engaging Leader Report. The Self-Coaching guide may also be used by managers who receive an Engaging Leader report and would like supplemental developmental recommendations.

This guide explains the constructs presented in the Engaging Leader report, explores potential root causes to low scores, and suggests actions to support development opportunities. It will focus on the most common opportunities to improve. The guide will provide items and questions for the manager, as well as his or her direct reports and other team members, and is intended to cultivate a manager's self-reflection as well as two-way conversations with others in the organization. The guide also provides development recommendations aimed at elevating levels of engagement, which can be further outlined in a formal development plan.

Values

Research consistently shows recognition is a key driver of engagement and commitment. Recognizing employees for their contributions and performance excellence is one of the most effective ways one can motivate direct reports. When you acknowledge your employees for their effort, ideas, and success, it provides them with helpful feedback, and helps them know you value their contributions. Without recognition, employees may feel you are taking their hard work for granted. Good employees may start putting in less effort. Great employees may start planning to leave.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you motivate people? Do you know how each of your direct reports likes to be incentivized? • There are individual motivators, and then there is self-initiation. Do you appreciate the difference and therefore the different ways to develop others? • Do you take the time needed appeal to those who are more consensus-driven? • Are you treating others the way you would expect to be treated? Are your expectations for recognition aligned with those of your employees? • Have you conducted an objective assessment of your team members' motivational values in order to specifically target encouragement? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about a time you felt most appreciated (here or elsewhere). What was the project? How did the recognition take form? • Do you feel the goals set for you are appropriately challenging/achievable? • Do you feel the exchange between your effort and recognition is fair and equitable? Why/why not? <p>Your manager & colleagues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I have a reputation for being a manager whose values align with those of the organization? • From your perspective, how motivated would you say my team members are? Should I do anything differently to drive them? • What types of organizational activities or resources would you recommend to increase motivation?

Actions to Consider:

- **Find the right buttons to push:** People like to be recognized in different ways. Some employees like to see their names in lights; others love having their contributions reviewed at team meetings; some prefer a personal email or handwritten note. The best way to find out how your direct reports like to be recognized is to ask them.
- **Listen to what people emphasize:** Make sure to find opportunities to socialize with direct reports around both work and non-work issues. Listen to what they tend to emphasize, when they get passionate and what activities they tend to repeat proactively. Take note and let that information help motivate them individually.
- **Quantify and recognize success:** Set challenging but achievable goals for team members. Make sure they clearly understand what success looks like; and when it is achieved, make sure it is proactively recognized.
- **Make sure to relay feedback:** Some managers neglect to pass along messages of recognition and encouragement from above to their team members. Fear of inflating egos, difficulty with giving compliments or unreasonably high expectations are just a few reasons this may happen. Reflect on whether you are relaying feedback (including the positives) as much as you are hearing it. If not, reflect as to why this may be.
- **Communicate your appreciation transparently:** Even positive feedback can be misinterpreted when it is not communicated directly enough. Remember, your team members' success is reflective of your leadership skills. If you can ensure they know how successfully they are operating, their faith in your ability to lead them will grow.

Clear Goals and Vision

Framing and communicating a vision for your team is one of the most important ways to engage followers. Your ability to contextualize the ideal future state of your organization, the strategy to achieve as it applies to your team, and the individual implications for each of your employee’s roles is paramount to your success. If an employee feels their day-to-day actions are connected to the mission, vision, and strategy of the organization, they will demonstrate much higher levels of commitment, leading to lower turnover, and higher productivity. Teams work well when everyone shares an understanding of their collective and individual priorities. Without clear priorities, employees will tend to focus on those aspects they think are important; which may not align with the organizational strategy. Team members may end up prioritizing tasks less important to the business or in conflict with other team members’ goals. If your direct reports are struggling to coordinate, collaborate, and get the right work done, they might be confused about the priorities.

