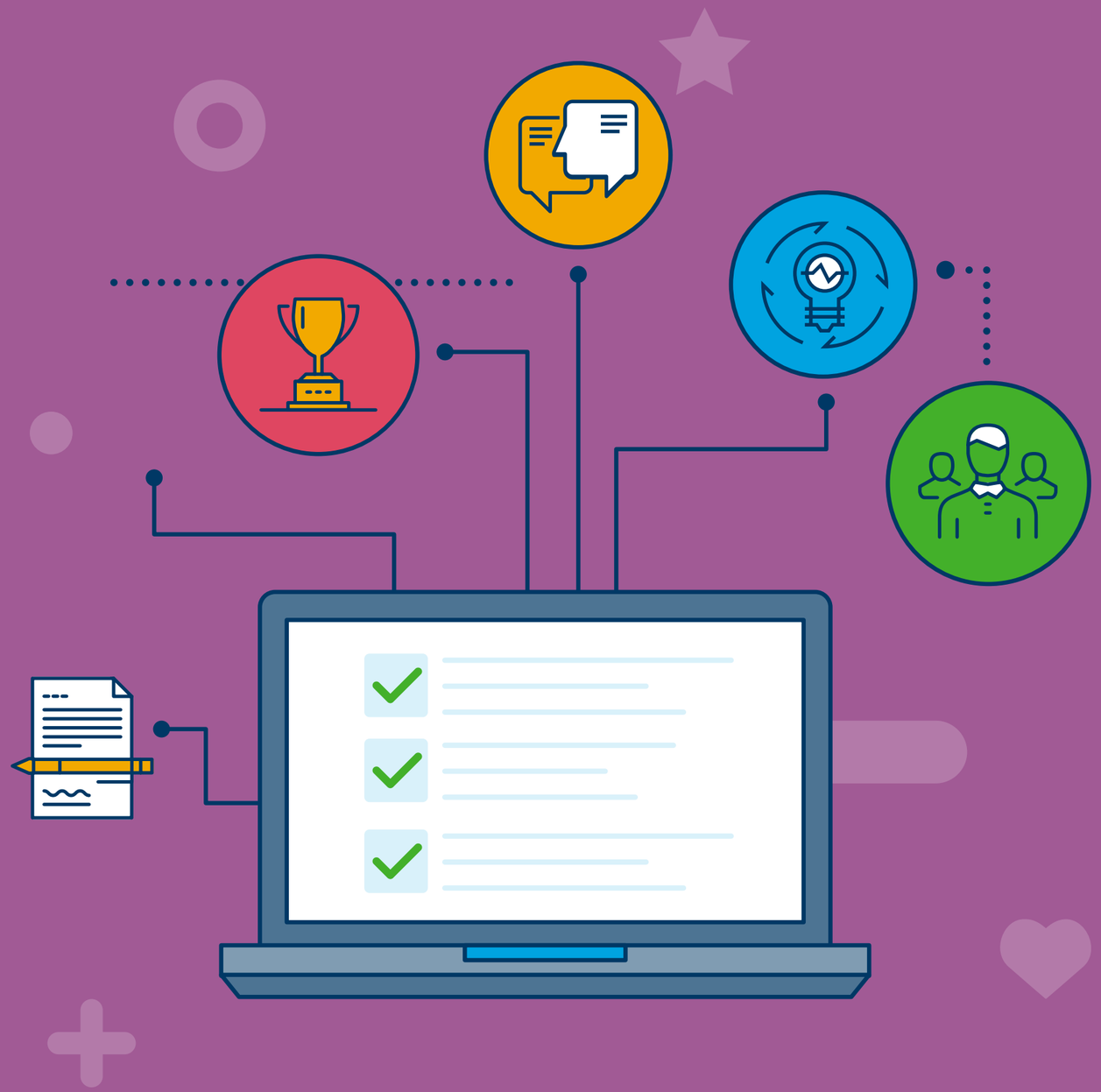
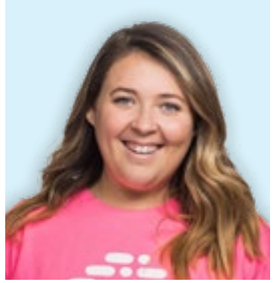
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Getting to Know Your Employees questionnaire:

15 things managers should know about their team





Introduction

Why is getting to know your employees important? You've heard it a thousand times before: There is no "I" in team – and it applies everywhere. Successful teams spring from the framework of strong relationships shared by employees who understand each other's motives, work styles and communication preferences. These relationships pave the way for powerful collaboration, and in an effort to fortify them, many managers will turn to a "Getting to Know Your Employees" questionnaire.

