



# APPROACHABLE LEADERSHIP® WORKSHOP

## Session One

### Course Description

The Approachable Leadership® Workshop begins the approachability journey. This **three-session, virtual learning experience** gives leaders a chance to dive deep into the behaviors and skills that set Approachable leaders apart from the rest. Leaders will learn that satisfaction and engagement are a result of doing stuff, and how leaders who create the right space work with employees who want to do that stuff every day. During each session participants **practice and coach others** on behaviors that work – and we'll have some fun practicing those that don't.

Approachable leaders produce better business results and enjoy a higher quality of life.

### Session One Learning Objectives:

- Recognize the importance of **approachability** in leadership.
- Identify the role **power distance** plays in work relationships and demonstrate ways to reduce power distance.
- Apply the three components of the Approachability window – **Be open, understand and support.**
- Demonstrate approachability by **practicing openness** behaviors.

**SUPPORT.**  
**CONNECT.**  
**THRIVE.**

your turn!

#ApproachableLeadership

### Everyday Leaders

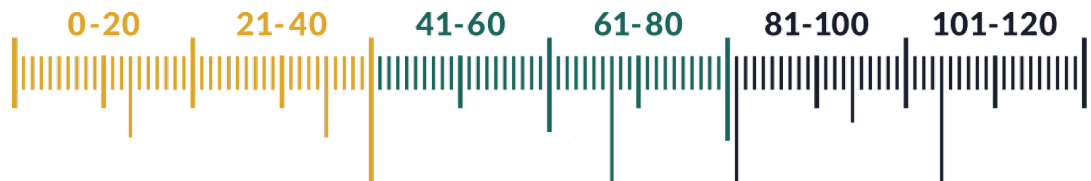
**Your Leader?**

**Why?**

**Two behaviors you admire?**



### Hofstede's Power Distance Index



**Low Power Distance**  
*Relationship Focused*

**High Power Distance**  
*Position/Authority Focused*

your turn!



Power Distance Gap  
Two ways you can shrink the gap?

- 1.
- 2.

## THE CONNECTION MODEL

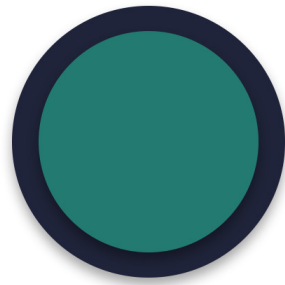
# The Approachable Leadership<sup>®</sup> Connection Model



**Be Open**  
right space



**Understand**  
right feeling



**Support**  
right action

Approachable Leadership Defined...

Connecting with another by  
being *welcoming*, and *seeking to*  
*understand* and (if possible) meet  
their *needs* and *desires*.

Approachable Behaviors	Unapproachable Behaviors
1 Available when needed	A. Not available
2 Makes time to talk	B. Too busy to talk
3 Cares how others are doing	C. Doesn't care about others
4 Shows interest in others	D. Not interested in others
5 Hears others all the way out	E. Interrupts and takes over
6 Does not cut off others	F. Cuts others off
7 Follows through on commitments	G. Doesn't follow through
8 Glad to see others	H. Feels like others are an interruption
9 Wants to hear questions or concerns	I. Not interested in questions or concerns
10 Wants to hear suggestions or opinions	J. Not interested in suggestions or opinions
11 Makes sure others have what they need	K. Doesn't care if others need resources
12 Asks others how to make the job better	L. Doesn't care if work is frustrating
13 Talks to others about their progress	M. Doesn't care about the progress of others
14 Tells others how they are doing	N. Doesn't tell others how they are doing
15 Open to new ideas	O. Not open to new ideas
16 Pushes others to do their best	P. Doesn't push others to do their best
17 Believes in others and expects a lot	Q. Doesn't seem to believe in others
18 Does what they say they'll do	R. Doesn't do what they say they'll do
19 Reliable	S. Unreliable
20 Positive and Encouraging	T. Negative and discouraging
21 Listens well	U. Doesn't listen
22 Cares about the personal lives of others	V. Doesn't care about personal lives of others
23 Doesn't play favorites, is consistent	W. Plays favorites, is inconsistent
24 Easy to find	X. Hard to find

**My Two Strengths:**

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**My Two Opportunities:**

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## One on One Guide

One on One Agenda

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKING IN \_\_\_\_\_

How are you doing?



