



Guidance for one-to-one meetings. The Latham 121 Approach

One-to-one meetings (121's) are common in industry to check-in with employees wellbeing and progress at work. It is something that was used by a few schools in the [ASE SOS pilot project](#). Andy Latham from Dorothy Stringer School developed and used this approach successfully. In memory of Andy, we are calling this the 'Latham 121 Approach'. Holding 121 meetings is demanding on time, but can have a significant impact on staff well-being, job satisfaction and career intentions.

What?

- A short meeting that is an informal chat between a head of department and each member of staff.
- The meeting focus is decided by the staff member, with a focus on how they are professionally and personally.
- These are completely separate to performance management meetings.

Why?

- Having an opportunity to talk on a personal and professional level to each member of staff.
- Developing a holistic view of the needs and pressures on the staff in your departments.
- Being able to keep your finger on the pulse of the department and intervene where necessary. Often useful for 'nipping issues in the bud'.

How?

The meeting takes place for 20-30 minutes, with opening questions such as: How are you? What's going well? What challenges do you face? (and what would help?). Sometimes the focus of the meeting could be decided in advance, tackling issues highlighted in the key RISE Project areas (job satisfaction, work life balance, career development).

Where?

- Somewhere neutral, quiet and where you will not be disturbed.

When?

- This can be time consuming, so it needs to be offered in a sustainable way.

Suggested approach

Depending on the size of department aim to have met every member of staff within the first term (six weeks). That would be one or two meetings a week. For larger departments, over the first two terms, 12 weeks, or divide the meetings between other colleagues with managerial roles. Then offer them in an ad hoc fashion over the rest of the year. Perhaps have a space in your diary/timetable where these can take place regularly, where staff can sign up on a needs basis?

Points to note:

- These should not be compulsory for staff to attend.
- They should be confidential
- No formal record of the meeting should be kept, but anonymised notes may be useful for follow up.