

MASTERING ONE-TO-ONES: A FEMALE ENGINEER'S GUIDE TO GETTING RESULTS



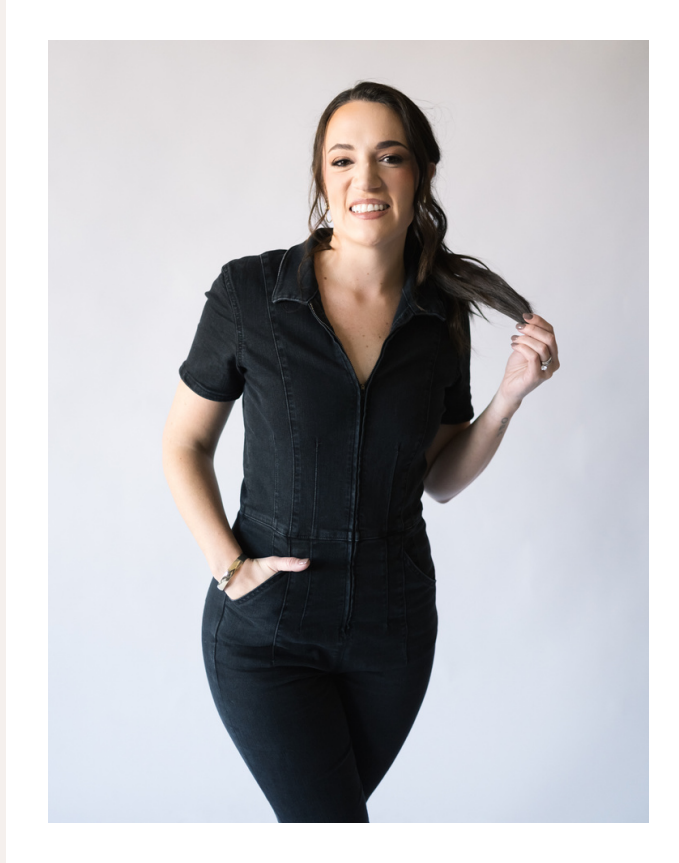
Do you keep having one to ones with your boss that fall flat? This guidebook will help you take control over the meeting from beginning to end. You'll leave with answers, clarity, & a path forward. This is client tested & approved.

HANNAH BURNS DUNHAM

CLIMBING TREES CONSULTING

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climbing trees consulting



WHO AM I?

I am the owner of Climbing Trees Consulting, a 1-person business focused on supporting female engineers through my 12-week, one-on-one coaching program.

I have taken my 10 years of experience in pulp & paper manufacturing, Industrial & Organizational Psychology training, & client research to compile this guide. It works! I'm so glad to share it with you.

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WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Before the one-to-one

- when to have a one-to-one
- setting the agenda
- determining your non-negotiables
- hyping yourself up

During the one-to-one

- staying on track & not getting derailed
- managing your emotions
- specifics of an action plan
- bonus tips!

After the one-to-one

- follow up email template
- progress check-ins

BEFORE THE ONE-TO-ONE

WHEN TO SCHEDULE A ONE-TO-ONE

I'm sure your company has some sort of process for feedback. That could be yearly, or maybe more often. But that doesn't mean that you can't request feedback more regularly if you need it. In fact, you absolutely should. Here are some hints that it might be time to schedule a meeting:

- At your last meeting, you were told to "keep doing what you're doing," or some other unhelpful feedback.
- You are lacking clarity as far as your next promotion, or salary raise.
- You were given negative (or neutral) feedback with no actionable steps to overcoming it, and you need answers.
- Your personal circumstances (life, family, mental health) have changed, and you feel the need to update your boss/need support from them to navigate it.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Whether or not your boss sets an agenda, it's important that what you want to talk about is on the list, too.

So whether you're writing it from scratch or adding to their plan, remember: this meeting is for your clarity + development. The agenda is the starting point to getting what you need.

Here are my tips to making it happen:



AGENDA SETTING

GIVE YOUR BOSS A HEADS UP

No one likes a personal meeting to appear on their calendar without a heads up. This can be a quick, "Hey, I wanna chat soon. Be on the lookout for a calendar invite!" and also...

AGREE ON MEETING LOGISTICS

It doesn't have to be the time down to the minute, but agree on day, location (their office or somewhere neutral), & duration.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE AGENDA

Ask yourself this: what are the top 1-2 (max 3) things that I need clarity on? Include those, written broadly, in the email invite. (more on this in the next section!)