Low scores could be due to:

- **Lack of understanding the vision, mission and/or strategy:** A breakdown between employee’s understanding of how his/her day-to-day tasks relate to the overall direction of the organization
- **Poorly organized workflow:** Uncoordinated silos, unclear direction, or general barriers to productivity may be issues that need to be resolved.
- **Lack of buy-in:** Failing to involve employees in the decisions that affect their day-to-day lives
- **Unclear communications:** Sending conflicting or competing messages regarding the team’s goals.
- **Infrequent discussions about priorities:** Not discussing priorities frequently enough, or updating them as a team, based on changes in the business.
- **Competing commitments:** Focusing on too many priorities or not allocating time effectively.
- **Lost in translation:** Employees require help translating strategic priorities into specific actions.
- **Lack of buy-in:** Employees do not support the priorities you are communicating.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a thorough understanding of the overall direction of your organization? Can you clearly articulate that to your team? • Do you clearly organize workflow and resource responsibilities, or might you allow certain team members to suffer due to lack of clarity? • What are your team’s top priorities? Can you articulate them and how they relate to the organizational strategy in a clear and concise way? • Are you making progress toward your priorities? Does your team know when you have reached a key milestone? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you understand the vision, mission and strategy of our company? • Do you have a clear sense of how you connect to the overall objectives of the organization? • What would you say our current priorities are? How would you define them? • Are there times when our priorities create confusion or competing commitments? <p>Your manager & colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think I align my team with the overall direction of the organization? • Do my scores on this item surprise you? Do you think I do a good job communicating clear priorities?

Actions to Consider:

- **Communicate often:** Priorities can change overnight based on our customers' needs and our strategic direction. If you are not communicating frequently enough about your priorities, your employees can easily become misguided. Regularly review team and individual priorities; over-communicate when strategic priorities change.
- **Translate priorities into personal assignments:** Sometimes employees understand business unit and team-level strategic imperatives and priorities, but they are unclear how to translate these priorities into their day-to-day work. During your one-on-one meetings, be sure to ask your direct reports if they need help making the connection between strategic priorities and their roles and responsibilities.
- **Ensure alignment:** Are you and your team on the same page? The best way to tell if you are being clear is to ask: list out and rank your team's priorities, and then ask your direct reports to do the same. If there is a discrepancy, discuss and clarify.
- **Focus on a few critical things:** Be sure you and your group understand the top three things you are trying to accomplish. Monitor progress, prevent delays in achieving your goals, and avoid strategic drift (moving from one priority to the next without accomplishing your initial goals).

Performance Enablement

Nothing erodes employee motivation, performance, and commitment faster than work obstacles that interfere with attainment of a goal or working effectively with your colleagues. When employees cannot achieve progress toward their goals on a daily basis, it leads to stress, frustration and fatigue. Work barriers and disorganization also undercut team performance, productivity, and cooperation. As a manager, you play an important role in helping your team work together and helping to eliminate challenges on a regular basis. Simply talking with your employees about their performance goals can help you start to show you are interested and supportive.

Low scores could be due to:

- **Lack of awareness:** Not realizing your team is struggling to make progress towards their goals.
- **Lack of focus:** Not spending enough time or attention on identifying and removing obstacles.
- **Poor time management:** You and/or your team feeling too busy to brainstorm possible ways to improve.
- **Lack of authority:** You and/or your team not feeling empowered to take improvement initiatives.
- **Lack of know-How:** Not feeling clear about the best way to identify and remove performance barriers, or not having enough collective know-how to think creatively about how to do so.
- **A complex hierarchy:** Struggling to navigate organizational complexities, such as red tape or matrix reporting lines.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you aware of any obstacles that are preventing your team from getting work done right now? • How often do you discuss and identify work obstacles with your team? • Does your team work closely with each other? Other teams/departments? Are any cross-functional issues affecting performance? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the biggest obstacles you are facing right now preventing you from getting your work done? • What are the most frustrating parts of your job? Are there things we could be doing to eliminate or improve those aspects of your job? <p>Your manager & colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the biggest obstacles you think my team is facing? • What do you think I should start or stop doing to help my team cooperate, and get their work done in a more efficient way?

Actions to Consider:

- **Clearly express standards:** As a manager, you are constantly evaluating the quality of your direct reports' work. Sometimes managers make their evaluations in a quick, automatic way. Get in the habit of consciously evaluating the quality of the work you receive, determine if it meets, exceeds, or misses your expectations, and provide feedback and recognition accordingly.
- **Celebrate successes:** Recognize and reward team members for creatively eliminating performance obstacles.
- **Set goals:** Set performance goals for your team and monitor factors impeding or derailing progress.
- **Identify any cross-functional inefficiency:** If your team works closely with other teams or departments, identify any cross-functional inefficiency affecting performance.
- **Learn from others:** Identify people in your department or within your organization who have successfully removed work obstacles and goals. Spend time talking with them and learning how they implemented process improvements and successful changes.