I'm great!

Doing good

Could be better

Not good

How are you doing since we last talked?

What went well?

\_\_\_\_\_

Any challenges?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHERE ARE WE GOING? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Needs

What do you need?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What would make work better?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What's next?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How Can I Help?

What do you need from me?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How can I make work better?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How can I help you get where you're going?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you want to work on over the next 30 days?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

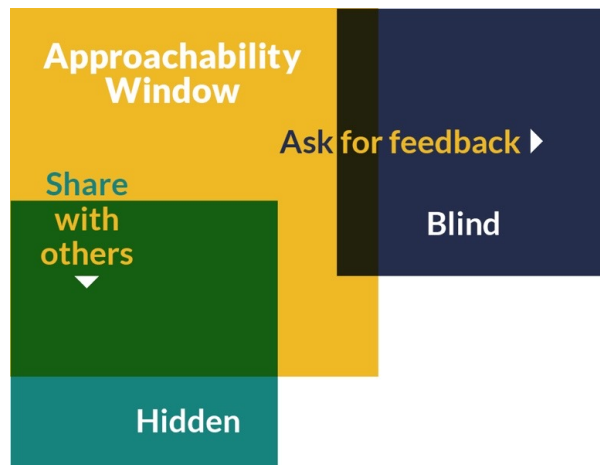
## Approachability Window Tool

Many are slow to trust people in power. This creates a “power distance gap.” Approachable leaders use the *Approachability Window Tool* to shrink the gap.

### CHECKING IN

#### Tool in Brief Approachability Window

The goal of this tool is to improve relationships by revealing more about yourself and seeking feedback. When you don't seek feedback you create blind spots. When you don't share with others, you close them out. This may cause them to withdraw.



### TOOL IN PRACTICE

#### Tips to Encourage Feedback

1. **Encourage feedback.** Sincerely ask for input.
2. **Stop/Start.** What should I start doing? What should I stop doing?
3. **Stress the value of the feedback.** Why is it important? Why is this person uniquely able to provide it?
4. **LISTEN!** Use our *Active Listening Tool* to make sure you do a good job of listening. This by itself encourages feedback.
5. **Don't be defensive!** Accept the feedback, be open-minded and reflect on it. Thank them – it's a gift!

#### Tips to Grow Relationships

1. **Take your time** – sharing too much too soon can be worse than not sharing. Go slow.
2. **Ask questions.** Don't interrogate but show interest and learn as much as you can.
3. When you share with someone **mention the relationship** – “I don't tell everyone this, but we are close so I'll tell you...”
4. **Be empathetic** (don't one-up, offer unsolicited advice, etc.) Use our *Empathy Toolkit*.
5. **Don't share secrets.**
6. **Acknowledge and appreciate** if they reveal something new.

## Recognize Approachability Tool

CHECKING IN

### The Connection Model



TOOL IN PRACTICE

#### Right Space

- Physical space: Welcoming? Inviting? Open door? Comfortable place to sit?
- Warmth: Genuinely glad? Appropriate touch? Eye contact? Body language?
- Availability: Make time to meet? Walk around to others' space? Keep appointments?
- Present: Limit distractions? Single tasking? Sole focus on the individual?

#### Right Feeling

- Stop: Full stop. Eliminate distractions. Reschedule if not able to give complete attention.
- Listen: Use *Active Listening* Tool. Show you are listening, provide nonjudgmental feedback.
- Confirm understanding: You feel [emotion] because of [reason]. Do I have that right?
- Gestalt mindset: Empathy. No advice. Share experience of similar emotion (don't "one-up").

#### Right Action

- Solution-focused questions: How do we solve? Who can help? What's our goal?
- Follow up tool: Use *Right Action* Tool. Inbox always with you. Routinely empty. Schedule.
- Follow up rule: Touch only once. Do it now. Return calls and emails on schedule.
- Get help: Accountability partner. Reminder if not back when promised.

