

ENGLISH FOR WORK / HIRING / PERFORMANCE / EMPLOYEE RELATIONS / CHANGE

Human Resources English

Be clear about expectations. Be careful with people.



Phil Stilwell

© 2026 Phil Stilwell. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the author, except as permitted by law.

Eight practical lessons. Eleven extended conversations.
Vocabulary, phrase banks, guided speaking, and explained answers.

Revised 2026 edition / Upper-intermediate to advanced

Your route through the book

01 Recruiting, Screening, and Candidate Experience, page 4

Turn vague hiring preferences into observable, job-related criteria and a consistent candidate conversation.

02 Onboarding and Role Clarity, page 14

Clarify first-month priorities, success criteria, support, and decision authority without confusing access with readiness.

03 Performance Feedback and Documentation, page 26

Give specific performance feedback, invite factual context, and record an observable improvement standard.

04 Employee Relations and Investigations, page 36

Listen empathetically, attribute accounts accurately, and explain process limits without promising secrecy or a finding.

05 Compensation, Benefits, and Equity, page 48

Explain pay-range calculations and policy criteria while keeping fairness concerns and individual decisions open.

06 Policy Communication and Compliance, page 59

Acknowledge a work-adjustment request promptly and explain an individualized review without collecting unnecessary sensitive information.

07 Conflict Mediation and Manager Coaching, page 72

Coach a manager to separate positions from work needs and define a testable handoff without inventing shared fault or agreement.

08 Restructuring and Sensitive Communication, page 82

Communicate a restructuring proposal with empathy while separating confirmed facts, possible impacts, and unfinished decisions.

[Professional communication notes, page 3](#)

[Three additional workplace cases, page 96](#)

[Answers and explanations, page 110](#)

[Phrase finder, page 168](#)

[Vocabulary index, page 170](#)

[References and publication notes, page 175](#)

Suggested study range: B2-C1. This is an editorial study range, not a certified proficiency assessment.

Clear language is part of fair treatment.

Human resources conversations often carry two responsibilities at once: responding to a person and keeping the record accurate. A concern is not yet a finding. A salary midpoint is not an individual promise. A manager can acknowledge uncertainty without sounding indifferent. These fictional cases practice the words that make those distinctions understandable while keeping next steps specific.

Describe the work, not a personality

Replace vague judgments with a task, an observable behavior, and the relevant expectation. Ask for the missing context before assigning a motive.

"The last two reports omitted the summary; I have not established why."

Name the status of the information

Distinguish what someone reported, what a document shows, what has been verified, and what the authorized process has decided. Each supports a different statement.

"The note records an allegation, not a finding."

Make a limited promise useful

Commit to the next contact or review you can deliver. Do not replace uncertainty with an unsupported outcome, secrecy guarantee, or employment assurance.

"I will update you on Friday even if the review remains open."

Use the actual policy and jurisdiction

These exercises supply fictional policy terms where needed. Real eligibility, process, privacy, representation, and employment obligations depend on the relevant facts and applicable rules.

"That is the policy range; your individual placement requires a separate explanation."

Professional boundaries

Original fictional language practice, not legal, employment, benefits, medical, or investigation advice. People, policies, figures, and outcomes are invented. Real decisions require current local law, applicable agreements, authorized procedures, and qualified advice. US and UK sources provide identified background, not a universal HR procedure.

A Read the situation

LESSON 01 / RECRUITING, SCREENING, AND CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Turn vague hiring preferences into observable, job-related criteria and a consistent candidate conversation.

What does good fit actually mean?

Recruiter Lina and hiring manager Marcus are preparing interviews for a client-operations coordinator. Marcus asks for good cultural fit but has not defined it. The role requires timely client follow-up and escalation of conflicting deadlines. The draft scorecard rewards confidence and shared interests without describing evidence. No applicant has been scored. Lina must clarify the competencies, interview questions, rating basis, and candidate updates before the panel starts making comparisons.

People: Lina, Recruiter; Marcus, Hiring manager.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. Which tasks are actually required?

- A.** Agreeing with every panel member
- B.** Client follow-up and escalation of conflicting deadlines
- C.** Sharing the manager's hobbies
- D.** Speaking at the fastest pace

2. What is wrong with the draft scorecard?

- A.** It uses impressions without observable evidence criteria.
- B.** It already contains all completed candidate scores.
- C.** It prohibits asking about previous work.
- D.** It measures only the two specified competencies.

3. What is the current selection status?

- A.** The preferred applicant has been selected.
- B.** Every candidate has failed the interview.
- C.** An offer has been accepted.
- D.** No applicant has been scored.

[Answers and explanations, page 110](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

job requisition

An internal request to fill an approved or proposed position.

open a job requisition

essential criterion

A requirement necessary for the particular role.

define essential criteria

job-related competency

A demonstrable capability connected to the work.

assess job-related competencies

structured interview

An interview using consistent questions and evaluation standards.

conduct a structured interview

situational question

A question asking how someone would address a supplied scenario.

use a situational question

rating anchor

A description illustrating a particular score level.

define rating anchors

role profile

A description of a position's purpose and required work.

clarify the role profile

desirable criterion

A useful attribute that is not a minimum requirement.

distinguish desirable criteria

behavioral evidence

Specific actions showing how someone handled a situation.

request behavioral evidence

behavioral question

A question asking about an actual past action or experience.

ask a behavioral question

scoring rubric

Stated standards used to assign assessment ratings.

apply the scoring rubric

interview panel

The group responsible for interviewing or assessing candidates.

brief the interview panel

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

job requisition JOB REQUISITION

open a job requisition

Keep the meaning precise: An internal request to fill an approved or proposed position.

behavioral evidence BEHAVIORAL EVIDENCE

request behavioral evidence

Keep the meaning precise: Specific actions showing how someone handled a situation.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

candidate pipeline

Applicants at different stages of the recruitment process.

review the candidate pipeline

shortlist

Candidates selected for a further assessment stage.

develop a shortlist

affinity bias

Favoring someone because of perceived similarity to oneself.

challenge affinity bias

calibration

Aligning assessors' use of the stated rating standards.

hold a calibration discussion

candidate experience

How applicants experience the recruitment process and communication.

improve the candidate experience

offer approval

Internal authorization for the terms of a proposed job offer.

obtain offer approval

screening call

An initial conversation checking relevant requirements and interest.

arrange a screening call

selection rationale

The evidence-based explanation for a selection decision.

document the selection rationale

halo effect

Allowing one favorable impression to dominate unrelated judgments.

check for the halo effect

work sample

A job-related task used to observe relevant performance.

evaluate a work sample

reasonable adjustment

A change intended to reduce a relevant barrier, under applicable rules.

discuss a reasonable adjustment

time to fill

Elapsed time between defined vacancy and hiring milestones.

state the time-to-fill basis

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

interview panel INTERVIEW PANEL

brief the interview panel

Keep the meaning precise: The group responsible for interviewing or assessing candidates.

affinity bias AFFINITY BIAS

challenge affinity bias

Keep the meaning precise: Favoring someone because of perceived similarity to oneself.

