

Q05. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.

Care About Me

Employees need to know that they are more than just a number. They need to know that someone is concerned about them as people first and as employees second.

Gallup's research indicates that employees don't leave companies; they leave managers and supervisors. Great managers know that it is not enough to put the right people in the right roles. They are aware of their employees' needs and manage with each person's engagement in mind.

In high-turnover companies, teams in the lowest quartile average 22% higher turnover than those in the top quartile. In organizations where resignations are less common, the difference rises to 37%.

When Gallup asked employees what they were thinking about when they responded to this item, employees used words like acceptance, trust, fairness, consistency, understanding and authenticity.



If you truly understand and appreciate each employee's unique strengths, motivations and workplace needs, you can create a caring and productive workplace. A caring environment is one in which each person feels safe — safe enough to experiment, to challenge, to share information and to support others — and in which employees are prepared to give you and the organization the benefit of the doubt. None of this can happen if team members do not feel cared about.

Only 27% of workers strongly agree that they can talk with their manager about nonwork-related issues. Only 37% of workers strongly agree that they can approach their manager with any type of question.

Great managers build caring and respectful relationships at work to strengthen their team's performance.

The most effective managers make each person feel valued, respected and genuinely cared about as a person.

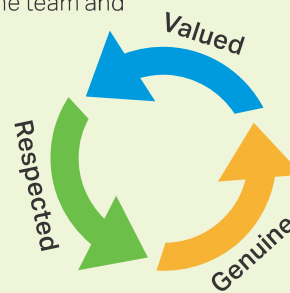
As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do my employees believe I care about them as people?
- ✓ What am I doing to increase my understanding and appreciation of each individual on the team?
- ✓ How do I let team members know that I am here to support them?
- ✓ What can I do to foster a caring work environment?

Three Aspects of a Caring Work Environment

Each person feels like a valued member of the team and organization.

Employees treat one another with respect.



Each person believes that his or her supervisor or manager takes a personal interest in him or her.

Building a Cohesive, Cooperative and Collaborative Team

Each day provides opportunities for your team members to identify ways they can help and support one another. This happens when you encourage cohesion and cooperation among team members and genuine support for one another. When this happens, your team members will start to rely on one another to get work done.

Engaging Conversations

Each person might have a different idea of how someone demonstrates care. The best managers listen to individuals and respond to each one's unique needs. Asking your employees the following questions can help ensure that you learn more about the issues at hand — and, more importantly, discover what they are looking for from you and from others:

- What makes you feel like a valued member of this team? What is your unique contribution to the team?
- What could we do to let our team members know that we care about their accomplishments?
- How do you show your team members that you respect and care about them?
- What could we each do to more effectively set up our team members for success?
- Who cares most about your success?
- Can our customers or internal partners sense an uncaring environment? How does this feeling affect their engagement?

Best Practices

The most effective managers build a culture of cooperation and collaboration by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Reinforce each employee's strengths and the value he or she brings to the team. On a regular basis, tell your employees how and why you value their contributions.
- Treat everyone with respect. Respect their values. Value their opinions.
- Encourage people to share their ideas and opinions with one another.
- Be an active listener. Give your employees plenty of time to share their ideas, frustrations and concerns.
- Greet your employees at the start of each day.
- Encourage your employees to get to know one another. Create opportunities for team members to get to know one another beyond who they are at work.
- Address each person's concerns and model supportive behavior during times of change or turbulence.
- Be supportive, and individualize your approach. Doing these things will help communicate that you are not just focused on the numbers, but that you genuinely care about each person and his or her success.
- Use the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment. Have one-on-one discussions with each person about his or her Clifton StrengthsFinder report. Share your strengths report. This is a great way to build trust. Talk about each employee's talents, strengths and valuable contributions.
- Maintain a calendar of important dates for each individual, such as family members' birthdays, work anniversaries and wedding anniversaries. Send notes to the family members on these occasions.
- Learn more about your employees' lives and their interests. Connect with them on a more personal level.