



Your 2024 Connection Commitment: A Checklist to Build Better Relationships at Work

With so much communication technology at our fingertips, it's easy to feel like we're doing a lot of "connecting."

But unless you remember the fundamentals of relationship building, all of that activity may actually lead to feeling lonely and disconnected at work.

Unlocking performance and retention requires an intentional focus on fostering connection for your team. The key is to remember these basics of relationship building:

- Make time.
- Get to know people.
- Stay in touch.
- Show appreciation.
- Be helpful.

Let's dive into these tips so you can ace the connection game this year!

1. Make time.

The most important thing to remember is that relationships require an investment of time. There is no shortcut or cheat code.

It's imperative to create time in your schedule to connect with colleagues through check-ins, coffee conversations, and other meetings. Meaningful relationships that create value at work don't happen accidentally.

Remember, time is the currency of relationships.

As a leader, you must make time for one-on-one meetings with each individual on your team. These should be scheduled and happen on a regular cadence, ideally at least once a week.

The one-on-one is not only a great tool for getting to know your people and providing support, but the investment of your time signals to the employee that they are important to you.

Do this:

Schedule regular one-on-one meetings.



2. Get to know people.

Creating stronger connection with others requires the formation of “overlap” in the relationship. Overlap describes our knowledge of each other, common interests, shared experiences and values. In this familiarity, we find areas of commonality and humanity that bond us together.

To build overlap, start asking more questions in your conversations with employees that invite sharing more about themselves beyond what they do at work. Questions like “did you do anything fun this weekend?” or “what are you looking forward to outside of work this summer?” create the opportunity to learn more about the individual and what’s important to them.

Do this:

Add a “Question of the Day” to your team meeting agenda.

A great technique to foster overlap within your team is to add a question of the day to your agenda. Each team member is invited to share their answer to the question in the meeting. These questions might range from silly to reflective. Examples could include:

- ✓ What’s your favorite movie of all time?
- ✓ Do you have a hobby? If so, what is it?
- ✓ What is your favorite memory of the place where you grew up?

As team members answer these questions, overlap naturally forms because individuals learn about each other and uncover common interests. You can even invite team members to participate in identifying the questions for the meeting.



3. Stay in touch.

Growing your network of relationships is a lot like having a garden. Relationships grow and develop over time, just like the flowers in a garden. They require regular care and attention if they are to flourish. To foster stronger relationships isn't about one conversation or connection, it requires a commitment to ongoing interactions and time spent together.

This is yet another reason why the regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings between managers and employees are so important and powerful. While each conversation is valuable, it is the consistent ongoing investment of time over time that will build trust and connection.

Do this:

Block time on your calendar to make space for non-work conversation.

Reaching out to sincerely inquire into how someone is doing is a powerful way to build the relationship. These check-ins require a small amount of time, but can have a huge impact on fostering stronger relationships with others.

Block off an hour on your calendar each week to simply reach out and check in with people. You might even want to keep a list of people who you feel are most important (your team, colleagues, friends, etc.). During your check-in time, if you haven't talked to them that week, reach out. Send a text. Make a quick phone call.

Take the step to stay in touch.



4. Show appreciation.

As humans, we innately crave acknowledgement and validation from others. It's important that we feel valued and appreciated for who we are and what we do. We all know the difference between the sting of feeling overlooked and the joy of being truly seen.

To foster more positive relationships, focus on showing more gratitude and appreciation. Before meeting with someone, take just a few minutes to consider what about that person you admire and are grateful for. What have you observed of them that is noteworthy? Then, share those insights with them when you meet.

The more positive moments of recognition and appreciation you create for others, the more positive they will feel about both themselves and your relationship with them.

Do this:

Make “shout-outs” a routine part of team meetings.

High-performing teams make appreciation and recognition a part of how they work. This means adding time on every meeting agenda to “shout out” thanks and appreciation for others. When your team does this regularly, it helps build habits around expressing sincere appreciation to others. These habits help accelerate and strengthen connection within the team.



5. Be helpful.

Our brains are naturally hardwired for reciprocity. Think of the last time someone did you a favor. What did you feel compelled to do immediately? Most likely, it was finding a way to repay the favor. That's reciprocity. When someone does something helpful or kind for us, we feel compelled to return that kindness to them.

This is an incredibly valuable insight when it comes to relationship building. When we orient ourselves to being helpful to others, it will accelerate your relationships with others. Every time you provide meaningful support or help, you make an investment in the relationship.

Do this:

Find ways to help.

Get in the habit of sincerely asking, "how can I help?" when you meet with people. Then, commit to whatever support you can offer when they respond. Even small things can have a big impact.

The more you offer and provide help to others, the more they will feel compelled to do it for you. This creates a bond that strengthens the relationship.



Take these tips to the next level and supercharge connection at your company. **Contact Enboarder® today** for a demo of the Human Connection Platform!

About the author:

A dynamic keynote speaker, Jason Lauritsen is a true thought leader in the world of work and employee engagement who is dedicated to revolutionizing the way we Lead With Relationship™.

He fearlessly challenges traditional norms to reshape the employee experience by

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Jason is the author of two books, "Unlocking High Performance" and "Social Gravity". His thought leadership has been featured in Forbes, Fast Company, Talent Management magazine, HR Executive magazine, and SHRM publications.



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