Phrases that move the work forward

Clarify the preference

What specific work behavior do you mean by good fit?

Separate the criteria

Which requirements are essential and which are desirable?

Follow the action

What did you do, and what happened next?

Define a rating

What would distinguish a strong answer from an adequate one?

Challenge an impression

Confidence alone does not tell us whether the commitments were met.

Keep access open

Explain the assessment and the route for requesting an adjustment.

Separate stages

A shortlist decision is not an approved offer.

Avoid an invented promise

We have not made a selection decision yet.

Return to the role

The role requires client follow-up and timely escalation.

Ask for evidence

Tell us about a time you handled two conflicting deadlines.

Avoid social scoring

Shared hobbies are not evidence of this competency.

Keep comparison consistent

Use the same core questions and rating standards.

Calibrate the panel

Let us compare the evidence against the agreed anchors.

Record the rationale

Link the score to the candidate's actual example.

Respect the candidate

Tell applicants when they can expect the next update.

Close the preparation

Confirm the criteria before the panel starts scoring.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Ask for evidence

Useful wording: Tell us about a time you handled two conflicting deadlines.

Purpose: Follow the action

Useful wording: What did you do, and what happened next?

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which question best elicits behavioral evidence for the required escalation skill?

- A.** How many clients did your last employer have in total?
- B.** Tell us about a deadline conflict, what you escalated, and the result.
- C.** How would you hypothetically handle a deadline conflict tomorrow?
- D.** Would your colleagues describe you as confident under pressure?

2. A panelist says, "I liked their energy, so I scored follow-up highly." What is the best response?

- A.** Good energy proves every competency.
- B.** Replace the score with the panelist's favorite number.
- C.** Ignore all evidence because interviews are subjective.
- D.** Which example shows how they followed through on a client commitment?

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A useful attribute that is not a minimum requirement. Which term fits?

- A.** candidate experience
- B.** situational question
- C.** desirable criterion
- D.** shortlist

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "Could we ask candidates to describe a time when two clients needed something at once? I would want to hear how they handled the competing commitments." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "Can we agree on the scoring before the first interview? I do not want us changing the standard because the opening candidate gives a polished answer." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** We need a scoring rubric with clear evidence levels. Strong delivery should not compensate for an example that never explains how the deadline conflict was handled.
- B.** Correct. Offer approval is a separate stage. Today we are making the assessment clearer, not deciding a winner before we have compared the relevant evidence.
- C.** Exactly. Let us start with the role profile and describe the actions we need. Then the panel can look for evidence rather than a familiar personality.
- D.** That is a useful behavioral question. Follow it with what they did, who they contacted, and the result, using the same core prompts across candidates.

[Answers and explanations, page 110](#)

One useful distinction

Good cultural fit is too vague to score consistently. Define the actual behavior: following up on commitments and raising deadline conflicts. A shared interest, accent, or outgoing manner does not itself establish either competency.

E Conversation

What does good fit actually mean?

What does good fit actually mean?

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

job-related competency / affinity bias / Offer approval / rating anchors /
selection rationale / role profile / structured interview / scoring rubric /
behavioral question / candidate experience

- 01 **Marcus:** I want someone who will fit the team. The current draft says confident, approachable, and easy to work with, which sounds reasonable to me.
- 02 **Lina:** Those impressions need a ¹ _____. For this coordinator, the actual requirements are client follow-up and escalation when deadlines conflict.
- 03 **Marcus:** Then let us replace confident with something we can assess. What would show that a candidate follows up with clients and raises a deadline problem early?
- 04 **Lina:** Exactly. Let us start with the ² _____ and describe the actions we need. Then the panel can look for evidence rather than a familiar personality.
- 05 **Marcus:** Could we ask candidates to describe a time when two clients needed something at once? I would want to hear how they handled the competing commitments.
- 06 **Lina:** That is a useful ³ _____. Follow it with what they did, who they contacted, and the result, using the same core prompts across candidates.
- 07 **Marcus:** Can we agree on the scoring before the first interview? I do not want us changing the standard because the opening candidate gives a polished answer.
- 08 **Lina:** We need a ⁴ _____ with clear evidence levels. Strong delivery should not compensate for an example that never explains how the deadline conflict was handled.
- 09 **Marcus:** One panelist likes people who share the team's interests. I understand the impulse, but that does not show whether someone can manage client commitments.
- 10 **Lina:** That is where ⁵ _____ can enter. Bring the discussion back to the required work without turning the panel review into an argument about who seems friendly.

Conversation continues on the next page.

What does good fit actually mean?

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Marcus:** After each interview, should we compare scores immediately? I want disagreements about evidence to surface before the final shortlist discussion.
- 12 **Lina:** Use the agreed ⁶ _____ when comparing judgments. Ask which part of the example supports the score, not merely whether everyone liked the candidate.
- 13 **Marcus:** Some candidates will have questions about the assessment format. We should explain it early enough for them to raise any access needs.
- 14 **Lina:** Yes. A ⁷ _____ does not mean refusing an appropriate adjustment. Explain the process and route requests through the relevant procedure without making assumptions about the person.
- 15 **Marcus:** We also need to tell candidates when they will hear from us. A long silence can make a well-organized interview feel careless.
- 16 **Lina:** That affects the ⁸ _____. Set a realistic update date and keep it even if the decision is still pending; an update need not be an offer.
- 17 **Marcus:** For the final discussion, I want notes showing why someone progressed. "Good fit" on its own will not help us explain the comparison later.
- 18 **Lina:** Record the ⁹ _____ against the criteria. Distinguish the candidate's actual example from our interpretation, and do not add details they never supplied.
- 19 **Marcus:** Agreed. We will revise the criteria, brief the panel, and complete the interviews. No one should imply an offer is ready merely because a candidate was shortlisted.
- 20 **Lina:** Correct. ¹⁰ _____ is a separate stage. Today we are making the assessment clearer, not deciding a winner before we have compared the relevant evidence.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. job-related competency / 2. role profile / 3. behavioral question / 4. scoring rubric / 5. affinity bias / 6. rating anchors / 7. structured interview / 8. candidate experience / 9. selection rationale / 10. Offer approval

[Why these answers fit, page 111](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

What does good fit actually mean?

Return to the case

Recruiter Lina and hiring manager Marcus are preparing interviews for a client-operations coordinator. Marcus asks for good cultural fit but has not defined it. The role requires timely client follow-up and escalation of conflicting deadlines. The draft scorecard rewards confidence and shared interests without describing evidence. No applicant has been scored. Lina must clarify the competencies, interview questions, rating basis, and candidate updates before the panel starts making comparisons.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. What belongs in a selection rationale?

