

**Volume 22****What I'm hearing**

I am committed to doing one-on-one conversations with my people, but how will we make it work?

**What it means**

Two things about this statement: First the use of "we." It's important to see one-on-ones as benefitting both parties involved. Actions tend to follow our attitudes, and trusting relationships are built based on a history of actions that say, "This matters to me and you matter to me." Keeping the "we" in this statement is step one. Secondly, keep in mind that this is a journey, not something you do twice and say, "Done." It is important to believe passionately in what you're doing in order to generate the energy and commitment needed to work through the setbacks that inevitably will occur.

**What you should do**

I have published a single-page guide to the one-on-one conversation, with rules and guidelines for both the individual and the leader. [Click here](#) to view it.

A good place to start is with the three rules for this conversation that must *never* be broken.

- Be in the same room (unless it's absolutely unavoidable — see guide).
- The individual (*not* the leader) owns the agenda.
- Never cancel without rescheduling.

My standard communication rule is to stay away from the words "never" and "always," with the following qualification: You earn the right to break these rules based on living into the word "never" as a rule. That means that, for the first three months, you treat these rules as sacred and make following them a priority. This is true for both you as the leader and for the individual taking part in the one-on-one.

The two guidelines that appear for both the leader and the individual are especially noteworthy:

- This time is to help you. Outcomes will follow your attitude.
- Follow up on all commitments.

I often hear comments such as, "I'll do it, but they don't really care," or "This is a waste of my time." I see these attitudes show up as the result of a lack of preparation or a lack of follow-through in the first few meetings. Somewhere between the fourth and tenth meetings, it changes.

Focus on the process and trust that outcomes will follow. Family business expert Greg McCann says, "When relationships matter, process trumps the solution." The number-one mistake I see in business is believing the formula to be: plan + individual ownership = accountability. The real formula is: plan + relationship + ongoing conversation = accountability.



*Strategic People  
Reminders for the Busy  
Executive*

**Are you struggling with accountability on your team? Need help building or leading a team in which work gets done and the actual outcomes match the plan? Contact me. [Scott@thetrugroup.com](mailto:Scott@thetrugroup.com)**

©2012, Scott Patchin