During the Workshop we learn the 3 Questions of Approachable Leaders. Those are a starting point. This tool helps you adapt the 3 Questions to your workplace.

## The 3 Questions Tool

### CHECKING IN



### The Three Questions (and their assumptions)

**Do you have what you need?**

*Nobody wakes up hoping to do a crappy job.*

**What would make work better?**

*My job as a leader is to reduce friction.*

**Where are you going?**

*People want to make progress.*

### TOOL IN PRACTICE

#### Do you have what you need?

##### Other ways to ask:

- How's it going?
- You need anything?
- Everything good?
- You're crushing it today!
- How am I doing?

*This is the resource question. Can you ask it in a way that is suitable to your workplace?*

##### How else can you ask?

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#### What would make work better?

##### Other ways to ask:

- Anything in your way?
- What's your best new idea?
- Can you think of a better way?
- What would you change?
- Anything new?

*This is the innovation question. Can you ask it in a way that is suitable to your workplace?*

##### How else can you ask?

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#### What's next?

##### Other ways to ask:

- You learning anything new?
- What's your next move?
- Applying for a promotion?
- What are you proud of?
- Any new "highlight reel" work?

*This is the progress question. Can you ask it in a way that is suitable to your workplace?*

##### How else can you ask?

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People often behave differently than we expect. Our unconscious biases attempt to explain behavior we don't understand in our own terms, and we must fight this tendency.

## CHECKING IN

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### Tool in Brief

- **Report** what you observed – **FACTS ONLY**
- **Walk a Mile** consider different perspectives; “Nobody thinks they are the villain.”
- **Confirm** discuss and validate your interpretation with the other person; assume positive intent; “You feel \_\_\_ because of \_\_\_. Do I have that right?”

## TOOL IN PRACTICE

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Use the Report/Walk a Mile/Confirm prompts below and complete with as much detail as you can. Use the back side if needed.

**Report the Facts:** Describe FACTS not motive or feelings; remain neutral and exact

### Key Questions

What happened first, second, third?  
Who was involved?  
Exactly what did you observe?  
How did each person behave?  
Did anyone else observe what happened?

**Walk a Mile:** Consider other perspectives; attribute positive motive to those involved.

### Key Questions

What different ways explain the behavior?  
What assumptions am I making?  
What is the best possible reason it happened?  
How would I feel if I was in their shoes?  
What if this was your wife, child, or parent?

**Confirm understanding:** Validate feelings; reconcile perspectives; assume positive intent

### Key Questions

How do I think they are feeling?  
Why do I think they feel that way?  
Is this the best possible explanation?  
Have I confirmed their feelings?  
Have I missed anything?

Power distance gaps cause major problems. But how can you tell if there is a gap? This tool helps you recognize behavior that suggests a power distance problem.

### CHECKING IN

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#### Tool in Brief

- **Physical Gaps** physical avoidance behavior can suggest a gap
- **Verbal Gaps** mitigated or indirect speech may express power distance
- **Behavioral Gaps** many times actions speak louder than words – watch for gaps between what someone says and what they do

### TOOL IN PRACTICE

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Use the tool to recognize signals of power distance. When you notice one use the discussion starters to help shrink the gap.

#### Physical Gaps

- Physical distance, turned toward an “exit”
- Avoiding eye contact, looking at ceiling
- Closed body language (arms crossed)
- Distracted, seems lost in thought
- Holding back or agitated body language

#### Behavioral Gaps

- Promising one thing, doing another
- No follow through or follow up
- Passive aggressive actions
- Being “too busy” or procrastinating
- “Changing mind” about importance of issue

#### Verbal Gaps... These are the most recognizable signals of power distance

- Watch for mitigated speech like **hints** (“I wonder if...”); **preference** (“perhaps we should...”); **question** (“do you think \_\_\_ would work?”); or **team suggestion** (“why don’t we try \_\_\_?”)
- Look for attempts to “sugarcoat” or downplay bad news
- Being overly polite or deferential
- Quickly deferring, backing down when rejected by someone in power

#### Discussion Starters... Once you notice a gap, try this to close it

“You seem uncomfortable. It’s OK – I really want to know what you think.”

“I’m not 100% sure what I think about this myself. Tell me what you really think.”