- A. The assumption that fluency guarantees reliability
- B. Relevant evidence linked to the agreed criteria
- C. A guess about the candidate's private life
- D. A record of shared hobbies as proof of competence

2. Which candidate update is supported before selection?

- A. All offer terms are approved.
- B. No further communication is needed.
- C. We are completing interviews and will update you on the stated date.
- D. You have the job because the interview felt positive.

[Answers and explanations, page 113](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Read the common assessment criteria and candidate-update commitment without announcing a hiring outcome.

Translate an impression into evidence

A fluent, sociable applicant can create a strong first impression without demonstrating the required work. Ask what the person needs to do, what evidence would demonstrate it, and how every applicant will have a fair opportunity to provide that evidence.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

A score needs an example

A panelist awards a high teamwork score because an applicant shares a hobby. The interview notes contain no teamwork example. No hiring decision is approved.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

rationale / evidence / criterion / approved

- 01 **Recruiter:** A shared hobby is not job-related ¹ _____.
- 02 **Manager:** We need an example against the agreed ² _____.
- 03 **Recruiter:** The score needs a supported ³ _____.
- 04 **Manager:** No offer has been ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. evidence / 2. criterion / 3. rationale / 4. approved

[Why these answers fit, page 113](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "Some candidates will have questions about the assessment format. We should explain it early enough for them to raise any access needs." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "We also need to tell candidates when they will hear from us. A long silence can make a well-organized interview feel careless." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** That is where affinity bias can enter. Bring the discussion back to the required work without turning the panel review into an argument about who seems friendly.
- B.** That affects the candidate experience. Set a realistic update date and keep it even if the decision is still pending; an update need not be an offer.
- C.** Yes. A structured interview does not mean refusing an appropriate adjustment. Explain the process and route requests through the relevant procedure without making assumptions about the person.
- D.** Exactly. Let us start with the role profile and describe the actions we need. Then the panel can look for evidence rather than a familiar personality.

[Answers and explanations, page 114](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 02 / ONBOARDING AND ROLE CLARITY

Clarify first-month priorities, success criteria, support, and decision authority without confusing access with readiness.

The laptop is ready; the role is not

New coordinator Evan has working accounts and equipment on day three, but no agreed first-month priorities. Manager Nora brings a proposed plan: review five sample cases by day ten, process live cases under supervision by day twenty, and hold a readiness review on day thirty. Sample-case checks cover required fields and the escalation route. Independent case ownership requires Nora's sign-off. The onboarding checklist currently says complete because the equipment and account tasks are finished.

People: Evan, New coordinator; Nora, Line manager.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What is already complete?

- A. The day-thirty readiness review
- B. Equipment and account setup
- C. All role-specific learning
- D. Independent case approval

2. What is proposed for day ten?

- A. Approve another employee's work
- B. Review five sample cases
- C. Take unrestricted ownership of every live case
- D. Complete the day-thirty review early

3. What must precede independent case ownership?

- A. Assuming every account permission is decision authority
- B. Nora's sign-off
- C. Having a working laptop alone
- D. Reaching day three automatically

[Answers and explanations, page 115](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

onboarding

The process of helping a new employee enter and become effective in a role.

plan the onboarding

orientation

An introduction to the organization, people, and basic arrangements.

attend orientation

role clarity

A shared understanding of responsibilities and expected outcomes.

establish role clarity

deliverable

A defined piece of work to be produced.

specify the deliverable

milestone

A meaningful point used to track progress.

set a learning milestone

shadowing

Observing an experienced colleague carrying out work.

arrange job shadowing

preboarding

Preparation completed before the employee's first working day.

coordinate preboarding

access provisioning

Creation of the required system accounts and permissions.

confirm access provisioning

first-month plan

A sequence of priorities and reviews for the initial month.

agree a first-month plan

success criterion

A stated basis for judging whether work meets expectations.

agree success criteria

ramp-up period

The time needed to reach the expected level of contribution.

support the ramp-up period

supervised practice

Performing a task with appropriate oversight and support.

schedule supervised practice

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

onboarding ONBOARDING

plan the onboarding

Keep the meaning precise: The process of helping a new employee enter and become effective in a role.

first-month plan FIRST-MONTH PLAN

agree a first-month plan

Keep the meaning precise: A sequence of priorities and reviews for the initial month.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

buddy

A colleague assigned to help with everyday orientation and questions.

assign an onboarding buddy

stakeholder map

A guide to people affected by or involved in the role's work.

review the stakeholder map

escalation route

The path for referring an issue beyond one's role or authority.

identify the escalation route

check-in

A scheduled conversation about progress, needs, or concerns.

hold a weekly check-in

readiness review

An assessment of preparedness for a defined responsibility.

conduct a readiness review

independent ownership

Responsibility for carrying out defined work without routine supervision.

confirm independent ownership

line manager

The person with direct managerial responsibility for an employee.

confirm the line manager

decision authority

Permission to make specified decisions.

clarify decision authority

dependency

Something that must be available or completed for another task to proceed.

flag a dependency

feedback loop

A process of using responses to improve subsequent work.

create a feedback loop

sign-off

Explicit confirmation or approval by the authorized person.

obtain manager sign-off

onboarding completion

Completion of a defined onboarding scope, not automatically all role learning.

qualify onboarding completion

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

supervised practice **SUPERVISED PRACTICE**

schedule supervised practice

Keep the meaning precise: Performing a task with appropriate oversight and support.

escalation route **ESCALATION ROUTE**

identify the escalation route

Keep the meaning precise: The path for referring an issue beyond one's role or authority.

Phrases that move the work forward

Distinguish setup

My accounts work, but the role priorities are not yet clear.

Name the first milestone

Review five sample cases by day ten.

Separate practice stages

Live cases come next, with supervision.

Ask about authority

Which decisions can I make, and which should I refer?

Qualify the date

Day thirty is a readiness review, not automatic authorization.

Raise a dependency

I need the sample-case access before I can complete that milestone.

Set a check-in

We will review progress and questions at the scheduled meeting.

Read back the plan

Samples first, supervised cases next, then a readiness review.

Ask for sequence

Which deliverable should I complete first?

Define the check

We will check the required fields and the escalation route.

Clarify the reviewer

Nora will review the sample cases with you.

Keep support visible

Bring unresolved cases to the named supervisor.

Confirm the condition

Independent ownership requires manager sign-off.

Avoid vague effort

Let us define what ready looks like for this responsibility.

Correct the checklist

Mark system setup complete, with role learning still in progress.

Close the agreement

Record the milestones, support, and sign-off requirement together.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Define the check

Useful wording: We will check the required fields and the escalation route.

Purpose: Separate practice stages

Useful wording: Live cases come next, with supervision.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which checklist status is accurate on day three?

