

# 12-minute

## TOUCH BASE

### **WHAT IS IT?**

A regular meeting with a team member to talk one-on-one about issues, problems, and progress in work and the workplace.

### **WHY SHOULD I USE IT?**

To make sure that all of your team members have direct contact with you. To avoid losing touch with people, programs and projects when you are extremely busy. To make sure that the "regular" one-on-one meetings you plan with your employees actually take place.

### **HOW CAN THIS TOOL HELP?**

Surveys show that one of the top five concerns of front-line staff is a lack of direct contact with their supervisor or leader. This tool helps you build that meeting time into your daily routine.

### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

#### **Planning**

Structure the time you spend with staff. Create a rotating schedule so that, for example, every day before lunch, from 11:48 to 12:00, you meet with a different member of your staff.

#### **Doing**

Be firm about the time – 12 minutes at the set hour.

### **FOLLOWING UP**

Once you make the 12-minute touch base part of your workplace culture, you will have greater control of your time. Your staff will keep note of questions, problems and issues that can be addressed during their regular touch base and ask for special meetings for more urgent or complex matters.

### **WHAT RESOURCES DO I NEED?**

Twelve minutes per day. If you have 10 team members, for example, each employee could meet with you every 10 days.

Being an effective leader is about understanding. You won't understand unless you listen. The best information to listen to is answers to the right questions. Questions are one of the leader's most powerful tools. Using them strategically is your key to becoming a better leader.

## **1. What is your biggest accomplishment this month?**

There are other ways to restate the question "What have you been working on recently?" "Is there any work you're proud of?" "What are some highlights of your recent work?" "Any good success stories?"

*Why ask it?*

This question helps provide a sense of forward motion and progress. A leader needs to know that things aren't just the same-same humdrum, but are moving along, going forward, getting better.

## **2. What's your biggest challenge right now?**

*Why ask it?*

You get to understand where the team member is struggling. As a leader, you've got to be aware of any pain points in team member's process, work, or the organization culture as a whole. Once you know about the problems, you can help solve them.

## **3. What resources would be helpful to you right now?**

*Why ask it?*

This question gives you concrete actionable information that can help a team member do better, do more, or do it right. By using the word "resources," you're leaving the door open to a wide variety of things.

## **4. What can I help you with?**

*Why ask it?*

This question provides a connection that lets your employee know you're a human. You care about their success and wellbeing. This is the broadest question of all. The question can transcend the office, the work, and the business.

# Touch Base QUESTIONS [TEAM]

Friends,

I look forward to sharing a monthly touch base conversation with you. As you think about our time together, you might consider the following questions. Let me reiterate this is your time and agenda. I want this time to be an opportunity for me to be responsive and helpful to you.

- 1. What is your biggest accomplishment this month?**
- 2. What's your biggest challenge right now?**
- 3. What resources would be helpful to you right now?**
- 4. What can I help you with?**