



It's About People, Not Process  
[oa.mo.gov/engage](https://oa.mo.gov/engage)

## ENGAGE: What Not to Do 2

### **Don't forget to link ENGAGE back to a team member's role and responsibilities and how they can get better at them**

Supervisor: So Matt, uh thanks for coming to the ENGAGE meeting. First question, what's your favorite color?

Employee: What? Umm..blue!

Supervisor: What's your favorite place to eat at lunch time?

Employee: Oh, I get it! Umm..the Café on High Street. Umm..if you could be any kind of animal, what would it be and why?

Supervisor: Umm..Bear! You know awesome! Yeah! If you could be in any house team on Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, what would you be?

Employee: Hmm...

Just as an employee's role and job responsibilities relate directly to the purpose and strategic goals of an agency or division, they also relate to the employee's professional development. When team members understand what's expected of them, they can better evaluate their own performance and identify ways to improve so that the goals of the agency and the individual are met.

### **Don't confuse daily work assignments and professional development goals**

Employee: So over the next few months I would really like to improve on...

Supervisor: Before we get into that I just want to let you know, you really did a good job pulling those staples for me last week. Umm..one thing, can you put these back in?

Daily work assignments are short-term tasks or responsibilities. Each state employee has dozens of daily or weekly work assignments that they must complete in order for their teams to meet their goals and objectives efficiently and effectively.

Professional development goals, on the other hand, are long-term objectives that each individual employee strives to achieve over the course of their career. Meeting these objectives may require additional training, experience, or a specific course of study.

### **Don't make it bureaucratic or overly formal (e.g. signatures, forms, copies of everything, etc.)**

Employee: Hi, I'm here for my ENGAGE meeting.

Receptionist: Welcome to your ENGAGE meeting with the Lord supervisor.

Employee: Umm..thanks. Can I go on in?

Receptionist: Rule 1, do not make eye contact. Rule 2, do not make eye contact.

Employee: Uh, ok.



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Receptionist: Rule 3, place your ENGAGE notebook into the box of judgment presented to its Lordship, head bowed. Rule 24, you may not leave until the Lordship has reviewed and signed your notebook. Rule 71, he may require a dance as a sign of respect. He prefers the Macarena. I hoped you practiced.

ENGAGE is primarily a conversation between team members and supervisors, not a process of checkmarks and paperwork. While both parties should take notes so that they know what they should be working on between discussions, there is nothing to sign or copy.

### **Don't treat ENGAGE as something above and beyond your regular duties as a supervisor: professional development is a core responsibility of every supervisor**

Supervisor: Hey Matt! Um, just want to let you know I'm so psyched about our ENGAGE meeting today, but, I'm a little busy so I uh went ahead and got the intern. She's going to go ahead and take care of the meeting for us.  
Employee: Wait...wait. What? The intern?  
Supervisor: Yeah, yeah. You'll be fine. You'll be fine. Right. Thanks! See ya!  
Intern: I have no idea what I'm doing.

By taking time to invest in your employees, you will build a positive working environment full of confident, productive team members who want to be at work and are happy to help you and your team meet your goals.

### **Don't try to "wing it." Prepare for your conversation in advance.**

Supervisor: Hey Matt, what's up?  
Employee: I'm here for my ENGAGE meeting.  
Supervisor: Oh yeah. Umm..umm..ok. What do you do?  
Employee: I work for you and uh.  
Employee in background: He's a doctor!  
Employee in background: He's uh a basket weaver! Oh, oh a whale breeder!  
Employee: What?  
Supervisor Nice. Whale breeder. And why is he here?  
Employee in background: He has an irrational fear of peanuts?  
Employee in background: Maybe a fear of the ocean?  
Employee: No!!  
Supervisor: Fear of the ocean. That's works. Arrrrgh matey!

Before your monthly ENGAGE discussion, review your notes from the previous meetings to make sure that you have completed all of your action items. Prepare to discuss any ongoing areas of development or discuss new professional development suggestions with the team member. Have several conversation starters ready to use to get the dialogue flowing.