



TOUCHPOINTS!

Touchpoints are ongoing, one-on-one conversations between supervisors and employees about work progress, goals, performance to date, and plan of action going forward.

Meetings should be held on a recurrent schedule, at least once per month.

Share Responsibility for Performance

Touchpoints are **simple**, quick, and informal, allowing time and attention to develop a strong working relationship and ensure progress is being made towards goal attainment.

Keep Priorities and Goals Aligned

Improve Communication

Employee and Supervisor feedback is prepared in advance. Resources are available to help guide the collaborative discussion and sharing that will foster trust and build relationships.

Inspire Engagement and Morale

Reinforce Your Team

***Take time to meet and stay on track
to success with TOUCHPOINTS!***

Touchpoint Conversation Guide for Employees and Supervisors

This guide helps supervisors and employees:

- Prepare for a productive two-way conversation
- Organize ideas and make note of key successes and challenges
- Anticipate what topics both parties will want to cover
- Decide together what is next for the employee going forward

Instructions:

SUPERVISORS

Start by defining and agreeing on work goals together with the employee. Explain what is expected of you as a supervisor and how the team fits into the department and broader institutional goals. Cut, paste and send this worksheet (including instructions) by email to your employee one week before the scheduled Touchpoint. Give careful thought to answers for the employee's highlighted questions in sections 3 and 5 once they have replied. Print the email and use the "notes" area in sections 2 and 4 to prepare for and guide the discussion topics you want to cover during the meeting.

EMPLOYEES

Review each section of the worksheet as you reflect on the last few weeks' activity. Use section 1 to identify your key accomplishments and priorities. In sections 3 and 5, highlight the topics and questions you want to discuss during the Touchpoint meeting. Email reply your selections 2-3 days beforehand. Print your reply and use the "notes" section to capture your thoughts and prepare for the discussion.

- After each meeting record key discussion points, action-items or feedback.
- Save a copy of each month's notes for the annual appraisal.
- Regularly ask for and offer informal feedback between the Touches.
- Set-up recurring invites for future Touchpoints.



WHO	TOPICS AND IDEAS FOR TOUCHPOINT AGENDA	NOTES
1. Employee	START THE MEETING BY: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Highlighting some of your contributions.2. Discussing your ideas about what's next to focus on.3. To date, what work priorities have you achieved?4. What priorities will carry over into the next month?5. What new priorities have emerged for you, your team or the college/department even through remote work?	
2. Supervisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Share your insight on key work priorities that impact and involve the employee.2. Highlight the contributions to key work priorities that the employee has helped achieve.3. Describe the actions to be carried out to move important initiatives forward during the next month. What can the employee do to help?	
3. Employee	YOUR PERFORMANCE: Now and Moving Forward Check/Highlight 2-3 questions you'd like to ask your supervisor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> What's one thing I do well that I should continue doing?<input type="checkbox"/> What's one thing I can do to grow in my position?<input type="checkbox"/> What's one area in which I can increase or re-focus my attention?<input type="checkbox"/> What do you think is the one thing I could do to make even more progress in my role?<input type="checkbox"/> What's next for me to focus on?<input type="checkbox"/> What's one thing I could do to contribute even more?	
4. Supervisor	SUPERVISOR'S PERSPECTIVE: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What's gone well, employee contributions and their impact.2. What's next to focus on.3. Other topic ideas: How has remote work impacted the team's dynamics?	
5. Employee	YOUR DEVELOPMENT AND WORK INTERESTS Check/Highlight 2-3 questions you'd like your supervisor to ask you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Is there anything you want to be involved in?<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a new skill you want to develop?<input type="checkbox"/> As you think about your professional progress, what on-the-job experience would be helpful?<input type="checkbox"/> What's one of your skills you'd like use or use more of?<input type="checkbox"/> What do you wish you knew more about within the organization that would be helpful in your job?<input type="checkbox"/> What adjustments can we make that would improve your well-being?	
6. Supervisor	SUPERVISOR SUPPORT Questions to ask your direct report: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What's one thing I'm doing to support you that is working?2. What's one way I could support you more?3. What's one way we could work better together?4. Are you getting enough feedback from your colleagues and me?	
7. Supervisor and Employee	ACTION ITEMS Identify next steps to your conversation, such as follow-up items, action items, new goals, ideas for development, etc.	

Touchpoints Frequently Asked Questions

What are Touchpoints and why do we have them?

Touchpoints are an ongoing, one-on-one conversation between supervisors and employees about work progress, goals, performance to date, and plan of action going forward, held at regular intervals throughout the year. They are quick and informal, allowing time and space to develop a strong working relationship and ensure progress is being made towards goal attainment.

How do Touchpoints work?

1. Employee and supervisor confirm a meeting time to exchange feedback.
2. Feedback is prepared by the employee and supervisor in advance of the conversation.
3. Employee and supervisor discuss successes, lessons learned, growth opportunities, short and long-term goals and priorities.
4. Employee and supervisor document the insights, guidance and feedback, as well as any important reflections.
5. Employee and supervisor agree and arrange to meet again.