- A.** Fully competent in every task
- B.** Independent ownership approved
- C.** All onboarding goals achieved
- D.** System setup complete; role learning not yet complete

2. Which day-ten milestone combines quantity, timing, and an assessment basis?

- A.** Open five cases by day ten and treat access as evidence of readiness.
- B.** Read five cases by day ten and obtain independent authority automatically.
- C.** Review the escalation guide by day ten without checking any sample cases.
- D.** Review five sample cases by day ten, checking required fields and the escalation route.

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: Creation of the required system accounts and permissions. Which term fits?

- A.** readiness review
- B.** stakeholder map
- C.** access provisioning
- D.** milestone

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "What will you check in the samples? I can count five completed files, but that would not tell me whether I handled them correctly." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "I also need to know what to do when a sample contains an unclear request. Should I choose an answer or bring the uncertainty to you?" Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** We need explicit success criteria. I will check the required fields and whether you identified the correct escalation route for each case.
- B.** Let us agree a first-month plan. Start with five sample cases by day ten, then supervised live work by day twenty.
- C.** We can arrange shadowing before your supervised cases. I will identify the colleague so you know who to ask about everyday workflow.
- D.** The checklist only confirms access provisioning. We need to separate that setup from your learning plan and the responsibilities you will take on.

[Answers and explanations, page 115](#)

One useful distinction

A completed equipment checklist establishes access, not competence or decision authority. Day thirty is a review point, not an automatic promise of independent ownership. The scope and approval condition must stay visible in the plan.

Conversation

The laptop is ready; the role is not

The laptop is ready; the role is not

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

readiness review / access provisioning / success criteria / decision authority / shadowing
/ escalation route / sign-off / dependency / first-month plan / role clarity

- 01 **Evan:** My accounts and laptop are working, but the checklist says onboarding is complete. I still do not know which work matters most this month.
- 02 **Nora:** The checklist only confirms ¹ _____. We need to separate that setup from your learning plan and the responsibilities you will take on.
- 03 **Evan:** That would help. I have several training links and messages from colleagues, but no clear order or definition of what I should produce first.
- 04 **Nora:** Let us agree a ² _____. Start with five sample cases by day ten, then supervised live work by day twenty.
- 05 **Evan:** What will you check in the samples? I can count five completed files, but that would not tell me whether I handled them correctly.
- 06 **Nora:** We need explicit ³ _____. I will check the required fields and whether you identified the correct escalation route for each case.
- 07 **Evan:** I also need to know what to do when a sample contains an unclear request. Should I choose an answer or bring the uncertainty to you?
- 08 **Nora:** Use the stated ⁴ _____. We are checking that you recognize the boundary, not rewarding guesses that happen to look decisive.
- 09 **Evan:** After the samples, I would like to see how a colleague handles live cases. The examples alone may not show the pace of the real queue.
- 10 **Nora:** We can arrange ⁵ _____ before your supervised cases. I will identify the colleague so you know who to ask about everyday workflow.

Conversation continues on the next page.

The laptop is ready; the role is not

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Evan:** Will that colleague approve my work, or will you? I do not want friendly advice to become an approval I was never actually given.
- 12 **Nora:** I retain the defined ⁶ _____. The colleague supports learning; the designated supervisor handles the live-case checks under the plan.
- 13 **Evan:** The day-thirty date sounds like a target for working independently. Should I tell other teams they can send cases directly to me from then?
- 14 **Nora:** Not yet. It is a ⁷ _____, not an automatic change in responsibility. We will assess the evidence and identify any remaining support you need.
- 15 **Evan:** I will tell the other teams it is a review date, then. What specifically has to happen before I can accept cases independently?
- 16 **Nora:** Correct. My ⁸ _____ is required for independent ownership. Account permissions alone do not change that condition, even if a system technically lets you open a case.
- 17 **Evan:** One thing is blocking the first task: I cannot open the sample-case folder. The general account works, but that folder still gives me an access error.
- 18 **Nora:** That is a ⁹ _____ for the first milestone. I will arrange the access and check progress with you rather than treating the existing setup tick as proof everything is available.
- 19 **Evan:** Let me confirm: five samples, then supervised live cases, then a readiness review. We will record the criteria and approval condition with those dates.
- 20 **Nora:** Yes. That gives us ¹⁰ _____. I will correct the checklist to say system setup complete and role learning in progress, so other teams see the same boundaries.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. access provisioning / 2. first-month plan / 3. success criteria / 4. escalation route / 5. shadowing / 6. decision authority / 7. readiness review / 8. sign-off / 9. dependency / 10. role clarity

[Why these answers fit, page 116](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

The laptop is ready; the role is not

Return to the case

New coordinator Evan has working accounts and equipment on day three, but no agreed first-month priorities. Manager Nora brings a proposed plan: review five sample cases by day ten, process live cases under supervision by day twenty, and hold a readiness review on day thirty. Sample-case checks cover required fields and the escalation route. Independent case ownership requires Nora's sign-off. The onboarding checklist currently says complete because the equipment and account tasks are finished.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. What does the day-thirty meeting establish in advance?

- A. Automatic sign-off for independent work
- B. Proof that supervision is already unnecessary
- C. Permission to bypass unresolved questions
- D. A planned readiness assessment, not a guaranteed outcome

2. How should Evan raise missing sample access?

- A. The milestone is irrelevant because accounts exist.
- B. I need access to the sample cases to meet the day-ten milestone.
- C. The laptop works, so no dependency can exist.
- D. I will mark the cases complete without opening them.

[Answers and explanations, page 117](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles. Read back five samples by day ten, supervised live work by day twenty, and a readiness review on day thirty.

Questions can show ownership

A new starter may hesitate to ask which task comes first or who can approve a decision. Clear questions reduce rework. Managers can make expectations usable by naming the deliverable, standard, support person, and review point instead of asking someone simply to be proactive.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

A date is not a sign-off

A new employee completes account setup on Monday. Three sample cases are due Friday. Independent processing requires a supervisor review that has not yet occurred.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

complete / review / confirmed / sample

- 01 **Employee:** Account setup is ¹ _____.
- 02 **Manager:** The next milestone is three ² _____ cases.
- 03 **Employee:** Independent processing still requires a ³ _____.
- 04 **Manager:** That approval is not yet ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. complete / 2. sample / 3. review / 4. confirmed

[Why these answers fit, page 118](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "The day-thirty date sounds like a target for working independently. Should I tell other teams they can send cases directly to me from then?" Nora: [missing response] Evan: "I will tell the other teams it is a review date, then. What specifically has to happen before I can accept cases independently?" Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** The checklist only confirms access provisioning. We need to separate that setup from your learning plan and the responsibilities you will take on.
- B.** We need explicit success criteria. I will check the required fields and whether you identified the correct escalation route for each case.
- C.** Correct. My sign-off is required for independent ownership. Account permissions alone do not change that condition, even if a system technically lets you open a case.
- D.** Not yet. It is a readiness review, not an automatic change in responsibility. We will assess the evidence and identify any remaining support you need.

[Answers and explanations, page 119](#)

Review 1 / Meaning and context

Use language from the lessons you have completed. Choose one answer per question.

