

Stay Conversations

Welcome! This page provides guidance and questions people managers can use to conduct effective stay conversations to engage and retain their employees.

What are they?

Stay Conversations are 1:1 conversations between you and your direct reports with the purpose of learning more about what motivates them, their career interests and overall job satisfaction. These conversations will help you identify individual retention risks and the strategies to address them.

✓ BENEFITS

- Increases engagement and [motivates employees to stay](#) with Atlassian
- Provides specific information you can use to **target issues** causing retention risk
- Increases **productivity and performance**
- Identifies retention risks early so you can **plan ahead**
- **Fosters trust** through open and honest communication

5 Key Questions

Stay Conversations are most effective when repeated regularly, with follow-up and next steps. You can incorporate these conversations into your standing 1:1s, Quarterly Check-Ins, or schedule a one-off meeting specifically to cover these questions.

During the conversation your goal is to understand how you can provide more of what they need and want from their work. Curiosity is an essential tool for digging deeper to learn how to best motivate and engage your employees.

Below are 5 key questions to ask during your Stay Conversation. Feel free to modify the language to work for you. You do not need to ask every follow-up probing question.

Question	Follow-up probing questions
What are you learning here at Atlassian, and what do you want to learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there anything else you'd like to be learning here but are not?• Do you feel like you can advance your career here if you want to?• Which other jobs here or elsewhere look attractive to you?• What skills would you have to learn to position yourself for that job/s?• How can I help you learn these skills in your current role?
Why do you stay at Atlassian?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell me more about why this/these reasons are so important to you.• If you narrowed your reasons to stay to just one, what would it be?
When you get ready for work each day, what things do you look forward to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you like most about working here?• What parts are the most challenging?• What do you like least about working here?
When was the last time you thought about leaving our team? What prompted it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does this still concern you?• On a scale from one to ten with ten being "I'm staying for the foreseeable future" and one being, "I'm leaving ASAP," how would you rate your intention to leave?• What's the single most meaningful action I could take to address this issue?

What can I do to make your experience at work better for you?

- What should I do more of? Less of? What do I do that frustrates you?
- What are three ways I can be a better manager for you?
- Do you feel like I truly hear your concerns when you have them?

▼ Conversation Tips

Conversation Tips

1. PLAN AHEAD

The best way to ensure that you conduct a successful stay conversation is to prepare beforehand. You could use an upcoming quarterly check-in, and existing 1:1, or set up a new meeting expressly for this purpose.

- Schedule the meeting ahead of time to set expectations on the importance of the conversation.
- Inform your team member of the reason behind the conversation and the general idea of what you will be talking about.
- Think through possible directions the conversation could take and prepare follow-up questions.

2. SET THE SCENE

Open the conversation with a reminder of the purpose and an acknowledgment that it will be a two-way exchange. Customize the opening to the employee. You may want to use the following (or similar) opening: *"I would like to have an informal talk with you to find out if you intend to stay with Atlassian so I can understand what I can do to support you and make this a great place to work, particularly on any issues within my control."*

3. MAINTAIN TRUST

Trust between the managers and employees is highly correlated to employee retention, and is critical for an effective stay conversation.

- Where trust may be an initial concern, start with less invasive or sensitive questions.
- Make sure follow-up actions from the stay conversation benefit the your team member and do not negatively impact trust.

4. PLAN TO FOLLOW-UP

Close the meeting with a plan for following up. Schedule the next conversation right then. Put a date on the calendar for the next step, and make it happen.

- Create an action plan following the initial conversation and determine:
 - What you will do
 - What your team member will do
 - When the action items should be accomplished
 - The next meeting date to follow up
- Aim to address at least one identified employee issue is closely following the conversation
- When taking actions be sure to let your team member know that they are a direct result of their suggestions and responses.
- Report general themes that are of concern to your manager or HR Partner.

Wrap up the meeting with the following statement like: *"I appreciate you sharing your thoughts with me today. I am committed to doing what I can to make this a great place for you to work."*