“OK, that’s what I do [name behavior] when I’m not sure if I should say something. What’s up?”

“I need your help. Can you be honest and tell me exactly what you think about this?”

“I may be completely off base here, I don’t know. Can you tell me what you really think?”

The first cornerstone of Approachable Leadership® is to be welcoming and create the right space. This tool provides practical tips on how to be available, warm and present.

### CHECKING IN

#### Right Space is created by:

- Physical Space
- Availability
- Warmth
- Presence

### The Connection Model



### TOOL IN PRACTICE

Use the tool to identify opportunities to improve your physical space, your behavior, your availability and your presence.

#### Physical Space

- Is the physical space inviting and warm?
- Comfortable place to sit?
- No obstacles between (same side of desk)?
- Personal objects or discussion starters?
- Is it quiet? Can it be private?
- Is there a reason to visit? Food works great - so do games.

#### Availability

- Available to meet when needed?
- Do you block scheduled "drop in" time?
- Convenient way to schedule time on your calendar?
- Do you allow interruptions for emergency situations?
- Do you "advertise" ways to meet with you?

#### Warmth

- Are you welcoming and neighborly?
- Are you smiling? Remember you smile with your eyes.
- Have you asked open-ended questions?
- Are you doing more than half the talking? Shut up.
- How are they feeling? Are they comfortable?
- What do they need?

#### Presence

- Full stop. Give full attention.
- Put away your phone, close your laptop. No distractions.
- Close your door or signal to others that you are in a meeting.
- Listen actively. Don't try to think of what you'll say next.
- Summarize what you've heard and confirm understanding.
- No problem solving till asked.

# AL Approachable Leadership®

## Active Listening Tool

A cornerstone habit of Approachable Leadership® is active listening. Without this skill there is no way to achieve understanding. This tool provides practical tips on how to improve your active listening skills.

### CHECKING IN

#### Active Listening:

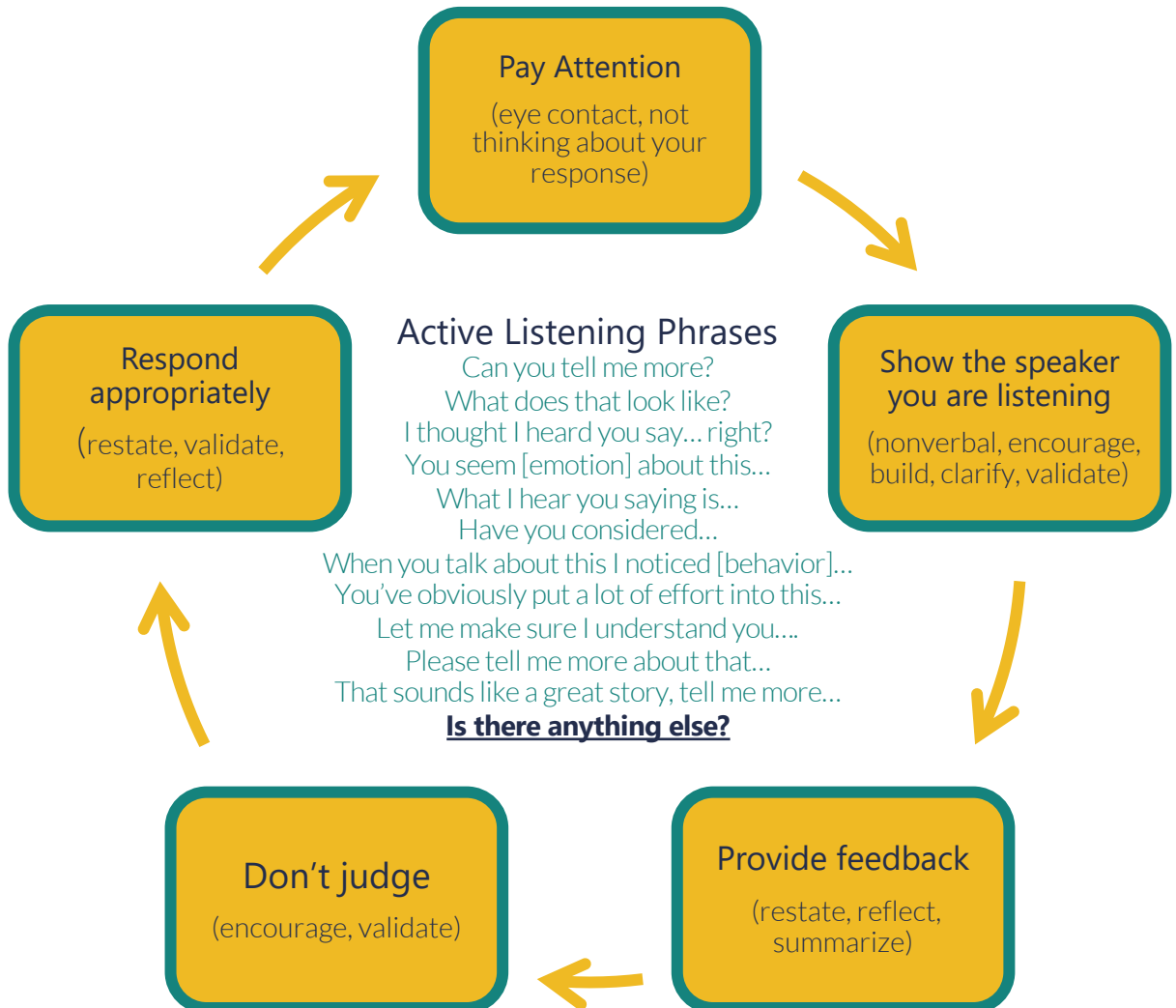
- Pay Attention
- Listening Behavior
- Feedback
- No Judgment
- Respond