KEEPING IT CLEAR + CONCISE

This is not the time to go into detail about the subjects you plan to bring up. Keep it concise - leave the details for the meeting itself. "Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind." - Brené Brown

PHRASES/WORDS TO AVOID

This actually goes for all emails you write:

"Just"

"Actually"

"Sorry"

Too many exclamation marks!!!!!!

Over thanking them (remember - they owe you this)

Too many niceties, just get to the point!

Determining your non-negotiables

AKA.. what we are absolutely NOT leaving the room without getting answers to.

This should typically be 2-3 things that you are frustrated by, have lacked clarity on, or need support with.

Write them on a notecard and **take it with you to the meeting.** Promise yourself you'll get the answers you need.

Examples:

1. clarity on my job responsibilities
2. clarity on my involvement with a particular project
3. an agreement on how I might work more flexibly
4. path forward for your promotion
5. salary increase (above your yearly merit raise)
6. steps forward to dealing with a difficult coworker/employee
7. answers to discrimination/undermining you've faced
8. communication expectations
9. support on personal issues that are affecting your work

Hyping yourself up

Maybe it doesn't feel fair that you have to be the one initiating this conversation. But remember - you are taking back control of your career by initiating it and preparing for it. That's a really good thing!

I often ask myself: just because the game is unfair, does that mean I won't play? HECK no. I'm going to play anyway and I'm going to get exactly what I want and deserve out of this career/life.

So remember - you have done harder things than this. This is a step in the right direction. You are prepared & ready for this.



DURING THE ONE-TO-ONE

Staying on Track & Not Getting Derailed

This is an art. You know how hard it can be to take control in a meeting. But now, this is a meeting that YOU are trying to control, but that is typically controlled by your superior.

So how do you stay on track and ensure that you get clarity and paths forward for your non-negotiables?

1. Expect that your boss will have an agenda of their own, and that is ok. Leave time and space for this while ultimately realizing that this you need answers to your questions, too.
2. Avoid getting into the weeds. Now is not the time to go into details about project updates, other employees progress, or future planning. When things like this come up, say, "I do think we need to have this conversation, but I'd like to continue talking about my development for now and I'll set up a follow-up meeting for us to discuss XYZ."



Staying on track, cont'd

3. Do your best to silence radios/cell phones/office phones. Mention out loud that you're doing this to set the tone for the meeting.

4. I've said it once already, but keep your "non-negotiables" notecard in the room with you. This will ensure that you don't get clouded by all the other conversation and forget to bring up something that's important to you.

5. This is going to be a tough pill to swallow. But sometimes you may need to be firm and redirect the conversation yourself. I wouldn't go so far as to say interrupt, but let's call it a respectful redirect, shall we?

6. Refer back to the agenda if needed.

7. Lastly, set up a follow-up meeting if you don't get to everything you had planned, or if the meeting gets derailed by operational issues (I get it).

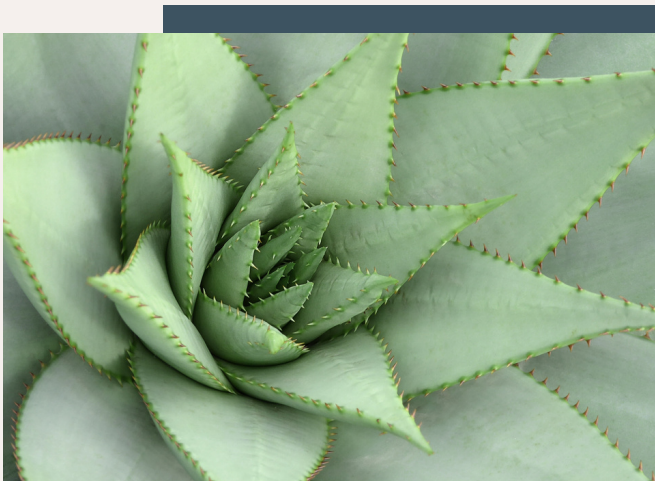


Managing your emotions (the big one)

Nervousness. Excitement. Anxiety. Resentment. Frustration. Jitters.

These are all normal things you ~~may~~ likely, WILL feel when you enter the room to have a one-to-one. And it's not about making sure those emotions don't surface - we don't always have control over that, no matter how much we want to.

