

5 Questions Every Leader Should Be Asking Right Now

A practical guide for checking in with empathy.

Today's headlines are heavy. From global unrest to economic uncertainty, people are carrying more than we can see. Your employees are navigating compounding stress from the world around them on top of everyday pressures at work and home.

As a leader, empathy isn't about having all the answers, it's about creating space for humanity. Use this simple guide to have a sincere check-in that says: I see you. I care. I'm here to help how I can.

5 Powerful Questions to Help you Lead with Empathy and Check in with Care

1. How are you really doing right now, and what do you need more or less of from me?

This creates room for vulnerability, not just status updates. It invites your team member to name emotional, logistical, or work-related needs.

2. Are there any recent events in the world or at work that are weighing on you?

With so much happening (from ICE Raids, political turmoil to global crises), acknowledging the emotional impact of current events signals awareness and care.

3. What could make our team feel more connected, supported, or safe right now?

Consider what actions or behaviors could be adjusted across the team. This helps identify opportunities to improve culture and psychological safety across the board.

4. Is there anything we're doing or not doing that feels out of alignment with our values?

Holding space for accountability is a key leadership skill. This question empowers team members to name gaps between intention and impact.

5. What's something bringing you joy or giving you hope right now?

Consider closing on a more uplifting note. The big and small moments of joy help sustain us during difficult times.

Pro Tips:

- **Give a Heads Up:** Let them know you'd like to have a check in given everything going on right now. Share the questions in advance so they're prepared to answer.
- **Be Vulnerable:** Start by sharing how you're feeling and how the current macro-environment is impacting you. Include any personal life updates that are top of mind for you as well. In the Trust-Vulnerability Loop, someone has to go first. Lead by example.
- **Provide Context:** Building trust and genuine relationships take time. If this is the first time you're asking these types of questions, provide context as to why you're asking them now. Ex. "I'd like to have more intentional check-ins with the team".