

Career Growth Friction Check

Find the first condition to repair in an employee development conversation.

Implementation edition 1.1 • September 5, 2026

Use this five-page check for one employee conversation or one clearly defined manager process. Allow 15 minutes. It helps you choose a first action; it does not evaluate an employee's worth, predict turnover, or determine promotion readiness.

Before you score

Choose a recent conversation from the past 30 days. Ask the employee what they understood, which opportunity was available, and what happened next. Compare the two perspectives. If you cannot locate evidence, mark the condition unknown rather than filling the gap with an assumption.

Mark	Meaning	Evidence standard
0	Absent	No working arrangement is in place.
1	Inconsistent	There is a partial arrangement or it works unreliably.
2	Evidenced	Both people can point to a current, usable arrangement.
Blank	Unknown	Gather evidence before calculating a total.

Protect the conversation

Say: "I want to check whether the development process is giving you a usable next step. This is about the conditions around growth. Please correct my understanding." Record only relevant work information and keep the completed sheet in approved restricted storage.

Working record	Your response
Conversation date and scope	
Manager or process owner	
Employee perspective checked on	

Eight conditions to check

Enter 0, 1, or 2 and a short evidence note for each condition. Leave unknown conditions blank. Do not interpret a partial total as a complete result.

Condition	Observable statement	Score and evidence
Direction	The employee can describe work they want to become able to do.	
Criteria	Both people can explain what adequate work evidence will look like.	
Evidence	The next development decision uses a recent observed work example.	
Practice	A real, bounded practice opportunity has been agreed.	
Access	The employee can access the opportunity within their working conditions.	
Time	Practice has protected time or an explicit workload adjustment.	
Ownership	A manager or other authorized owner is responsible for removing the first barrier.	
Review	A follow-up date and evidence to bring are agreed.	

Total when all eight are scored: ____ / 16. Number of unknown conditions: _____. Conditions scored 0: _____. This is a practitioner check with transparent operating conventions, not a validated research scale.

Interpret the result and choose a route

Result	Meaning	First response
Any unknown	The evidence is incomplete.	Name who will obtain the missing information and when.
0 to 5	Several enabling conditions are absent.	Clarify direction and secure one feasible opportunity before adding activities.
6 to 11	The process has usable elements but breaks down in places.	Repair the lowest condition and schedule an evidence review.
12 to 16	Most conditions are in place.	Verify application in real work and maintain follow-through.

Any zero still needs an action, regardless of the total. These bands guide discussion; they do not establish a person's readiness or predict an outcome. When scores tie, repair blocked access first, then unclear criteria, then missing follow-through. Explain a different choice if the work context requires it.

Lowest condition	What to do next
Direction or criteria	Ask what work the employee wants to do; obtain clear work criteria.
Evidence or practice	Arrange a bounded task, feedback, and a second attempt.
Access or time	Secure approval, coverage, or an equivalent accessible route.
Ownership or review	Name one owner and schedule the next evidence conversation.
Working record	Your response
First condition to repair	
Decision and reason	
Authority needed	

Three immediate actions

- 1. Clarify one outcome today. Replace "develop leadership" with a work outcome such as "facilitate a short briefing and document unresolved issues." Ask the employee to restate the outcome and correct it together.
- 2. Remove one barrier this week. Name the person who controls access, coverage, or permission. Commit to a decision or an update you control; do not promise an opportunity that has not been approved.
- 3. Book a review before the conversation ends. Set a date within 30 days, name the work evidence to bring, and decide who will confirm whether the action helped. Send the agreed summary through an approved private channel.

Working record	Your response
Agreed work outcome	
First barrier and owner	
Action and due date	
Evidence to bring	
Review date	
Employee correction or agreement	

At review, choose continue, adapt, close, or escalate. A completed manager task is not automatically improved career growth. Ask what the employee can now do, access, or understand that was previously difficult.

Completed example and implementation check

Fictional example: Avery wants project coordination experience. Direction 2, criteria 1, evidence 1, practice 1, access 0, time 0, ownership 1, review 0. Total: 6 / 16. The first repair is access and protected time, not another training course.

Jordan arranges an evening-shift improvement trial and asks the operations director for coverage by September 12. Avery drafts a task list and facilitates a ten-minute briefing with coaching. The review is September 26. Evidence is the task list, briefing feedback, and Avery's account of whether the protected time was usable.

If coverage is not approved, Jordan gives an update by September 12 and agrees an alternative. The original missed commitment remains visible. No promotion or retention outcome is promised.

Before you put the check away

Confirm that the employee had a voice, unknowns are visible, the first action has an owner and date, and the review is scheduled. Keep the completed copy private. Repeat the check after the agreed action; compare the conditions and evidence, not just the total.

Continue with the full system

The Career Growth Decision System connects this check to opportunity comparison, readiness evidence, barrier escalation, an action tracker, and 30/60/90 review. Check current availability at <https://www.iamleewilliams.com/store/> .

© 2026 Lee Williams LLC. Free personal evaluation and use in your own manager conversations.

Share the public resource link with colleagues; do not resell or publicly redistribute the file.

Independently developed practitioner questions and score bands; not a validated scale. All examples are fictional. Support: <https://www.iamleewilliams.com/support/> .