



Talking with your manager about improving your work

Use this guide if you want to talk with your manager about a small, practical change that could help your work feel more effective, manageable or meaningful.

Job crafting works best when it is practical and discussed early. Your manager can help you explore what is possible, consider impacts on the team and support you to make the change.

Start with your SMART focus area

Which part of SMART is your priority right now? You can strengthen something that's already working well.

Think of one or two options

What small practical change could you test? Changes don't have to be big to be effective.

Ask for a conversation – email template

Subject: Request to discuss a small work design change

Hi [manager name],

I've been reflecting on my work design and I'd like to talk through one area that could be working better: [focus area]. I have some ideas for small changes we could test and would appreciate your input. Could we schedule 30 minutes to discuss this?

Thanks,

[Your name]

Have the conversation and agree on one small change to test

You could discuss:

- What is working well?
- What could be improved?
- What change could we test?
- What support is needed?
- How will we know if it helped?

Review and keep what works

After you have tested the change, check whether it helped. You could ask:

- What worked well?
- What was harder than expected?
- Should we keep, adjust or stop the change?
- Is there another small change worth trying?



Quick conversation guide

If your focus is	You could say	Small changes you could try
Stimulating work When you want more interest, variety or challenge in your work	- I'd like to explore one small change that might make my work feel more engaging. - I'd like to discuss ways to use more of my strengths and interests in my work.	- Take on a stretch task. - Spend time on an activity that uses your strengths, skills or interests. - Mix routine tasks with more varied or challenging work across the week.
Mastery When you want more clarity, better feedback or greater confidence in your work	- I'd like more clarity on what your expectations are and how you think I'm tracking. - I'd appreciate more feedback on my work so I can focus on what's important. What do you think this could look like?	- Ask for feedback on a recent piece of work and identify one area to improve or refine. - Clarify expectations for a task or responsibility. - Schedule a regular check-in on progress or priorities.
Agency When you want more control over how, when or where you work, or greater input into decisions that affect your work	- I think having more control over how I approach this work would help me work more effectively. - I'd like more opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect my work. Where could I have greater input?	- Agree on where you have flexibility in how work is completed. - Trial a different way of organising or sequencing your work. - Identify decisions you can make independently within your role.
Relational When you want stronger working relationships, more support, better collaboration or greater connection with others	- I'd like to feel more connected to the team and the broader work we're contributing to. - I'd like more opportunities to share ideas, seek support and learn from others. What options could we explore?	- Schedule short catchups with colleagues or stakeholders you work with regularly. - Join a community of practice, network or cross-team working group. - Work with a colleague on a task or project.
Tolerable demands When workload, pace or competing priorities are making work feel pressured or difficult to manage sustainably	- I'd like to talk about my workload and priorities to make sure they're realistic and manageable. - I'm finding it challenging to balance competing demands. Could we talk about what's most important right now?	- Clarify which tasks are highest priority and which can wait. - Identify regular interruptions and discuss ways to minimize them. - Reduce or suspend lower-value tasks during busy periods.