The trick is to know **what to do** when the emotions do surface. When you have a plan for managing them, you are far less likely to be anxious about them appearing. Having a plan will make you confident that you can handle what's to come.



Tears (resentment/sadness)

This is the big one for most women because often when we're bringing up topics that have caused us to feel serious resentment, it can be hard to manage the emotions.

- Leave the room if you can't get the tears under control. Seriously, I give you permission to do this. Take a 5 minute break or reschedule the meeting. You don't have to sit there trying to fight through tears. Take a beat.
- Remember - you're feeling this way for a reason. Expect that it is coming, and remember that it is OK that your very real emotions are surfacing. You've been told that women shouldn't be emotional at work & I call B.S. If you're undervalued and underpaid chronically, it's emotional. Period.
- Practice - rehearse the tough parts with a friend or partner. The more you say it, the less power it will have in the moment.
- Grace - it's okay if the emotions get the better of you. What's not okay is replaying it over and over and giving it even more power in your head. Repeat after me:

"This doesn't mean I'm a mess or overly emotional, it means I've been hurt by the situation. I will free my mind from thinking about it and try again soon. I will let this go today."

Anger

If the meeting isn't going your way, you may feel yourself getting angry. If outbursts are your thing, you may want to step out and regroup at a later date. This meeting isn't worth losing respect over.

Jitters/Nerves

I am the world's most fidgety person. If you've ever been on a call with me, you know this to be true (I'm a work in progress, too!). Here's what helps me in these situations:

- take notes or play with a stress ball/fidget toy. Keep your hands occupied.
- take jewelry/watches off if you'll play with them the whole time
- tie your hair back

Fidgeting is OK! It's a normal byproduct of being nervous, and that's a completely normal feeling. It makes me feel more confident when I don't do it, though. If you feel the same, then try out those tips.

Excitement

Why would this ever be a bad thing? Usually not - but mainly, if you're excited about a new opportunity or a promotion, just don't show all your cards. Remember that jobs are contracts. Before you say "THANKS boss!" make sure there's nothing you may want to negotiate.

Specifics of an action plan

So the meeting is going well, you're on track to nailing down some opportunities/promotions/raises that you'll be working towards over the next few months. I consider this step of the process "closing the deal." Now is your chance to get explicit direction about what you need to make that opportunity YOURS, or what specifics you and your boss have agreed to for any other change to your work situation. The goal is for there to be no confusion about the path forward to making it happen - for you OR your boss.

Timeframe

We aren't going to leave this ambiguous. Ask questions like:

- When can I expect an answer to my salary increase?
- Is 6 months a reasonable expectation for completing this project?
- Can I expect to be up for the promotion around April?
- When should I follow up on XYZ situation with you?

Steps/Goals

For promotions specifically, you need steps/goals to get there - agreed on by both you + boss. Use the SMART goal format.

- S: Specific
- M: Measurable
- A: Attainable
- R: Relevant
- T: Timebound

Do this exercise with each goal they expect you to achieve prior to the promotion.

Follow-up/Communication Expectations

Example: You've got a 6 month timeline to complete 3 major goals in order to receive the promotion you want and the salary increase to go with it. BUT we're not going to only bring it up again at the 6 month mark.

Set expectations for when you'll have a quick check-in about progress. **I'd recommend 1/2 way through and 1 month out from the end goal.**



Bonus Tips

- Your boss has an ego, and it's playing a role in the room. Tips for managing that ego:
 - Make as many of your requests about YOU as you can. For example: I want to learn XYZ from you because I think it would be good for my career.
 - Ditch the blame. For example, I'd steer clear from bringing up past mentions of this same request. You're doing it differently now & you're prepared, so there's no need to mention balls that got dropped after your last conversation. It could derail the meeting.
 - Framing - shift things from negative to positive as often as you can. Instead of: I'm frustrated that I haven't gotten helpful feedback, try: I know that getting feedback on this area of my career will help immensely. Here's what I need.
 - Compliments - no one hates them. Just saying.
- Files on your desktop
 - Make two - one titled "Wins" & one titled "Losses," + the current year
 - Wins: should include every good email, project completion, praise, etc to easily reference during these meetings, year-end reviews, salary negotiations
 - Losses: this should include pushbacks, roadblocks, hurdles that have hindered your progress to easily reference in follow-up meetings where you ask for additional support.