For both supervisors and employees, the focus is on conversations and meaningful connections to help you maximize your contributions at work and help you feel fully satisfied by the work you do.

To have meaningful conversations, it is good to focus on:

- having a positive mindset about your working relationships;
- having a sense of shared responsibility for performance conversations;
- asking questions, seeking examples, and clarifying meaning.

How do I prepare for Touchpoints with my supervisor?

Here are some tips for making the most of your Touchpoints:

- Bring an agenda of things to talk about.
- Pick some great questions. Use the enclosed Touchpoints Tool as a guide.
- Consider where your professional development is right now and where you would like to take it in the short and long term.

In the beginning, you will likely work more on getting rid of blocks and issues that are keeping you from doing your best work. Later, that will transform into more coaching time as you collaborate on priorities and goals.

Keep all this in mind when planning your Touchpoints and deciding what to focus on.



How do you do a Touchpoints meeting?

If you are new to having Touchpoints, it really just takes a few basic steps:

- **Create an agenda** - Bring some topics to discuss to build your relationship and learn key things from your supervisor. Use the enclosed Touchpoints tool as a guide.
- **Ask questions during the meeting** - Good questions are a key component of effective meetings, especially in the beginning. Questions will help unearth important insights.
- **Listen for insights** - Listening is an important part of Touchpoints because you are looking to uncover valuable information that will allow you to grow and excel. Ask follow-up and clarifying questions.
- **Follow up** - Ensure progress is made by committing to priorities: Before the meeting ends, agree on what you are responsible for taking action on. Cover what needs to get done between now and the beginning of your next Touchpoint.

Over time, your Touchpoint meetings should change as your relationship with your supervisor enhances and you develop new skills. So, keep in mind that this is just a good starter framework and should be adjusted over time.

What do you talk about in Touchpoints?

You can focus on everything from career development, to building rapport, to learning how to improve certain skills, your team, or your department.

Here are some good Touchpoint questions to ask:

- How could I improve as an employee?
- How can I help my coworkers succeed?
- How could I have handled a recent situation differently?
- What can I add to my plate for a greater challenge?
- What advice do you have on improving my work-life balance?

Effective questions will help get the conversation started and keep it going in the right direction. The feedback and insights you uncover will help improve your performance and standing in on the team.

Additional Supervisor Questions for Employees

Touchpoint standard

- How are you? What is going on inside and outside work?
- What accomplishments are you proud of?
- Is anything blocking you?
- What are your top priorities right now? (Are we aligned?)
- What can I do to support you?
- Anything else you would like to talk about today?

Remote work

Remote employees face unique challenges and may need time to find their remote working style. It is part of a remote supervisor's job to guide this journey.

- What do you like and dislike about working from home?
- How are the tools we are using working for you?
- What can other people in our department or I do to make remote work easier for you?
- How has remote work impacted the team dynamics – positively and negatively?

Relationship building

Building a strong relationship with a direct report is more challenging when you are not in the same office. Chatting about non-work topics can replace those vital water cooler moments.

- How has working remotely impacted your family routines?
- What vacation (or staycation) plans do you have coming up?
- Can you recommend any good podcasts or books?
- What was one of your funniest moments at work?
- Any cool movies you watched recently?

Well-being

Remote work can impact your team member's physical and mental health. Ask these questions to help keep their well-being high.

- Does work feel energizing or draining to you right now?
- What adjustments can we make that would improve your well-being?
- Have you been able to find clear boundaries between work and personal life?
- Do you feel like you are able to maintain a healthy, active lifestyle?
- Do you ever feel lonely or isolated at work?

Communication

Frequent, effective communication is a pillar of successful remote collaboration. *Touch* with team members to help them meet their communication needs.

- How do you feel about the amount of communication in our team and department? Would you prefer more or less?
- Are you getting enough feedback from your colleagues and me?
- How well do you feel informed about what is going on in the rest of the department?
- What is something I can improve in my communication style and habits?

Productivity

Remote workers can be more productive than office workers, but only if they have a supportive work environment.

- How productive have you been feeling lately?
- How is your workload? (Anything we should delegate or deprioritize?)
- Do you have enough clarity about your role and responsibilities?
- How challenging is it for you to stay focused when working from home?
- Do you have access to all the resources and information you need?

Bonus Questions

- What's one win we had as a team this past week?
- What's your work and non-work highlight of the past month?
- If there was one thing I could do differently to help you more, what would it be?
- On a scale of 1-10, how happy are you with your work-life balance? How can we get closer to 10?
- How can I best support the team as a manager?
- What's one skill you'd like to improve this quarter?
- What, if anything, feels harder than it should be in your day-to-day work?

For both Supervisor and Employee – view the other's perspective

- What does success look like?
- What are the challenges?
- Are you pulling the other up or bringing them down?
- What is one thing you can do to support the other?