

# **Title & Total Compensation Project Engaging Your Employees in the TTC Conversation**

**Participant Guide Spring 2021**

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## Agenda

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- Introduction
- Supporting Individuals During Change
- Listening to Understand
- Sharing Your Message

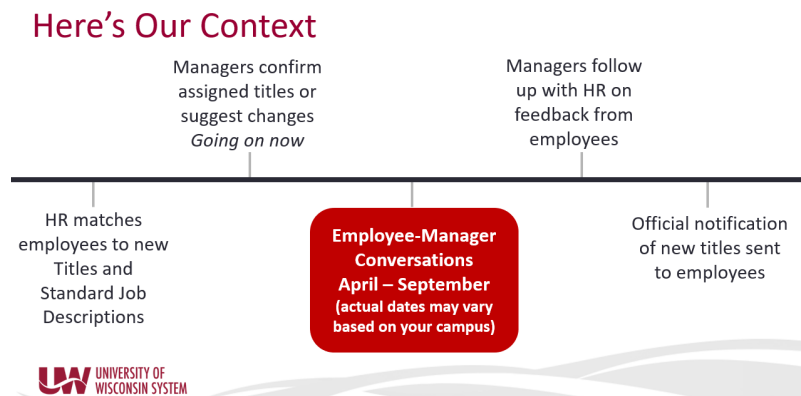
## Resources

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- Your Human Resources contact
- [Title & Total Compensation Project – Online Manager/Supervisor Training](#)
- [Employee-Manager Conversations Toolkit](#)

## The Context

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## Employee Conversations

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Conversations include:

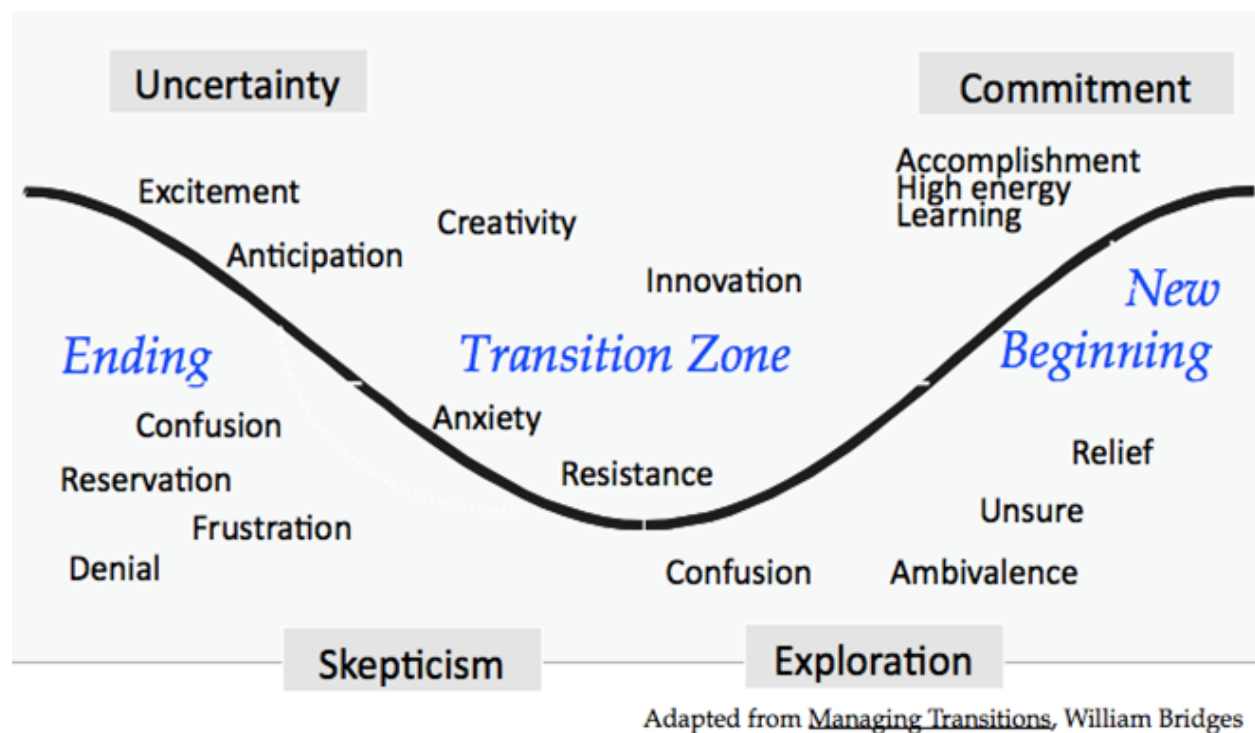
- New job title
- New business title
- New standard job description
- Next steps (there will be supplemental resources for employees who will be switching FLSA exemption status as a result of the project)

Conversations do not include:

- Pay range of new title

## Supporting Change and Transition

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| Phase                  | Feelings                                                                                                  | Ways to Respond and Support                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ending</b>          | Fear/Anxiety<br>Denial<br>Anger/Frustration<br>Sadness<br>Disorientation<br>Hopelessness<br>Sense of loss | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect and accept resistance</li> <li>• Provide information and talk through the changes</li> <li>• Reassure the things that will not change</li> <li>• Encourage sharing of emotions. Listen empathetically and communicate openly</li> <li>• Be open to and available for follow-up conversations. Some people will react immediately, while others may have a delayed reaction and want to talk again</li> </ul> |
| <b>Transition Zone</b> | Confusion/Uncertainty<br>Anxiety<br>Impatience<br>Ambivalence<br>Skepticism<br>Resistance<br>Resentment   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normalize the transition zone</li> <li>• Provide a solid sense of direction with information and resources</li> <li>• Be open to questions and concerns</li> <li>• Provide reassurance emotionally and practically</li> <li>• Allow for collaboration and give agency where you can</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      |
| <b>New Beginning</b>   | Uncertainty<br>Relief<br>Anticipation<br>Energy<br>Engagement<br>Commitment                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reassure your commitment to providing continued support</li> <li>• Pause and reflect on positive outcomes of the changes and intentionally celebrate them with staff</li> <li>• Make connections between changes and employee's personal goals or organizational objectives</li> <li>• Clearly communicate next steps and be open to continued needs</li> </ul>                                                     |