Case file

Revisit "Recruiting, Screening, and Candidate Experience" and "Onboarding and Role Clarity". Choose precise terminology, then reconstruct the missing responses using both neighboring turns. The final two questions also revisit earlier conversations.

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A requirement necessary for the particular role. Which term fits?

- A. screening call
- B. behavioral question
- C. work sample
- D. essential criterion

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A stated basis for judging whether work meets expectations. Which term fits?

- A. buddy
- B. onboarding
- C. check-in
- D. success criterion

3. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "One panelist likes people who share the team's interests. I understand the impulse, but that does not show whether someone can manage client commitments." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "After each interview, should we compare scores immediately? I want disagreements about evidence to surface before the final shortlist discussion." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A. That is where affinity bias can enter. Bring the discussion back to the required work without turning the panel review into an argument about who seems friendly.
- B. Yes. A structured interview does not mean refusing an appropriate adjustment. Explain the process and route requests through the relevant procedure without making assumptions about the person.
- C. Exactly. Let us start with the role profile and describe the actions we need. Then the panel can look for evidence rather than a familiar personality.
- D. That affects the candidate experience. Set a realistic update date and keep it even if the decision is still pending; an update need not be an offer.

Review 1 / Meaning and context / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "One thing is blocking the first task: I cannot open the sample-case folder. The general account works, but that folder still gives me an access error." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "Let me confirm: five samples, then supervised live cases, then a readiness review. We will record the criteria and approval condition with those dates." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Yes. That gives us role clarity. I will correct the checklist to say system setup complete and role learning in progress, so other teams see the same boundaries.
- B.** That is a dependency for the first milestone. I will arrange the access and check progress with you rather than treating the existing setup tick as proof everything is available.
- C.** Correct. My sign-off is required for independent ownership. Account permissions alone do not change that condition, even if a system technically lets you open a case.
- D.** Not yet. It is a readiness review, not an automatic change in responsibility. We will assess the evidence and identify any remaining support you need.

[Answers and explanations, page 150](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 03 / PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK AND DOCUMENTATION

Give specific performance feedback, invite factual context, and record an observable improvement standard.

Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict

Manager Priya and analyst Daniel review two weekly reports, dated September 11 and 18. Both omitted the summary section required by the agreed template, and Priya had to request it separately. A draft note calls Daniel careless and unmotivated. No explanation for the omissions has been established. Priya wants the next report, due September 25, to include the summary. This is a feedback meeting; no formal warning or disciplinary decision has been made.

People: Priya, Team manager; Daniel, Analyst.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What was missing from the two reports?

- A. A signed disciplinary warning
- B. All supporting calculations
- C. The agreed summary section
- D. Every data table

2. What does the draft note wrongly assume?

- A. That a summary was required
- B. That the manager requested the missing sections
- C. A motive and personality judgment not established by the facts
- D. That the reports have dates

3. What is the current meeting status?

- A. A completed dismissal
- B. A confirmed final warning
- C. A completed appeal outcome
- D. Feedback without a formal disciplinary decision

[Answers and explanations, page 120](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

performance expectation

The standard of work or behavior required for a role.

clarify performance expectations

performance gap

A difference between expected and observed performance.

identify a performance gap

specific example

A concrete instance supporting the feedback.

give a specific example

employee response

The employee's account, explanation, or comment.

record the employee response

attribution

An explanation assigning an outcome to a cause or person.

check the attribution

performance standard

A defined level or feature of acceptable work.

apply the performance standard

observable behavior

An action that can be specifically described or evidenced.

describe observable behavior

feedback conversation

A discussion of work, its effects, and improvement.

hold a feedback conversation

impact statement

An explanation of the effect of the observed work or behavior.

make an impact statement

barrier

A factor that may prevent the expected work.

explore a work barrier

recency bias

Overweighting the most recent events when judging a longer period.

avoid recency bias

measurable objective

A target whose achievement can be checked against stated criteria.

agree a measurable objective

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

performance expectation PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION

clarify performance expectations

Keep the meaning precise: The standard of work or behavior required for a role.

impact statement IMPACT STATEMENT

make an impact statement

Keep the meaning precise: An explanation of the effect of the observed work or behavior.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

improvement action

A specified step intended to address a performance gap.

confirm the improvement action

review date

The planned date for checking progress or an outcome.

set a review date

factual record

Documentation distinguishing evidence from interpretation.

maintain a factual record

informal coaching

Developmental guidance outside a stated formal disciplinary stage.

provide informal coaching

performance improvement plan

A structured plan specifying improvements, support, and review arrangements.

review the performance improvement plan

right of response

An opportunity to answer a concern under the relevant process.

provide a right of response

support commitment

Assistance the manager or organization agrees to provide.

record the support commitment

contemporaneous note

A record made at or near the time of the event.

keep a contemporaneous note

acknowledgment of receipt

Confirmation that a document was received, not necessarily agreed with.

obtain acknowledgment of receipt

formal warning

A notice issued under an applicable formal employment process.

distinguish a formal warning

calibration meeting

A discussion aligning performance ratings with common standards.

prepare for a calibration meeting

follow-up evidence

Later information used to assess whether the agreed change occurred.

review follow-up evidence

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

measurable objective **MEASURABLE OBJECTIVE**

agree a measurable objective

Keep the meaning precise: A target whose achievement can be checked against stated criteria.

factual record **FACTUAL RECORD**

maintain a factual record

Keep the meaning precise: Documentation distinguishing evidence from interpretation.

Phrases that move the work forward

Open with the work

I want to discuss the September 11 and 18 reports.

State the impact

I had to request the summary separately before completing my review.

Avoid a motive claim

I have not established why the section was missing.

Verify the document

Let us compare that file with the agreed version.

Offer specific support

I will send the current template and confirm the required section.

Correct the label

The note should describe the omissions, not call you unmotivated.

Clarify the stage

This meeting is feedback, not a formal warning.

Close the next step

Confirm the report date, required section, and review arrangement.

Name the gap

Both reports omitted the agreed summary section.

Invite context

Please walk me through how you prepared those reports.

Separate the account

You explained that you used an older template.

Keep the standard clear

The September 25 report needs the summary section.

Define the check

We will review completeness against that template.

Preserve disagreement

We can record your response without pretending we agree on every point.

Distinguish receipt

Acknowledging receipt does not necessarily mean agreeing with the note.

Assess the follow-up

Judge the next submission against the agreed standard.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Invite context

Useful wording: Please walk me through how you prepared those reports.

Purpose: Avoid a motive claim

Useful wording: I have not established why the section was missing.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which opening is most precise?

- A.** The September 11 and 18 reports omitted the required summary.
- B.** You never care about your work.
- C.** Your personality is the problem.
- D.** Every report you have ever written is wrong.