There are endless questionnaires that ask "sillier" questions like what superpower your employees want most, which movie they would take with them to a desert island or what kind of tree they would be – and while these are fun conversation starters that teach us things about each other and ourselves, they aren't the most useful questions for maximizing employees' engagement with the company and productivity.

If you're looking for a tool that digs into workplace-relevant characteristics that directly affect the employee experience, resources are surprisingly scarce.

... Until now.

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Why use this Reward Gateway "Getting to Know Your Employees" Questionnaire?

There are countless ways to get to know someone, but the questions included here are intended to help you understand what a person is like as an employee. That's not to say that you can't also build rapport with your employees in more lighthearted social contexts, (in fact, we believe you should!) but that's not what this questionnaire is about.

What it is for is uncovering core personality traits and preferences that dictate the way a person works. It touches on themes like motivation, communication style and recognition preferences. You have a unique working relationship with each of your employees, and all of these elements are critical to your team's success.

1 What big-picture issue do you want to work toward?

Members of today's workforce – especially millennials, who represent more than half of it – thrive on the idea that they're contributing to something bigger than themselves. They are hungry to make the world a better place and seek positions and organizations that let them do so.

Of course, a shared desire to make the world a better place doesn't equate to a shared idea of the best way to do it. While some employees may be passionate advocates for sustainability, others might spend their weekends volunteering at a local animal shelter.

Whatever the cause, it can be helpful to understand the big-picture problems your employees care most about. It's likely the issue(s) somehow ties back to your company's mission. Even if it doesn't, there are ways to relate those causes to work (for example, by offering volunteer time off).



2 What’s one professional achievement you feel especially proud of?

This question is included to offer insight into what your employee considers excellence at work.

You can learn a lot by asking which achievements an employee looks back on with pride.

Even when you’ve worked with an employee for years, it can be hard to gauge their private feelings towards their own work. Asking this question directly gives you that opportunity.

Was the accomplishment a convention-shattering feat of innovation?

A task completed in record time?

A masterpiece in project management?



3 What do you foresee being the next major milestone(s) in your career?

Companies have big goals they want employees to work toward, and employees have career goals that you can support in turn – but only if you know what those goals are.

Use this questionnaire as an opportunity to ask your employees which career milestones they anticipate next. Often, the pursuit of those major goals and the evolution of your organization go hand-in-hand. The more opportunities you provide for your employees to work toward professional milestones, the more engaged they will be at work and the lower the likelihood of turnover.