Positive responses during change include:

- Excitement and anticipation for something new and different
- Opportunities for creativity and innovation
- New, higher energy for learning; openness to learning
- Renewed commitment to the role and/or organization
- Feeling a new sense of accomplishment

These responses can be very positive to help influence others in the organization who aren't feeling the same way. Leaders can lean on these people in several ways:

- Ask them to use their positive lens in the role of an advocate for both leadership and employees
- Invite them to assist with training and sharing of information
- Tap their creativity and innovation in the development or updating of new processes
- Reference their accomplishments as success stories and causes for celebration

### Individual Needs during Change

Plot each of your employees on the change curve.

| Employee Name | How might they feel about this change? | What have you seen and heard that suggest they are on this part of the curve? | How can you support and engage them? |
|---------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|               |                                        |                                                                               |                                      |
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## **Listening to Understand**

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Effective conversation:

- Is a dialogue between two or more people
- Starts with listening to understand

### **Reflect**

1. Reflect on an experience when you felt understood. Describe the situation.
2. What did the person say or do to make you feel listened to and understood?
3. What was the impact (on you, on the relationship)?

### **What Is Beneath the Surface?**

As you listen, pay attention to the underlying concerns employees may be expressing.

Examples:

### **Active Listening**

- Is a practice
- Begins with intent
- Includes:
  - Paraphrasing
  - Asking questions to invite sharing
  - Attending to the nonverbal

## **Paraphrasing**

The skill of paraphrasing involves sharing with the speaker in your own words your understanding of the intent of his/her message. This is done in order to make sure that you, as the listener, understand the true meaning of what the speaker is saying.

Paraphrasing is not repeating verbatim what the speaker says, but it is putting into different words the message without changing it. Paraphrasing increases communication accuracy and expresses to the other person that you care about what is being said.

### **Sentence Starters:**

- You feel \_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_.
- Let me see if I get what you're saying...
- It sounds like...
- It seems to me that...
- If I'm hearing you correctly...
- ... Am I understanding you correctly?

## **Asking Questions to Invite Sharing**

Sentence starters to invite sharing:

- What's going on?
- I'd really like to hear your thoughts on this
- Please let me know if you see it differently

Sentence starters to clarify and increase understanding:

- When you say \_\_\_\_, what do you mean by that?
- Can you tell me more?

## **Tips for Nonverbal Communication**

- Face the other person squarely
- Adopt an open posture
- Lean toward the person at times
- Maintain eye contact
- Remain relaxed to help the other person relax



## Practice: Active Listening

**Speaker:** Share your greatest concerns about the project.

**Listener:** Practice listening actively with the intent to understand the concerns. Ask questions to invite sharing. Resist providing solutions, jumping in with your stories and experiences.

**Observer:** Observe. Note the specific words, actions, behavior that demonstrated the listener's intent to listen and understand.

## Sharing Your Message

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### Declare Your Intent

Before the conversation, ask yourself:

- What do I want for myself in this situation?
- What do I want for this employee?
- What do I want for the relationship?

Let your employee know your positive intent and don't leave it to them to infer.

*Example:* "I value the work that you do, and want to make sure your standard job description includes your most important responsibilities."

### Set Expectations

Let employees know what they can expect during the conversation and provide time for them to prepare.

*Examples:*

- Share the [Learning Series: What to Expect During the Employee-Manager Conversation](#) before the conversation
- Share new title and standard job description before the conversation

## **Start with Facts**

There are unknowns and ambiguities during a change process. Affirm what you do know.

*Example:* “We don’t know what your new pay range will be, but I want to assure you that your job is not changing, your pay is not changing, and you will still be working with the same team”

## **Explain How You Arrived at Your Conclusion**

When sharing how you determined title and standard job description, explain how you arrived at your conclusion. What factors did you look at? What facts did you rely on to make the determination?

*Example:* “I looked at these three titles and standard job descriptions when confirming your title, and I thought that this one was the best fit because...”)

## **Ask for Others’ Perspectives**

Recognize that your conclusion may not be completely accurate. Ask questions to invite sharing. Practice active listening.

*Examples:*

- “I’m curious what you think about this title.”
- “What have I missed?”

## **Invite follow up**

Some may need more time to process after meeting. Open the door for them to come back with questions and comments. Set a timeframe so they are aware when decisions have to be finalized.

*Example:* “Let me know if you think of other questions later. I’ll be sending the standard job description to HR for their final approval next Tuesday. If you have more thoughts on what the standard job description should include, let me know before then so we can talk about it.”

## **Follow Through with Commitments**

If you commit to something during the conversation—seeking answers to questions, requesting a different title or edits to the standard job description—follow through and let them know the outcome. Even if you were not able to get a definitive answer or a requested change does not work out, letting them know that you followed through builds trust.

## Practice Your Message

Review [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and select two questions that you anticipate from your employees.

How would you respond to these questions in a way that is helpful for your employees?

What else do you need to feel ready for this conversation? What steps will you take to prepare?

## Additional Resources

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- [Project website](#)
- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler (2012)