SOEN 6841 - Fall 2023
Software Project Management

"Help Yourself to Better One-on-Ones"
Topic Analysis and Synthesis

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1 Abstract

One-on-one meetings are a cornerstone of effective engineering team management, often viewed from a managerial perspective. However, this report shifts the focus to the engineer-driven nature of these meetings. It explores strategies for engineers to maximize the value of one-on-ones, emphasizing the importance of agendas, career goal discussions, and open communication about emotions. The report aligns with industry-standard frameworks and adopts a nonlinear approach through a distributed version control system. By synthesizing insights from various sources, this report aims to enhance key skills in software project management.

2 Introduction

2.1 Motivation

The motivation behind this analysis stems from the recognition of the vital role one-on-one meetings play in the software engineering landscape. By instilling and validating essential skills such as abstracting, analyzing, and communicating, this report seeks to empower engineers to actively contribute to these critical meetings.

2.2 Problem Statement

While managerial perspectives on effective one-on-one meetings abound, there's a gap in recognizing the engineer's role in driving these interactions. This report addresses the need for engineers to take ownership and actively contribute to making these sessions more valuable.

2.3 Objectives

The primary objectives are to enhance engineers' skills in communication, critical thinking, and decision-making during one-on-one meetings. By focusing on these objectives, the report aims to contribute to healthier team dynamics and improved project management.

3 Background Material

3.1 Understanding the Importance of One-on-One Meetings

One-on-one meetings stand as a unique platform for engineers to engage in meaningful conversations with their managers. These interactions transcend traditional status updates, offering a dedicated space to discuss career goals, express emotions, and address concerns in a secure and open environment.

3.2 Current Literature on Effective One-on-One Meetings

Existing literature predominantly focuses on the managerial perspective of one-on-ones. While this provides valuable insights, there's a lack of guidance on how engineers can actively shape and contribute to these meetings. This report aims to bridge this gap by synthesizing relevant information and presenting a comprehensive guide for engineers.

4 Methods Methodology

4.1 Approach to Analyzing One-on-One Meetings

The analysis adopts a systematic and iterative approach, leveraging a distributed version control system on GitHub to track the evolution of recommendations and strategies. This nonlinear method allows for continuous improvement and adaptation.

4.2 Techniques Used in Analysis of One-on-One Meetings

The analysis adopts a systematic and iterative approach, leveraging a distributed version control system on GitHub to track the evolution of recommendations and strategies. This nonlinear method allows for continuous improvement and adaptation.

5 Results obtained

5.1 Conditions for Effective One-on-One Meetings

Through the analysis, it becomes evident that effective one-on-one meetings require proactive engagement from engineers. Bringing a preplanned agenda, discussing career goals, and openly expressing emotions create a conducive environment for meaningful conversations. The report emphasizes the importance of structuring these meetings for focused discussions.

5.2 Constraints in Implementing Recommendations

Although the ideas are meant to improve the quality of one-on-one meetings, there may be practical obstacles that prevent them from being implemented smoothly. Engineers and managers have obstacles to overcome, including time restraints, managing staff, and shifting team dynamics.

5.3 Quality Assessment of One-on-One Meetings

The quality of one-on-one meetings is subjective and context-dependent. The report encourages engineers to actively participate in shaping the format of these meetings, emphasizing the importance of holding managers accountable for follow-ups and actions discussed during these sessions.

6 Conclusions and Future Works

7 References