

# How to Have a Meaningful 1:1 Conversation

*Strengthening relationships and ourselves through mutual understanding*

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**Strategic Imperatives**

There's no perfect way to have discussions with another to strengthen or build a relationship. The willingness to have the discussion at all is a great start. Here are a few thoughts for having a meaningful 1:1 conversation with a colleague, a direct report or your boss. (They can also be useful with those in your personal life.)

***It is not our purpose to become each other; it is to recognize each other, to learn to see the other and honor him for what he is."***

***-Hermann Hesse***

## **1 Set Your Mindset:**

First and foremost, consider your mindset before having this conversation. Be curious, open-minded and seek to understand the other person. Also be willing to be vulnerable and share your preferences and thoughts.

## **2 Share Insights in Advance:**

If your team uses behavioral profiles (such as Predictive Index), share your report with one another before you meet to have a chance to read and absorb the insights. Read with respect and a discovery mindset.

## **3 Reflect on Your Style:**

Consider how you prefer to make decisions, process ideas, resolve conflict and interact with others. Without judgement, think about how your style compares with that of the other person.

## **4 Begin with Ease:**

Start on a positive note expressing your desire to learn more about this person to set the environment for a pleasant dialogue. You are both there to seek greater understanding, not to judge or compete.

## **5 Explore Similarities, Differences, and Insights:**

Compare preferences with one another. Where are you similar? Consider if these similarities may create a bond and where they may create tension. Where do you have complementary strengths? How might these differences make you better together as you balance one another's styles?

## **6 Share Ideas:**

In your discussion, share a few ideas on how you might use this better understanding to strengthen your relationship and perhaps to make you a better leader (and human). Some find it useful to create a shortcut phrase to use when certain behaviors appear to prompt both of you to select a more productive path.

## **7 Keep it Going:**

Stay connected and keep talking. This initial conversation is a springboard. Continue learning about one another and yourself. You don't have to become best buddies. However, you will strengthen the ability to respect others who are different from you, or where conflict occurs because you are quite similar.

***We will never truly know all the ways we impact those around us by what we do, what we say and how we say it. Understanding yourself and others provides opportunities to bring your best self to every encounter. I wish you well in the never-ending journey to discover more about yourself and all those you interact with.***