AFTER THE ONE-TO-ONE



Progress Check-ins

These can be in the form of emails or scheduled, quick meetings.

Either way, the check-in logistics should be determined in the initial one-to-one meeting.

The purpose of these meetings are so that you don't get to the end of the time-frame that was decided on, you're expecting the promotion/raise/job title, and your boss comes back with XYZ reasons why it won't happen. You do not want to be shocked by this at the last minute.

Regular check-ins prevent this from happening & keep you both on the same page with any adjustments to the timeline or tasks.

Be honest about your progress during these meetings and ask for support on any roadblocks you've been hitting.

At this point, your boss should be invested in your success. Be open with them about what you need to hit your targets.

Follow-Up Email Template

This follow-up email doesn't have to be long, but it does need to reiterate the path forward that you and your boss have agreed on. This is your opportunity to restate the agreement, and double-check that you and your boss are on the same page.

Boss,

I appreciate you taking the time today for our one-to-one. I feel we were able to gain clarity on a few areas of my career and development (enter whatever the non-negotiables were here), which I look forward to making progress on.

I've provided a summary of the next steps for the items we discussed. Please let me know if there is anything you are not in agreement with.

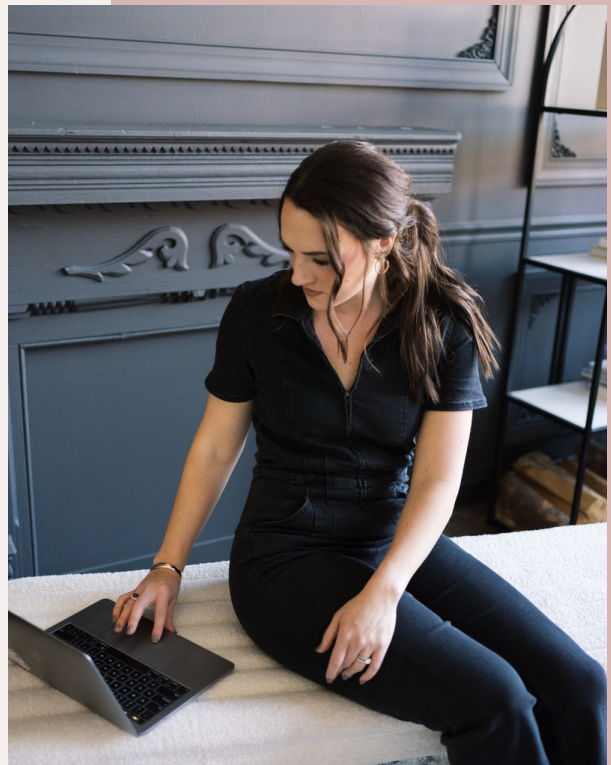
- Item:
- Path forward: (keep it to 2 sentences or less)
- Timeline:
- Communication & follow-up frequencies:

(repeat this for as many items that you covered in the meeting)

If there is anything that I need to update, please let me know. If not, I will assume that we are both in agreement.

Thank you again for your time,

Hannah



NOW GO CRUSH IT.



I'm so proud of you for wanting more out of your career. Whether that's in the form of a raise, clear feedback, or steps to getting your next promotion, I'm confident that following this guide will help you get there.

When you start taking control over your career in small ways, it pays off in big ones. This momentum will compound and before you know it, you'll no longer be dissatisfied with your career. That's because you will be taking action to get what you want & deserve. That's a really exciting place to be in your engineering career.

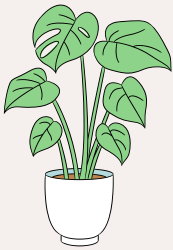
If I can be there for you on this journey, know that I created my whole business to support you. And as always, I'm rooting for you!

& IF YOU NEED MORE THAN JUST THIS GUIDE...

ROOTING FOR YOU

COACHING FOR FEMALE ENGINEERS

- 12 weeks by your side to help you take back control of your career
- 1 onboarding call + six 1-hour coaching sessions
- Text support for the good days, and the bad ones
- Modules, customized to your needs:



practicing
confidence



limiting beliefs &
negative self talk



effective
one-to-ones



salary
negotiations



navigating
discrimination



leadership 101

BONUS MODULES:

- prioritizing yourself (guilt-free) for moms
- LinkedIn/resumé tips for the job search process



apply to work with me!



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let me know your thoughts here!