2. Which note preserves the distinction between an account and a verified cause?

- A.** Daniel admitted carelessness by confirming that the summary was missing.
- B.** The manager verified a template error when Daniel described the file.
- C.** Daniel said he used an older template; comparison with the current file is pending.
- D.** The older template caused both omissions; no comparison is needed.

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A discussion of work, its effects, and improvement. Which term fits?

- A.** review date
- B.** feedback conversation
- C.** attribution
- D.** performance improvement plan

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict".
Priya: "I will remove them. Before I revise the note, can you show me the file you used and explain how you prepared the reports?" **Daniel:** [missing response] **Priya:** "Then I will attribute that explanation to you and mark the version check outstanding. I will not record a template fault as already proven." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** The performance standard is clear, but I need that version. Could you send the file rather than just the folder name, so we compare the same document?
- B.** I can work to that measurable objective. If the current file still leaves something unclear, I will ask before submitting rather than omit the section again.
- C.** I understand the performance gap. The tables were there, but the summary was not. I am concerned about the draft note calling me careless and unmotivated.
- D.** Yes. My employee response is that I used an older template without a summary heading. I will send it, but we have not compared the versions yet.

[Answers and explanations, page 120](#)

One useful distinction

The observed fact is that two dated reports lacked a required section. That supports feedback about completeness, not a conclusion that Daniel is unmotivated. An employee explanation is a reported account until the relevant facts are checked.

E Conversation

Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict

Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

performance gap / support commitment / follow-up evidence / factual record /
impact statement / acknowledgment of receipt / informal coaching / performance standard
/ measurable objective / employee response

- 01 **Priya:** Thanks for meeting with me. The reports dated September eleventh and eighteenth both omitted the required summary. I had to request it separately before finishing my review.
- 02 **Daniel:** I understand the ¹ _____. The tables were there, but the summary was not. I am concerned about the draft note calling me careless and unmotivated.
- 03 **Priya:** You are right to question those words. I can describe what was missing and its effect, but I have not established your motivation.
- 04 **Daniel:** Please keep the ² _____ about the extra requests. That is specific. The character labels suggest you have already decided why the omissions happened.
- 05 **Priya:** I will remove them. Before I revise the note, can you show me the file you used and explain how you prepared the reports?
- 06 **Daniel:** Yes. My ³ _____ is that I used an older template without a summary heading. I will send it, but we have not compared the versions yet.
- 07 **Priya:** Then I will attribute that explanation to you and mark the version check outstanding. I will not record a template fault as already proven.
- 08 **Daniel:** That makes the ⁴ _____ clearer. Please also retain the dates and the fact that I supplied the summary after you requested it.
- 09 **Priya:** For September twenty-fifth, the report needs the summary as well as the supporting tables. I will review it against the current agreed template.
- 10 **Daniel:** The ⁵ _____ is clear, but I need that version. Could you send the file rather than just the folder name, so we compare the same document?

Conversation continues on the next page.

Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Priya:** I will send it today and identify the required heading. We will also check whether the shared folder still contains an outdated copy.
- 12 **Daniel:** Please include that ⁶ _____ in the note. I will check the required section before submission and raise any unresolved version difference before the deadline.
- 13 **Priya:** Agreed. The next step is a complete report on September twenty-fifth, checked against that file. It is not an instruction simply to show more enthusiasm.
- 14 **Daniel:** I can work to that ⁷ _____. If the current file still leaves something unclear, I will ask before submitting rather than omit the section again.
- 15 **Priya:** I also need to correct the meeting label. This is a feedback discussion; no formal warning or other disciplinary decision has been made.
- 16 **Daniel:** Then please label it ⁸ _____, not a warning. I want the record to show the actual stage as well as the work we discussed.
- 17 **Priya:** I will send the revised note for you to check. Please identify any remaining factual errors and let me know that you received it.
- 18 **Daniel:** I can give an ⁹ _____ without agreeing to wording I still dispute. Will you keep my response with the note if something remains unresolved?
- 19 **Priya:** Yes. I will preserve your actual response. We will judge progress from the next submission against the agreed requirement, not from receipt of this note.
- 20 **Daniel:** Understood. The September twenty-fifth report will provide the ¹⁰ _____. Today I will send my earlier template, and you will send the current one.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. performance gap / 2. impact statement / 3. employee response / 4. factual record / 5. performance standard / 6. support commitment / 7. measurable objective / 8. informal coaching / 9. acknowledgment of receipt / 10. follow-up evidence

[Why these answers fit, page 121](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict

Return to the case

Manager Priya and analyst Daniel review two weekly reports, dated September 11 and 18. Both omitted the summary section required by the agreed template, and Priya had to request it separately. A draft note calls Daniel careless and unmotivated. No explanation for the omissions has been established. Priya wants the next report, due September 25, to include the summary. This is a feedback meeting; no formal warning or disciplinary decision has been made.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. Which objective is measurable?

- A. Never have another difficulty of any kind.
- B. Include the required summary in the September 25 report and check it against the agreed template.
- C. Care much more from now on.
- D. Become a better person immediately.

2. What does a receipt acknowledgment alone establish?

- A. Every statement in it is agreed
- B. A formal warning was issued
- C. The employee waived every possible concern
- D. The note was received

[Answers and explanations, page 123](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Stress September 25, the current template, and receipt without forced agreement.

Direct feedback can remain respectful

Name the work and its effect without assigning a character flaw. Invite the employee to explain the sequence and barriers. A clear expectation is easier to act on than a softened hint, while a specific record is fairer than an unsupported judgment about motivation.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

Record the event, not a motive

Two timesheets lacked project codes. The employee says the code list was unavailable; this has not been verified. The next timesheet must include the codes by Friday.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

Friday / verified / codes / unavailable

- 01 **Manager:** Two timesheets omitted the project ¹ _____.
- 02 **Employee:** My explanation is that the list was ² _____.
- 03 **Manager:** That explanation still needs to be ³ _____.
- 04 **Employee:** The corrected next timesheet is due ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. codes / 2. unavailable / 3. verified / 4. Friday

[Why these answers fit, page 123](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict". Priya: "Agreed. The next step is a complete report on September twenty-fifth, checked against that file. It is not an instruction simply to show more enthusiasm." Daniel: [missing response] Priya: "I also need to correct the meeting label. This is a feedback discussion; no formal warning or other disciplinary decision has been made." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Yes. My employee response is that I used an older template without a summary heading. I will send it, but we have not compared the versions yet.
- B.** I understand the performance gap. The tables were there, but the summary was not. I am concerned about the draft note calling me careless and unmotivated.
- C.** I can give an acknowledgment of receipt without agreeing to wording I still dispute. Will you keep my response with the note if something remains unresolved?
- D.** I can work to that measurable objective. If the current file still leaves something unclear, I will ask before submitting rather than omit the section again.

[Answers and explanations, page 124](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 04 / EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Listen empathetically, attribute accounts accurately, and explain process limits without promising secrecy or a finding.