### The Connection Model



### TOOL IN PRACTICE

Use the tool to identify opportunities to improve your active listening skills.



Empathy is hard. Leaders often feel like they need to have all the answers or they'll be seen as weak. Use this tool to help build your empathy skills and grow relationships.

CHECKING IN

Tool in Brief Empathy is the opposite of sympathy. Here is how to express it:



TOOL IN PRACTICE

Use the tool to use the Stop, Listen, Confirm, + Collaborate model.

**Stop. Give your attention, full stop.**

- Put away your phone, close your laptop
- Remove any distractions
- If you can't pay attention reschedule
- Block uninterrupted time to meet
- Close your door – ask for privacy

**Listen. Use active listening skills.**

- Show speaker you are listening
- Provide feedback (summarize, reflect)
- No judgment, encourage more
- Respond appropriately (validate, restate)
- Focus on them – not what you will say next

**Confirm. Make sure you understand the situation and the feeling.**

- “You feel \_\_\_\_\_ because of \_\_\_\_\_. Do I have that right?”
- Give them space to correct your interpretation
- Remain in Gestalt mindset – don't give answers or advice
- Sit with that feeling you just described, think about a time you felt the same way
- Make sure you have confirmed understanding before moving to the next step

**Collaborate. If you are asked, use solution-focused questions to find an answer.**

**Avoid problem-focused questions.**

1. What's wrong?
2. Why do you have this problem?
3. Whose fault is it?
4. How long has this been going on?
5. What is this costing you?
6. Why haven't you overcome this problem?

**Ask solution-focused ones instead.**

1. What result do we really want?
2. When can we start?
3. What do we need to get started?
4. What resources are available?
5. Who can help?
6. What can we start now?

People often behave differently than we expect. Our unconscious biases attempt to explain behavior we don't understand in our own terms, and we must fight this tendency.

## CHECKING IN

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### Tool in Brief

- **Report** what you observed – **FACTS ONLY**
- Consider different perspectives; “Nobody thinks they are the villain.”
- **Confirm** discuss and validate your interpretation with the other person; assume positive intent; “You feel \_\_\_ because of \_\_\_. Do I have that right?”

## TOOL IN PRACTICE

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Use the Report/Perspective Swap/Confirm prompts below and complete with as much detail as you can. Use the back side if needed.

**Report the Facts:** Describe FACTS not motive or feelings; remain neutral and exact

### Key Questions

What happened first, second, third?  
Who was involved?  
Exactly what did you observe?  
How did each person behave?  
Did anyone else observe what happened?