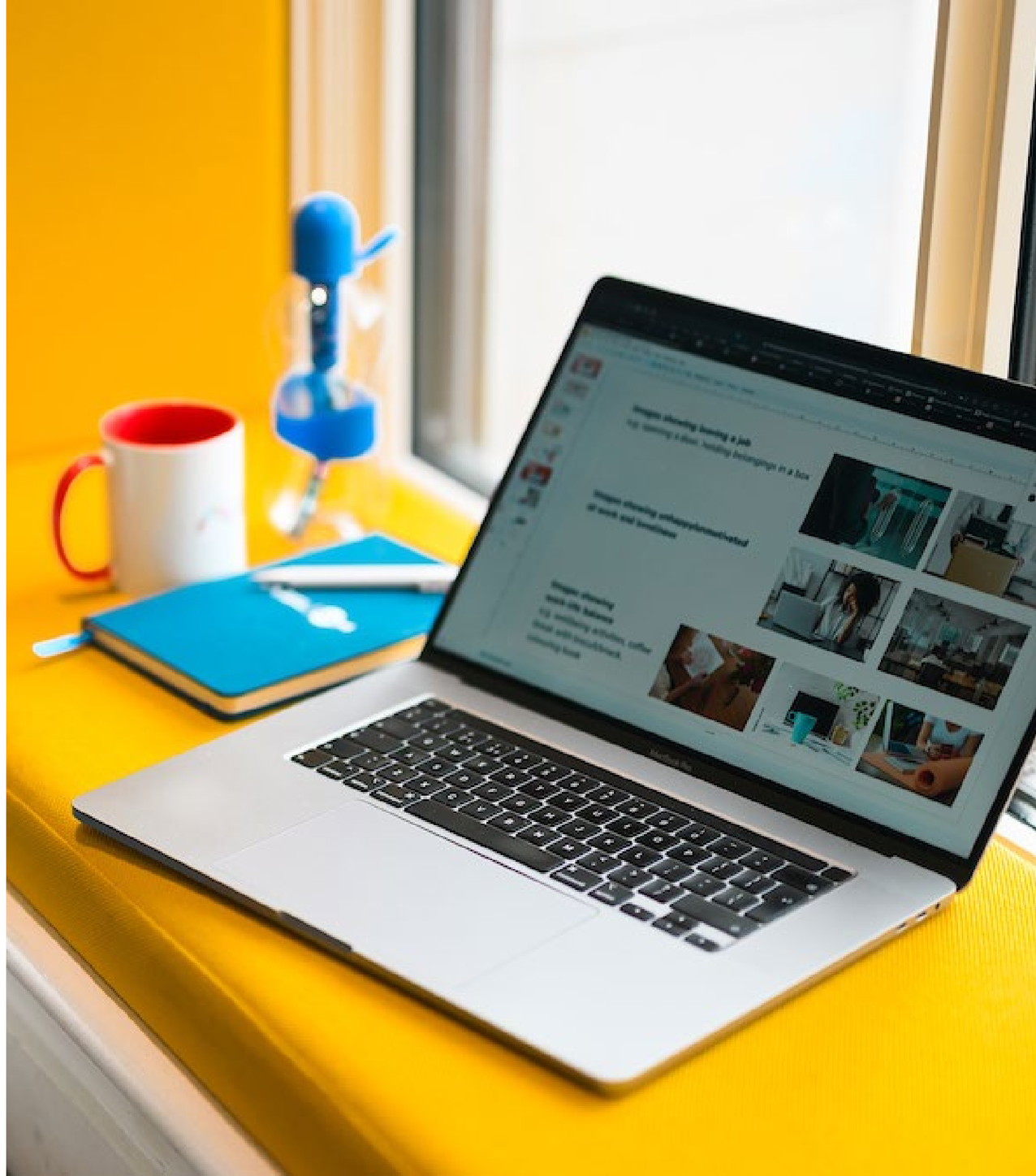


4 What behaviors do you believe best exemplify our company's core values?

This question in a "Getting to Know Your Employees" questionnaire serves two purposes:

1. The employee's answer offers insight into how well your employee knows your core values and how their interpretation of them aligns with your own. Because core values are so high-level, there is often room for them to be interpreted in multiple ways.

2. It can also offer inspiration for what specific behaviors to look out for as deserving of recognition. The practice of recognizing your employees for embodying core values comes highly recommended, and asking employees this question can give you concrete ideas for which behaviors to call out.



5 What's one area you'd like to grow in that you currently find challenging? Why do you find it challenging?

Understanding your employee's challenge areas is as important as knowing their strengths. Especially when an employee is self-aware enough to acknowledge their own limitations, giving them the opportunity to speak openly about them lays the groundwork for a growth-oriented working relationship.

Having an earnest conversation about what your employee struggles with as part of the "Getting to Know Your Employees" questionnaire is also a great way to build trust and establish an environment where they feel comfortable asking for help.



6 Which areas of work do you value autonomy the most?



Autonomy significantly boosts employee engagement, but 52% of employees report that they lack autonomy at work.[1]

According to motivation expert Daniel Pink, there are four varieties of autonomy in the workplace:

1

Autonomy Over Time

Freedom over when you start and end work, and how you allocate your time while there.

2

Autonomy Over Task

Freedom over daily responsibilities and long-term projects.

3

Autonomy Over Team

Freedom over which coworkers you work most closely with.

4

Autonomy Over Technique

Freedom over the process you use to complete your work.

Ideally, employees should experience autonomy in all four categories, but it's helpful to know which they value most. Whatever their preference, ensure that your employee has a lot of independence in that arena – not only does it lead to higher employee satisfaction, it leads to better performance.

1 www.culturemonkey.io/employee-engagement/employee-autonomy-at-work

7 What is the most productive way to structure one-on-one meetings?

According to current best practices, managers should make time for one-on-one meetings with their direct reports a minimum of once a week. But there are a lot of different ways one-on-one meetings can be structured.

Who owns the agenda? Is the meeting more of a retrospective or a look at what lies ahead? Are there recurrent goals and projects that should be surfaced at every meeting?

By asking your employees these questions, you ensure that all parties involved gain maximum value from these important meetings and provide them opportunities to address issues as, or even before, they arise.



8 How do you prefer to receive constructive feedback?

If you are genuinely committed to fostering your employees' success, you will inevitably have to address areas for improvement.

It can be uncomfortable to receive – and deliver – less than complimentary feedback. The process is easier for both parties if it's preceded by a discussion about the most productive approach.

Some employees do best with real-time feedback, delivered immediately after a misstep. Others might prefer a scheduled meeting that they can mentally prepare for. Some employees do best processing written feedback, others prefer face-to-face conversations. It all depends on the person.