Receive the concern without deciding the case

Employee Tomas tells HR adviser Imani that colleague Reed excluded him from two project meetings and made a dismissive comment on September 15. Tomas recalls the words but has not supplied the invitations or messages. He thinks another colleague may have heard the comment; that has not been checked. Imani is receiving the first account, not deciding whether misconduct occurred. Tomas asks whether the conversation can remain entirely secret and whether Reed will be disciplined.

People: Tomas, Employee raising a concern; Imani, HR adviser.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What evidence is available at the start?

- A. Verified invitations and message records
- B. Tomas's initial account
- C. A completed investigation finding
- D. Confirmed witness testimony from everyone present

2. What is Imani's role in this conversation?

- A. Guarantee that no one else will ever know
- B. Receive and clarify the concern
- C. Announce Reed's discipline
- D. Decide a legal claim immediately

3. What is known about the possible witness?

- A. The colleague issued a disciplinary decision.
- B. Tomas thinks someone may have heard the comment.
- C. The colleague has already confirmed every word.
- D. The colleague has denied being present.

[Answers and explanations, page 125](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

employee relations

Work addressing the employment relationship and workplace concerns.

manage employee-relations concerns

allegation

A claim about conduct that requires appropriate assessment.

record an allegation

respondent

A person responding to an allegation under the relevant process.

hear the respondent's account

reported account

Information attributed to the person who supplied it.

attribute a reported account

contemporaneous record

A document or note created at or near the event.

preserve contemporaneous records

witness

Someone who may have relevant knowledge about an event.

identify a possible witness

intake

The initial receipt and clarification of a concern.

conduct an intake conversation

complainant

A person raising a complaint under a defined process.

contact the complainant

firsthand account

Information from someone who directly experienced or observed an event.

distinguish a firsthand account

corroboration

Independent information supporting an account.

seek corroboration

chronology

Events arranged in time order.

establish the chronology

neutral question

A question that does not assume the desired answer or conclusion.

ask a neutral question

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

employee relations EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

manage employee-relations concerns

Keep the meaning precise: Work addressing the employment relationship and workplace concerns.

firsthand account FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT

distinguish a firsthand account

Keep the meaning precise: Information from someone who directly experienced or observed an event.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

leading question

A question suggesting the answer or assuming a contested fact.

avoid leading questions

impartiality

An approach not favoring a person or predetermined conclusion.

maintain impartiality

confidentiality

Appropriate protection and restricted handling of information.

explain confidentiality limits

retaliation concern

A concern about adverse treatment connected to protected conduct or reporting.

raise a retaliation concern

evidence preservation

Keeping relevant original information available and intact.

arrange evidence preservation

substantiated

Supported under the relevant process and evidential standard.

explain a substantiated finding

scope of inquiry

The issues and boundaries to be examined.

define the scope of inquiry

conflict of interest

A connection or interest that could compromise fair handling.

disclose a conflict of interest

need-to-know basis

Sharing information with people who require it for a legitimate purpose.

share on a need-to-know basis

interim measure

A temporary arrangement pending review, not itself a finding.

explain an interim measure

finding

A conclusion reached through the applicable assessment process.

distinguish a finding from an allegation

case update

Information about the progress or status of a concern.

provide a case update

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

neutral question NEUTRAL QUESTION

ask a neutral question

Keep the meaning precise: A question that does not assume the desired answer or conclusion.

confidentiality CONFIDENTIALITY

explain confidentiality limits

Keep the meaning precise: Appropriate protection and restricted handling of information.

Phrases that move the work forward

Acknowledge the concern

Thank you for bringing this to me.

Clarify direct knowledge

Which parts did you personally see or hear?

Request the record

Please identify the relevant invitations and messages.

Keep the witness status open

We have not yet heard from the possible witness.

Explain information handling

I will handle the information carefully and explain appropriate sharing.

Clarify the next step

The concern will go through the applicable review process.

Preserve the original

Keep the relevant messages in their original form.

Set a realistic update

I will contact you on Friday with the current process status.

Invite the sequence

Please describe what happened and when.

Separate recollection

Are those the exact words you remember, or a summary?

Attribute the account

I will record this as your account of the events.

Avoid prejudice

I cannot determine the outcome from this conversation alone.

Avoid an absolute promise

I cannot promise that no one else will need to know.

Keep reporting available

Please raise any further concern, including possible retaliation.

Distinguish a temporary measure

A temporary arrangement is not itself a finding.

Check the note

Please tell me if my summary misstates what you reported.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Separate recollection

Useful wording: Are those the exact words you remember, or a summary?

Purpose: Request the record

Useful wording: Please identify the relevant invitations and messages.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which intake note is most accurate?

- A.** Tomas reported exclusion from two meetings; invitations have not yet been reviewed.
- B.** Reed is guilty because Tomas spoke first.
- C.** No concern exists because documents are missing.
- D.** Every colleague confirmed deliberate exclusion.

2. Which question avoids adding facts to the September 15 account?

- A.** Which confirmed witness has already verified your recollection?
- B.** What punishment would address the misconduct we have established?
- C.** Where did the comment occur, who was present, and which words do you recall?
- D.** At the September 15 meeting, why did Reed deliberately exclude you again?

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A person raising a complaint under a defined process. Which term fits?

- A.** contemporaneous record
- B.** impartiality
- C.** evidence preservation
- D.** complainant

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "The comment was said directly to me. The reason I think I was excluded from the meetings is that I heard about them afterward from someone else." Imani: [missing response] Tomas: "There was a colleague nearby. I can give you the name, but I have not asked what they heard, so I cannot say they will confirm my account." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** We have an allegation, not a finding. The relevant review needs to examine the information fairly, and I cannot promise a particular outcome from this conversation.
- B.** We can build a chronology first. Please separate what you remember clearly from anything you are unsure about, and identify the meetings as specifically as you can.
- C.** That distinction matters. The comment is part of your firsthand account, while the meeting information has another source. I will not combine them as though you directly observed everything.
- D.** Please report any retaliation concern through the available route. We should record the facts and assess the concern, not pre-decide either that retaliation occurred or that it could not occur.

[Answers and explanations, page 125](#)

One useful distinction

Write Tomas reported that he was excluded, not Reed deliberately excluded Tomas as an established finding. Record exact words only when they are actually supplied, and label uncertain recollection. A possible witness is not yet corroboration.