Positive Team Climate

Receiving feedback and recognition that is authentic, timely, and purposeful fuels our professional growth. Giving such feedback also happens to be one of the more challenging skills to master. For many managers, determining how to deliver the right message at the right time in the right way takes practice; but it is well worth the effort. Every successful team environment involves mutual trust. Without mutual trust motivation can decrease, and commitment and performance can decline. As a manager, it is critical that you create a work environment that promotes fairness and respect; this includes the effective delivery of feedback. Learn to deliver feedback effectively, and you will have a big impact on the performance of your team. Encourage behaviors that show appreciation for giving and receiving feedback, and you can turn your team into a high performing machine.

Low scores could be due to:

- **Underestimating the impact:** Not realizing the impact recognition has on organizational effectiveness and the bottom line.
- **Imbalanced approach:** Recognizing some employees and not pay attention to others.
- **Missing the mark:** Not providing recognition in a way that truly motivates others.
- **Infrequency:** Not providing employees with enough praise or constructive criticism.
- **Lack of clarity:** Feedback may not be clear, candid, or specific enough.
- **Misperceptions and biases:** Blind spots or presumptions, which are getting in the way of giving or receiving fair feedback.
- **Lack of dialogue:** Talking more than you are listening to your employees' needs.
- **Lack of coaching:** Your employees want more guidance on their career options and informal development.
- **Negative spillover:** Unsatisfied with your own career development.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are your direct reports having performance problems? If so, what training or help do they need to perform at a higher level? • How often do you provide feedback to your direct reports? Daily? Weekly? Monthly? • What’s your feedback based on? Personal observations and hunches? Or clear and objective data? • After you provide feedback, what do you normally do? Move on to the next topic, or engage your direct report in dialogue? • How often do you have career development discussions with your direct reports? Are they always/only part of the annual review process? • When you think about each of your direct reports, what career path do you see for them? Where do you want them to be in one year? Three years? Five years? • Do you treat all your direct reports the same, or do you treat some better than others? Why? Is it a problem? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I do provide you with feedback, is it clear? Fair? Balanced? Does it leave you feeling motivated, or anxious? • How clear do you feel about possible career paths here? • I really want to be a fair and respectful manager. What is the best way I could improve in this area? What should I start doing? What should I stop doing? <p>Your manager & colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think there are people I am not recognizing enough? • What are the main things you focus on when you provide feedback? Are there any tips or practices you have found to be effective? • Do you think I do a good job developing my direct reports? • Have you seen me behave in ways that seemed unfair or disrespectful?

Actions to Consider:

- **Clarify your expectations:** Ensure your direct reports understand your expectations for performance and how they are performing against those expectations.
- **Track your acknowledgements:** Spend a month tracking your recognition behavior. At the end of the day, tally whom you recognized, how, and the impact it had on them. Also note missed opportunities—times you could have recognized someone but did not.
- **Balance your messages:** If you really want to help your employees grow, it is important to provide feedback on both their strengths and development opportunities. Your feedback should be focused on helping your employees reach their full potential. Be sure to tell them what they are doing well, and how they could be even more effective; and be sure to do so in a constructive manner.
- **Open a dialogue:** After you deliver feedback, be sure to create an opportunity for dialogue. What does your employee think? What is her/his point of view? Does she/he have any questions? By taking the time to listen to your direct reports after delivering feedback, you create the opportunity for deeper learning and coaching.
- **Development discussions:** Try to focus at least one of your one-on-one meetings exclusively on development. And at the start of each year, be sure to have a formal career development planning discussion with each of your direct reports.
- **Identify your triggers:** Reflect on your own actions and behaviors. Are there situations, people, or topics that make you act in disrespectful, unreasonable, or inequitable ways? What steps can you take to prevent these triggers from derailing you?

Agile & Open Culture

In today's fast-paced world, organizations must grow, innovate, and change to meet the needs of our customers. As a manager, you play an important role in creating an environment where your employees feel encouraged to challenge the status quo, generate new ideas, and pursue continuous improvement. The best managers know how to cultivate an environment that encourages the free flow of ideas and information, and coordinate resources and people to create new and innovative solutions, increase productivity, and gain a diverse perspective; all while tolerating failure and seeing failure as a learning experience.

