

## Conversations that Matter

**Six tools that will help you or your team express what matters in your life.**

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The presence of compassion is the best predictor of high engagement. If you are looking for reasons why engagement is in the tank, the absence of compassion is a good candidate.<sup>1</sup>

**Here are three strength-based questions to help build relationships among teammates:**

- 1) When did you feel like you belonged?
  - 2) When did you feel like you mattered?
  - 3) When did you feel like you made a difference?
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How can we increase teammates feeling like they belong, matter, and make a difference? Have conversations that matter. Here are some tools to start conversations that matter:

### Inside Scoop

On a single power point slide, all team members provide pictures of people who mean the most to them and what they most enjoy doing. In five minutes, it is a way for each person to express to their teammates that this is what matters to me.

### Bucket List

Identify five to ten experiences you want to have before you die. Teammates share their bucket lists to learn what matters to each person, as well as identify shared interests.

### Defining Experiences and People

Identify five to ten experiences and people that shaped the person you have become. Focus on how you grew both in grace and grit based on both positive and negative experiences and people. Look for what matters to each person as well as experiences that people share.

### Personal Timeline

Take your age and divide it by three. In each of the three parts of your life, who were the people and what were the experiences that shaped the person you have

become? Include both positive and negative experiences and, importantly, when you were at your best. What is your life story so far? Going forward, what do you want your life story to be?

### Who am I?

Each teammate answers the question, “who am I?” Clearly, this is a challenging question that may freak out some teammates. Remember that the critical point of conversations that matter is vulnerability, not comfort. The deeper the vulnerability, the deeper the bond among teammates. Each person is given time to prepare how he or she wants to answer this question, though it is a conversation, so lose the power point! The person is given ten minutes to answer this question. A timekeeper lets the person know when five minutes are left, then three minutes, then two minutes with a firm cut off at ten minutes.

### The Four H's

The Four H's are History, Heroes, Heartbreaks, and Hopes. Put team members in pairs to discuss these topics and build trust while deepening connections.

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1 Houseman, M., & Minor, D. (2015, October). “Toxic Workers.” *Harvard Business Review*.