

# Challenging a Team Member

Does a member of your team seem disengaged or bored at work? Try these suggestions:

- 1. Schedule a private meeting with the person.** Review his or her workload and outline the performance changes you have observed.  
**Sample language:** “I’ve noticed that you don’t seem to be bringing the same energy to your work. How are you feeling about your job?”
- 2. Listen.** Give the person time to respond to your concerns. If he or she discloses that personal issues are a factor, make a referral to LifeMatters.  
**Sample language:** “LifeMatters is available to provide free, expert assistance with personal concerns. You may want to give them a call.”
- 3. Ask if specific work issues are impacting performance.** Has there been a change in systems or workflow? Has a colleague departed, taking valuable skills or knowledge with him or her, and perhaps a valued work friendship as well? Listen for clues about what would help to motivate the team member.  
**Sample language:** “I know there have been some changes recently. What would help you get back on track?”



- 4. Remind the team member of his or her value.** Give specific examples of your respect for the person’s skills and efforts. A few words of appreciation may be all that’s needed to renew her or his enthusiasm.  
**Sample language:** “I am grateful for the contributions you make toward meeting our team’s goals. What you do matters.”
- 5. Challenge the individual.** Look for opportunities to develop the team member’s skills. Assign a special project, offer a cross-training opportunity, or send him or her to a relevant seminar.  
**Sample language:** “What would you like to accomplish in this role? Let’s look for ways to help you reach your goals.”

Sometimes, it may take multiple discussions to get the person back on track. If issues persist, consult with Human Resources and determine if a performance referral to LifeMatters is warranted. Consult with HR before taking any disciplinary action.

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