



A supportive conversation model for line managers

Starting the conversation

- **Allow enough time** and make sure you're prepared.
- **Book a meeting** as soon as you are aware of a concern.
- Ask if they would like to **bring anyone along for support**.
- Offer as much **confidentiality** as possible. Be honest about who you may need to talk to and where possible seek permission to share information.

Gathering information

- **Ask open questions**, questions that cannot be answered with a yes/no response. How, when, what, why questions.
- **Examples of information to solicit** might be, how long has the issue been developing? What caused it? If anything makes it better? If anything makes it worse?
- **Actively listen**. Be attentive to physical and verbal pointers that may give you more information.
- **Chunk and Check**. Say back to the person the information you have heard and check that you have understood correctly.

Creating a plan

- What are the persons **concerns/worries**?
- **Sign post** to relevant support.
- **Be honest**. If you don't know something, say you'll find out.
- **Work adjustments** may be needed to support the employee.
- **Share the decision** regarding actions moving forward. You may want to give options that the person can choose from.
- **Check for understanding** by making sure the person is clear what the plan is, including next steps.
- **Follow up** by checking how the person is doing later and if the plan needs adjusting.

Make the space safe

Use supportive language

Don't judge or assume

Don't interrupt

Think about your tone and body language

Build relationship