**Hero Assumption:** consider other perspectives; attribute positive motive to those involved.

### Key Questions

What different ways explain the behavior?  
What assumptions am I making?  
What is the best possible reason it happened?  
Could their background have contributed?  
What if this was your spouse, child, or parent?

**Confirm understanding:** Validate feelings; reconcile perspectives; assume positive intent

### Key Questions

How do I think they are feeling?  
Why do I think they feel that way?  
Is this the best possible explanation?  
Have I confirmed their feelings?  
Have I missed anything?

When a complaint surfaces, this is a golden opportunity to reduce frustration for your team. Use the tool to secure advice and buy-in from your team member, and track actions.

**What would make this better?**

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**What is your advice?**

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**What small wins can we identify?**

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**What can I do?**

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## The Win, Know, Show Progress Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKING IN \_\_\_\_\_

**What's Next?** What to improve? Why important or meaningful?

**Win** What's your next small win?

**Know** What's your "right way/wrong way" yardstick?

**Show** What will you show, and to whom, when you're ready?

FOLLOWING UP \_\_\_\_\_

Copy of completed worksheet given to teammate.

Date of follow-up discussion: \_\_\_\_\_

# AL Approachable Leadership®

## Follow-Up Follow-Through Tool

The essential habit of support happens with good follow up and follow through. Lack of follow through destroys trust and credibility. Here are some practical tips to improve your follow up and follow through.

CHECKING IN

Follow-Up and Follow-Through:  
Rules  
Tools  
Habits  
Environment

### The Connection Model



TOOL IN PRACTICE

These are the 6 Key Areas for Follow Up and Follow Through.



Learn numerous other follow-up and follow-through ideas in *The Approachability Playbook* (ALplaybook.com)

### *Follow-Up Rules to Experiment with:*

- Clean up your workspace each day before you leave.
- List your top three to-do items before you leave.
- Empty your in-boxes (physical and virtual) each day and add follow-up items to your to-do list.
- Limit your in-boxes (one physical and one virtual in-box).
- Don't turn on your computer or tablet until you have taken a walk through the work area.
- Only check email at certain times each day.
- Arrive 30 minutes before your team to prepare for day.
- Make follow-up an agenda item for all meetings.
- Follow through on one to-do item before you wake up your computer each time you sit at your desk.
- Add follow-up to your morning or evening routine.

### *Supportive Environment Tools to Experiment with:*

- Use an obvious, physical in-box where people know they can put items they want you to see.
- Use an "Always Around" in-box where you can capture follow-up items (a notebook, notecards, or a phone app are the most common).
- Use a "dictation" app so to-do items can be captured by voice (Siri® can add items to your reminders list or a document by just speaking them into your phone).
- Consider using a "location-aware" to-do app, that can remind you to take an action when you are in a certain location (like picking up a form when you are at the corporate office).
- Use a whiteboard to put your key to-do items, follow-up items, or issue-tracking system.
- Share an Excel® spreadsheet with your team so they can see progress on open items and when items close.

# AL Approachable Leadership®

## Delivering Positive Feedback

Positive feedback ties to our core assumption that **PEOPLE ARE THE HERO IN THEIR OWN STORY**. Positive Feedback confirms what people think about themselves and provides guidance on desired behaviors.

### CHECKING IN

Positive Feedback is not the same thing as

- constructive feedback
- negative feedback
- a feedback sandwich

It takes practice to get it right, but the results are powerful.



### TOOL IN PRACTICE

Use these **5 Principles of Positive Feedback** to make it sincere and relational.

- **Timely:** as close to the observation of the behavior or action as possible.
- **Specific:** name exactly the action or behavior you want to reinforce
- **Behavior:** focus on the action of the employee – not the motivation behind it.
- **Desirable:** it is the *behavior* you want to reinforce, not just the outcome.
- **Repeatable:** it must be something that the employee has control over

Use “I messages” to deliver feedback:

I saw what you did.

Describe the specific behavior.

I appreciate it!

Be sincere.

It's important.

Explain why it matters.

It makes me feel...

How it makes YOU feel is critical to enhancing the relationship.