Low scores could be due to:

- **Mixed messages:** Not clearly articulating the need or security of the environment for your staff to safely innovate and change, take risks in the best interests of the business, or share ideas on how to do so.
- **Business and workload:** You and/or your team feel too busy to focus on innovation and change.
- **Preference for the status quo:** You and/or your team feel uncomfortable with change or believe the status quo is just fine.
- **Lack of awareness:** A limited view of what is going on, or what is possible within your team.
- **Lack of focus:** Not spending enough time or attention on identifying opportunities to connect people with key resources.
- **Lack of support:** Not getting the information and support you need from your team, manager, or colleagues to connect the dots.
- **Limited network:** Not establishing a broad enough network to drive powerful collaboration.
- **Lack of security:** Being more interested in protecting—rather than sharing—your resources.
- **Limited business acumen:** Not having a strong enough understanding of strategic business priorities and how your team fits in the big picture to initiate meaningful change.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a process in place for gathering, assessing, experimenting, and implementing new ideas and practices? • How busy are you right now? How busy is your team? Is workload or business preventing you and your team from innovating? • How do you react when people bring you new ideas? Do you explore new ideas, or shoot them down quickly? • Do you think you do a good job connecting ideas, information, and resources to the most important priorities? • When is the last time you felt you connected ideas, information, or resources to benefit the organization? • How often do you provide your direct reports with stretch assignments or opportunities to grow? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the biggest things you would like to see us do differently as a team? • What should I be doing to help us improve in this area? • How could I do a better job connecting ideas, information, and resources to the most important priorities? • What role can you play in making connections on behalf of our team? <p>Your manager & colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think I should start doing to improve in this area? What should I stop doing? • Do you think I do a good job connecting ideas, information, and resources? • What recommendations do you have for me to improve in this area?

Actions to Consider:

- **Spend team time talking about new ways of doing things:** Each month, dedicate time during a team meeting to discuss process improvements, innovation, and new ways of doing things. Select and implement actionable ideas.
- **Challenge your direct reports:** Use one-on-one meetings to challenge your direct reports to come up with new and innovative ways of doing things. Spend at least one meeting a month discussing their suggestions for change.
- **Host a process-improvement discussion:** Gather your team and—working together—identify policies, practices, and procedures that are impeding performance. Determine which can be improved and/or eliminated and implement a change plan.
- **Consider possible partnerships:** Set up meetings with your direct reports and brainstorm possible opportunities to cross-collaborate, within and outside your team, to improve workflow or gain a different perspective on an idea or project.
- **Ask your manager for advice:** Talk with your manager about ways to expand your network and develop an understanding of the broader organization. Ask your manager about the most critical places in your department that could benefit from integrating ideas, information, and resources from other parts of the organization.
- **Learn from others:** Identify people in your department or within your organization who are successful at connecting ideas, information, and resources. Spend time talking with them and learning how they were able to implement process improvements and successful changes. Ask your team for constructive criticism, and be sure to thank and encourage them after.
- **Stretch goals:** Find ways to build informal development opportunities into your direct reports' day-to-day jobs. Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities that your employees are seeking, and then identify new assignments and challenges that will help them grow.

Overall Effectiveness

The climate you create within your team reflects members' attitudes toward working as part of your team. These attitudes are directly linked to individual engagement levels. How one behaves as a leader can make or break a team's performance track record. It is important that, despite a changing environment, strategy or scope, a leader remain focused, aligned and engaging. Doing so is the crucial support system a team needs to remain the same.

Low overall scores could be due to:

- **Workload and stress:** If you are stressed and stretched too thin, you might be taking it out on your staff.
- **Misaligned Expectations:** A team's expectations, like those of an individual or organization, are constantly shifting. If you have not recently checked where those expectations stand, you may be misaligned; and then it is impossible to work beyond them.
- **Inspiration:** Not putting enough attention or effort into inspiring your direct reports can lead them to question the direction they are headed; even if the direction is well articulated.

Questions to Ask Yourself	Questions to Ask Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think back over the past six months. Have you been under a lot of stress or pressure? If so, how has that affected your behavior? • Do you think there are factors preventing your direct reports from understanding your actions? What are these factors? 	<p>Your team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you like me to start doing? What should I stop doing? Anything I should keep doing? <p>Your manager & colleagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could I do to more effectively engage my direct reports?

Actions to Consider:

- **Conduct a daily review:** At the end of each day, review your interactions and behaviors. Identify times when you lived up to your values and times when you did not. Determine factors that affect your actions.
- **Find an accountability coach:** Find someone (e.g. your boss, sponsor, mentor, an internal or external coach) who can help you restore trust with your team. This person can help you reflect on your actions and hold you accountable for making progress.
- **Ask for feedback:** Ask your team for feedback on a monthly basis through one-on-ones, team meetings, or whenever you feel it is appropriate.
- **Personal Development:** Build your skills through formal training, mentoring, reading, or other learning.