

### FOLLOWER'S BRIEFING

#### WHAT YOUR FOLLOWERS WANT YOU TO KNOW....

We value the chance to have your undivided attention. We can talk about what's important to us as individuals - and you can understand what engages, inspires and motivates us as individuals. You can also offer assistance where we are struggling. You can even 'nip-in-the-bud' an aspect of our behaviour before it becomes an issue!

#### GET A SENSE OF HOW IMPORTANT THESE MEETINGS ARE

As their significant resource, followers will naturally turn to you for what they need. And one of the best ways of being there for individual followers is the regular, prioritised, ringfenced time that I call one-to-one (but call it what YOU like!)



If you have never done these then start them by doing them once a week – then release to once a fortnight. I think every couple of weeks is optimal. However, as you build exemplary trusted relationships with your followers, then you MIGHT get away with doing these once a month. But certainly no less frequently!

**Prioritise:** These appointments should trump pretty much ANYTHING ELSE you do. Under the extraordinarily rare circumstances (like plague, pestilence or brimstone!) of needing to postpone, then do this immediately you become aware of the problem, and re-appoint for as soon as possible afterwards.

The best leaders I know have NEVER postponed (let alone cancelled) a one to one with their followers. Even during Corona Lockdown in 2020, they were Skyping and Zooming so as not to let their followers down.

**Timing:** The optimal time is about 20 minutes – so these meetings do not have to be onerous in terms of time. However, they will pay back your investment of that time many, many fold, with more confident, valued, purposeful, and productive followers.

**Awkward!:** Be prepared for these meetings NOT to work well in the first instance. Followers will expect you to do all the talking and may be reticent to say what's really on their minds – which, of course, is a symptom of your relationship right there! However, with your perseverance – a few awkward silences and your clarity of expectation, the meetings will turn around soon enough, I promise.

**Agenda:** By all means, send out the agenda beforehand (especially in the early days) and ask them to bring answers to your questions. On the next page is a set of possible questions to help with an agenda, but please create your own. And understand that, as these meetings



progress, you can loosen the agenda considerably as you and your followers develop your own rhythm.

#### TYPICAL QUESTIONS TO ASK

As part of the initial meeting – by all means keep it general. If it's their style, shoot the breeze for a couple of minutes about 'stuff' that's going on. You might pick up on something which will lead you into the meeting proper, but largely this is to relax both of you!

**Do you have a theme or goal for the next 20 minutes?** This can be yours and/or theirs.

**Ask for a score out of 10 for work.** Consciously avoid 'seven'! If it's average, then the score is 5. If it's not going well then 2, 3 or 4. If it pretty much couldn't be better, then 9 or 10 is fine. Ask why the score – and how would we go from THAT figure to the next one up?

**Score out of 10 for personal.** There are three levels here: 1) You can miss this out in the early days. 2) You can ask for a score but without pressing for reasons. 3) The score is given freely and you discuss why.

**What are the three things that are going well at the moment?** Subsequently, what can you do to support, capitalise, encourage this further?

**What is the one thing you would change right now?** Whatever their response (if any) listen without defence, attack or explanation.

**What do you think should be done about this?** You want to get them used to being part of the solution rather than the problem.

**Anything else you would change?** Whilst you start with asking about 'The One Thing' they would change, it may be that there are others lurking! Worth probing – especially if your reaction to the first one was constructive!

**Any issue with any other personnel or department.** Maintain confidentiality. You want to uncover any interpersonal or inter-departmental blockers.

**Is there anything you would like me to address or keep an eye on?** This can be excellent fuel for your next one to one.

**How might I be letting you down at the moment?** This question is so powerful and important, we have a separate lecture dedicated to it at the end of the book.

**Work up your own set of question and subject matter to form your own agenda.** If you want your follower to bring information, send out the request in good time. And be specific. "Bring two ideas that might help speed up our workflow", is a far better question than: "Bring your ideas as how we could speed up our workflow".

**Whatever you do, prioritise, protect, persevere and be patient.** There is probably no more important leadership activity than this!

