

# Questions great managers ask

 [thedailyrecruiter.com/5-questions-great-managers-ask-2/](https://thedailyrecruiter.com/5-questions-great-managers-ask-2/)

By The SearchLogix  
Group

*“By Joel Garfinkle, SmartBrief, contributor”*

5/12/2017

As a manager, you may feel that it's always on you to deliver the messages, make the tough calls and guide the team through thick and thin — and it is.

Your team is looking for that sure-footed, goal-oriented sureness that makes them feel comfortable in the direction of the day, the project and the company. But here's the thing that great managers know — while they want to feel secure that there is “a plan” and that it's working, they also want to be included and to share that vision.

Great leadership not only brings everyone into making that vision a reality, it also helps everyone toward making “a plan” for their own personal journey to realizing their own goals. Make a habit of asking these five questions frequently to keep your team engaged and confident in corporate and personal success.

## 1. “How's it going?”

Never underestimate the value of checking in. Whether you're talking about the daily tasks at hand, a project as a whole, or an employee's career path, more than 80% of people report wishing they had the opportunity to talk to their boss more often. There's huge value in frequent, in-the-moment feedback. Great managers work hard to get the hang of delivering both praise and correction on a continuous basis. And don't wait for annual appraisals to talk about professional development. Most people would like to discuss career path and setting goals up to four times a year, especially if they're young or new to the organization.

## 2. “What do you think?”

Leadership is not, despite what some might think, about having all the answers. It's important to know when to ask for input from the team, from colleagues, from your own leaders and beyond. Pulling in ideas and feedback from the right group of relevant stakeholders is a skill great managers possess.

## 3. “How can I help?”

It's one thing to encourage team members to come to you with their problems. After all, an open-door policy that is genuine and everyone feels welcome to take advantage of is a sign of a good manager. Great leaders, however, don't wait for the issues to come to them; “what can I do for you?” is a powerful question. Strive to make sure employees have what they need beyond the scope of just individual problems and daily tasks. And don't forget to ask what can be done to improve the bigger picture and increase job satisfaction.

## 4. “Would you like to work together?”

There is definitely leadership value in knowing when to delegate tasks, but there's a difference between staying engaged and sitting back and watching the work. Great leaders wade in and help, making sure critical tasks are done, or just staying involved to advise, strategize and cheer on the team. Put a priority on working together, side-by-side with staff, especially at crunch time. Remember the days when you were the junior member on a team — chances are you would jump at the chance for an opportunity to work with your manager, or someone more experienced, both to have a chance to learn and to strut your stuff.

## 5. “Can I tell you why this matters?”

Team members can be pretty task oriented — solving problems and getting the job done. For some, the task itself is reason enough, but for many, nothing is quite as inspiring as knowing how and why what they're doing really

matters. Good managers are able to share the big picture, giving a whole team a great sense of the overall vision and a reason to be truly engaged. Great leaders really drive that concept home by adding a roadmap — a step-by-step account of how the team is going to get there, together.