Of course, for urgent matters or major mistakes, you won't always be able to respect the preferences your employees express. But in many cases, knowing your employee's preferences can maximize feedback's impact by minimizing friction.



9 How do you prefer to deliver constructive feedback?

Providing constructive feedback is a two-way street. Often, insights from direct reports can provide relevant, productive inspiration for improving your management approach.

That said, most employees are uncomfortable approaching their manager with constructive criticism. Incorporating this question in a “Getting to Know Your Employees” questionnaire gives you the chance to establish clear processes for delivering appropriate feedback.



10

What are your key motivators?

One important outcome of this questionnaire is understanding what drives your employees. Some employees may be able to answer this question without missing a beat, but others will be overwhelmed by such a deep question with so many potential answers.

Understanding what it is your employees care most about can help you push them towards excellence at work.

If that's the case, you can mention that people tend to be driven by four main motivators:

1



Money

Opportunities to turn a profit or increase personal wealth.

2



Mission

Opportunities to create high-level change, often on a global scale.

3



Relationships

Opportunities to build meaningful interpersonal connections.

4



Creativity

Opportunities to think outside the box and push the boundaries of innovation.

11 What tasks do you find intrinsically motivating?

An intrinsically motivating task offers automatic fulfillment – it is not performed as a means to an end, but rather is rewarding in itself.

From writing and painting to programming, people vary widely when it comes to what they derive natural satisfaction from.

Hopefully, an employee's position involves at least some day-to-day functions they find intrinsically motivating (if it doesn't, you have a much bigger problem than anything this questionnaire can solve). Creating plenty of opportunities for your employees to perform those tasks is one of the simplest ways to ensure they find fulfillment at work.



12 What rewards do you find extrinsically motivating?

Realistically, few people have jobs that involve solely intrinsically motivating tasks. For those less joy-infused projects, extrinsically motivating rewards can do a lot to boost morale.

Extrinsic rewards act like a light at the end of the tunnel for particularly tedious tasks. They incentivize employees as they pour effort into necessary, albeit less-than-enjoyable, undertakings.

While some employees might be highly driven to work towards an experiential reward, such as tickets to a concert, others might find a piece of jewelry or new kitchen appliance much more appealing. It all depends on individual taste, which is why asking this question can help you tailor extrinsic rewards accordingly.



13 How do you prefer to receive praise?

In general, it's best to praise your employees publicly – but that doesn't mean there aren't exceptions to the rule. For any number of reasons, some employees can feel uncomfortable with the attention that public praise attracts.

Use this as an opportunity to check in about whether your employees are comfortable receiving public recognition.

Respecting the wishes of those team members who like their praises whispered rather than sung ensures that recognition remains a positive experience for all. But for everyone else – sing praises from the rooftops, and be sure the rest of the team has ample opportunity to chime in.



14 How do you prefer to deliver praise?

Just as people have different preferences about receiving praise, levels of comfort vary when it comes to delivering praise.

What could be perceived as a reluctance to participate in your employee recognition program might actually be discomfort around delivering praise in the public eye.

If this “Getting to Know Your Employees” questionnaire reveals that an employee prefers to deliver praise privately, let them. Ideally, your company has a recognition and reward program that allows users to customize the visibility of each recognition so team members can have as big of an audience as they feel comfortable with.

That said, public praise does drive a bigger impact, so you might point out that suffering through the occasional uncomfortable instance of delivering public praise can have a big impact on the recipient.



15 What’s your favorite way to celebrate a job well done?

Most of these questions are geared toward helping your employees succeed, so you should have a plan in place to celebrate their success when it happens! When your employee reaches a major milestone or wraps up a time-consuming project, refer to their answer on this final question and make a plan to celebrate accomplishments their preferred way. The thoughtfulness of the gesture will make the celebration that much sweeter.




Where to go from here
Depending on the size of your team, customizing your management approach to fit each and every employee will vary. But using this “Getting to Know Your Employees” questionnaire is an excellent way to gain a baseline understanding of the core characteristics that dictate employee performance. When you understand what makes your employees tick, what their major goals are and how they work best, it becomes a lot easier to support their success.

A little more about us:

8m+ employees use our employee engagement solutions

4,500+ clients trust us with their employee engagement strategy

We're in **6+ offices** around the world

Our RG family is **700+ strong** and growing



About Reward Gateway

Reward Gateway helps companies engage, motivate and retain people – every day, all over the world.

Our unified employee engagement hub provides the best of recognition, reward, wellbeing, surveys, benefits and discounts that support talent acquisition, retention and values-driven growth.

Get in touch with us to learn more about Reward Gateway solutions:

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