

Line manager support: behaviours to support health, wellbeing and engagement



Exercise 4:

Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance

This exercise forms part of the [support materials](#) designed to help you explore and develop your management capability, based on the [behaviours the CIPD have identified](#), and support the wellbeing, health and engagement of your team. It aims to provide ideas and inspiration relevant to **providing knowledge, clarity and guidance**, the third area of management behaviour covered by the framework.

If you haven't already done so, you can get insight into your management capability by completing the [quiz](#). You can then use the step-by-step guidance to help you get feedback, identify strengths and areas to develop and plan the action you will take. There is also an [action plan sheet](#), which can be used to note down and track your actions.

Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance is about clarifying employees' role requirements and expectations, understanding their role, your own role, and relevant process and procedures, and communicating whether employees are on track. It's also about taking the time to give employees clear, specific advice when they need it and taking responsibility for decision making, problem solving, follow-up and planning.



Exercise 4: Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance

Page 2 of 5

Activity	What have I learnt from reflecting on this?	What will I do differently as a result?
<p>Review understanding: what is my role and what are the roles of my team members?</p> <p>In order to create clarity for your team about their roles and yours, you need first to understand the various roles for yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the function of each member of your team? Why are they there?• What is your own function? Why are you there?• What processes and procedures are your team responsible for?• How do the different roles within your team link with one another and depend on one another? <p>Consider whether you and your team are clear about the various roles and responsibilities. Is there more to be done in clarifying these? If anyone is unclear, consider setting aside time with the team or individuals to refresh understanding.</p>		
<p>Clarify expectations: what do you expect?</p> <p>Once you are clear about each person's role, you can also clarify the requirements and expectations of those roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you expect each team member to do and/or achieve on a daily basis?• What are their goals or tasks for the next quarter or year?• How will you know when they are achieving what is expected of them? <p>Reflect on how you clarify expectations. You might find it helpful to seek feedback from your team to check their understanding and explore ways to monitor and review goals and expectations.</p>		



Exercise 4: Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance

Page 3 of 5

Activity	What have I learnt from reflecting on this?	What will I do differently as a result?
<p>Explore how you give feedback: are we on track?</p> <p>Clear expectations, including clarity about how you will know when people are achieving what is expected of them, puts you in a good position to give feedback on whether people are on track. Reflect on the following questions to help with this area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are people doing what you expect of them? If not, why not? What needs to happen to help them meet expectations?• Are they on track to achieve their longer-term goals?• What do you most appreciate about what they are doing?• What would you prefer them to do differently in future? <p>Ensuring you have regular meetings with team members will enable you to give this feedback and to support them to make changes as necessary. Giving them positive feedback and appreciation is a key part of this. (See exercise 1 for more information on the positive to negative ratio.) Consider whether there is more you need to do to help people know how they are doing and to get their feedback on their understanding.</p>		
<p>Reflect on your approach: how do you balance guidance and decisiveness with empowerment and facilitation?</p> <p>Giving people guidance or advice is always a balance: on the one hand, you want to support people with the knowledge and experience you have gained and sometimes you need to take decisions; on the other hand, it is important to empower and coach people to find their own solutions. To coach and empower people, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It all starts with listening: in order to understand the issues with which someone is struggling, you need to be able to listen attentively to what they are telling you. Many of us think we are good at listening, but there is often more we can do to really listen effectively – what more could you do? (See exercise 1 for more on listening.) <p><i>Continued on next page</i></p>		



Exercise 4: Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance

Page 4 of 5

Activity	What have I learnt from reflecting on this?	What will I do differently as a result?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coaching questions can help people think: for example, when people come to you with an issue or question, do you ask what they think would be the best way forward, what they might try, what their view is etc? By supporting people to explore their ideas and options out loud, you enable them to think through problems from different angles and find solutions. You can also help them see any unhelpful assumptions that they might be making. Over time, by allowing space for this exploration, rather than telling people what to do, you help get them into the habit of thinking things through instead of waiting for instructions. Is there more you could do to support people in this way?• Allowing time for discussion and planning will help people take the actions needed. By giving people time to think, you can help people clarify the actions needed and plan next steps. Do you give time to this? <p>To support and guide people, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where you have knowledge and experience to contribute, it may be appropriate to share this to help inform how people solve problems. As mentioned, this will always be a delicate balance: asking questions and helping people think things through for themselves needs to be the first step. However, if it becomes clear that they are lacking particular information, which you have and which would make things a lot clearer or easier for them, it makes good sense for you to tell them what you know. For example, you may have information about the wider organisation or marketplace or have solved a similar problem before in ways that don't occur to them. How do you judge when to give guidance? <p><i>Continued on next page</i></p>		



Exercise 4: Providing knowledge, clarity and guidance

Page 5 of 5

Activity	What have I learnt from reflecting on this?	What will I do differently as a result?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where there are decisions that only you can take, it is important to be decisive and communicate clearly. Are you decisive when you need to be?• Where problem-solving is part of your role and responsibility, beware deflecting that responsibility to others. Do you take responsibility when needed? <p>Do you err on the side of giving people too much or too little guidance? How might you empower people more? How might you provide better guidance, decision-making and problem-solving?</p>		
<p>Review how you complete the cycle: have you followed up and followed through?</p> <p>When a member of your team has raised an issue or problem with you (for example a problem with a customer, supplier or service user or with internal systems), it is important to ensure that you take any actions that you have agreed to take and that you follow up with the team member involved to ensure that the issue or problem has been resolved. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What problems and issues have employees raised with you recently?• What solutions were agreed?• Have those solutions been put in place?• What actions did you agree to take?• Did you take the actions you agreed to take?• Did that resolve the situation?• What more needs to be done?		

This exercise has hopefully helped you generate ideas on what you want to do differently in order to provide knowledge, clarity and guidance. You can refer to the [exercises](#) page for more advice on developing your management approach.