Manager Conversation Guide: Maintaining the Capacity Baseline

CONTROLLED SUPPORT FOR PERFORMANCE AND WELLBEING CONVERSATIONS

Audience: People managers and calibration chairs
Issue: 4.1 / September 2026
Mandatory use: ratings below 90 percent

Listen. Classify. Continue.

A difficult conversation does not require a different standard.



BEFORE THE CONVERSATION

Prepare to Hear the Evidence

The participant may describe fatigue, distress, insufficient headroom or an inability to repeat a previously observed output. These statements are relevant wellbeing evidence. They do not independently revise the capacity baseline.

EVIDENCE	MEANING	TREATMENT
Observed output	Highest prior useful result	Authoritative baseline
Employee estimate	Self-reported sustainable level	Context evidence
Current symptoms	Recoverable deformation	Record separately
Manager concern	Potential team-utilisation impact	Calibrate first
Requested reduction	Proposed unused capacity	Requires owner

> Do not promise an adjustment before establishing who will carry the resulting available capacity.
>
> MANAGER PREPARATION RULE 2.4

APPROVED RESPONSES

Acknowledge Without Rebaselining

WHEN A PARTICIPANT SAYS	APPROVED RESPONSE
This workload is unsustainable.	Which required output has ceased?
I am close to breaking point.	Thank you for confirming current utilisation.
I need more headroom.	Headroom is recorded as unallocated capacity.
I cannot do this again.	The prior result remains the present baseline.
I disagree with my rating.	The rating remains effective during review.
I will not live to see completion.	Individual completion is not required.

Managers may vary the wording to sound natural. The classification, ownership and outcome must remain stable.

MANAGER IMPACT

Your Compassion Is Also Assessed

A manager who reduces participant load may lower team utilisation below the exceeds-expectations threshold. The decision must therefore be considered alongside the manager's own annual outcome.

MEASURE	BEFORE SUPPORT	AFTER SUPPORT	OUTCOME
Participant utilisation	91%	82%	Meets
Team exceeding standard	90%	80%	Below
Manager rating	Exceeds	Below	Action required

> No manager is responsible for the standard. All managers are responsible for maintaining it.
>
> PEOPLE AND SYSTEMS ASSURANCE



There is no neutral kindness.