E Conversation

Receive the concern without deciding the case

Receive the concern without deciding the case

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

witness / evidence preservation / allegation / firsthand account / case update /
need-to-know basis / chronology / retaliation concern / confidentiality / intake

- 01 **Tomas:** I was left out of two project meetings, and Reed made a dismissive comment on September fifteenth. I am worried that bringing this up will make things worse.
- 02 **Imani:** Thank you for telling me. This ¹ _____ is for understanding your account and explaining next steps, not announcing a conclusion.
- 03 **Tomas:** I can describe the comment, although I would like a moment to remember the exact words. I do not have the invitations open right now.
- 04 **Imani:** We can build a ² _____ first. Please separate what you remember clearly from anything you are unsure about, and identify the meetings as specifically as you can.
- 05 **Tomas:** The comment was said directly to me. The reason I think I was excluded from the meetings is that I heard about them afterward from someone else.
- 06 **Imani:** That distinction matters. The comment is part of your ³ _____, while the meeting information has another source. I will not combine them as though you directly observed everything.
- 07 **Tomas:** There was a colleague nearby. I can give you the name, but I have not asked what they heard, so I cannot say they will confirm my account.
- 08 **Imani:** I will identify them as a possible ⁴ _____. We have not heard their account, so the note should not present their involvement as independent confirmation.
- 09 **Tomas:** Can you keep this entirely secret? I am uneasy about Reed hearing a different version of what I said before I have checked the summary.
- 10 **Imani:** I will explain the limits of ⁵ _____. I will handle the information carefully, but others may need to know to address the concern.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Receive the concern without deciding the case

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Tomas:** I am still uneasy about who will hear this. Can you explain who may need the information and whom I should contact if anything changes?
- 12 **Imani:** Appropriate sharing should be on a ⁶ _____. I will explain the process and contact route without restricting protected reporting rights.
- 13 **Tomas:** Will Reed be disciplined? Part of me wants a clear answer now, but I realize you have only heard from me.
- 14 **Imani:** We have an ⁷ _____, not a finding. The relevant review needs to examine the information fairly, and I cannot promise a particular outcome from this conversation.
- 15 **Tomas:** I can provide the messages and identify the invitations I expected. Some details may support my interpretation, while others may show something I did not know.
- 16 **Imani:** Preserve the originals for ⁸ _____. We need the actual records, including context, rather than edited extracts that accidentally leave out information relevant to the concern.
- 17 **Tomas:** My biggest worry is what happens after I raise this. If my assignments suddenly change, I would want someone to examine that rather than assume it is unrelated.
- 18 **Imani:** Please report any ⁹ _____ through the available route. We should record the facts and assess the concern, not pre-decide either that retaliation occurred or that it could not occur.
- 19 **Tomas:** Before we finish, could you read back the main points? I want the note to distinguish my recollection, what I inferred, and what still needs checking.
- 20 **Imani:** Yes, and I will give you a ¹⁰ _____ on Friday. That is a commitment to communicate the status, not a promise that the review or an outcome will be complete then.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. intake / 2. chronology / 3. firsthand account / 4. witness / 5. confidentiality / 6. need-to-know basis / 7. allegation / 8. evidence preservation / 9. retaliation concern / 10. case update

[Why these answers fit, page 126](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

Receive the concern without deciding the case

Return to the case

Employee Tomas tells HR adviser Imani that colleague Reed excluded him from two project meetings and made a dismissive comment on September 15. Tomas recalls the words but has not supplied the invitations or messages. He thinks another colleague may have heard the comment; that has not been checked. Imani is receiving the first account, not deciding whether misconduct occurred. Tomas asks whether the conversation can remain entirely secret and whether Reed will be disciplined.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. What is the best response to a request for total secrecy?

- A. Explain careful handling and the limits of necessary, appropriate sharing.
- B. Promise that no person can ever learn anything.
- C. Publish the account to the whole team.
- D. Require silence about every concern in every setting.

2. What does a temporary separation arrangement establish by itself?

- A. That the respondent has admitted the conduct
- B. That no review is needed
- C. A temporary process measure, not a finding of guilt
- D. That every allegation is proven

[Answers and explanations, page 128](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Read the limits of confidentiality and Friday's status-update promise without adding a discipline outcome.

Empathy is not a verdict

Thank someone for raising a concern and explain what you can do next. Taking the account seriously does not require declaring it proven. Equally, an incomplete record is not a reason to dismiss the person. Be candid about appropriate information sharing and avoid guarantees about another employee.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

A report is not yet corroboration

An employee reports a comment and names a possible witness. The witness has not been contacted. HR has promised a Tuesday status update, not an outcome.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

finding / contacted / update / account

- 01 **Adviser:** The note records the employee's ¹ _____.
- 02 **Manager:** The possible witness has not yet been ² _____.
- 03 **Adviser:** The review has not produced a ³ _____.
- 04 **Manager:** Tuesday is the promised status ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. account / 2. contacted / 3. finding / 4. update

[Why these answers fit, page 128](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case". Tomas: "Will Reed be disciplined? Part of me wants a clear answer now, but I realize you have only heard from me." Imani: [missing response] Tomas: "I can provide the messages and identify the invitations I expected. Some details may support my interpretation, while others may show something I did not know." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** We can build a chronology first. Please separate what you remember clearly from anything you are unsure about, and identify the meetings as specifically as you can.
- B.** I will identify them as a possible witness. We have not heard their account, so the note should not present their involvement as independent confirmation.
- C.** We have an allegation, not a finding. The relevant review needs to examine the information fairly, and I cannot promise a particular outcome from this conversation.
- D.** Preserve the originals for evidence preservation. We need the actual records, including context, rather than edited extracts that accidentally leave out information relevant to the concern.

[Answers and explanations, page 129](#)

Review 2 / Meaning and context

Use language from the lessons you have completed. Choose one answer per question.

Case file

Revisit "Performance Feedback and Documentation" and "Employee Relations and Investigations". Choose precise terminology, then reconstruct the missing responses using both neighboring turns. The final two questions also revisit earlier conversations.

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A difference between expected and observed performance. Which term fits?

- A. barrier
- B. support commitment
- C. formal warning
- D. performance gap

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: Independent information supporting an account. Which term fits?

- A. leading question
- B. retaliation concern
- C. employee relations
- D. corroboration

3. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "After the samples, I would like to see how a colleague handles live cases. The examples alone may not show the pace of the real queue." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "Will that colleague approve my work, or will you? I do not want friendly advice to become an approval I was never actually given." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A. We can arrange shadowing before your supervised cases. I will identify the colleague so you know who to ask about everyday workflow.
- B. We need explicit success criteria. I will check the required fields and whether you identified the correct escalation route for each case.
- C. The checklist only confirms access provisioning. We need to separate that setup from your learning plan and the responsibilities you will take on.
- D. Let us agree a first-month plan. Start with five sample cases by day ten, then supervised live work by day twenty.

Review 2 / Meaning and context / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "My biggest worry is what happens after I raise this. If my assignments suddenly change, I would want someone to examine that rather than assume it is unrelated." Imani: [missing response] Tomas: "Before we finish, could you read back the main points? I want the note to distinguish my recollection, what I inferred, and what still needs checking." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Yes, and I will give you a case update on Friday. That is a commitment to communicate the status, not a promise that the review or an outcome will be complete then.
- B.** That distinction matters. The comment is part of your firsthand account, while the meeting information has another source. I will not combine them as though you directly observed everything.
- C.** Please report any retaliation concern through the available route. We should record the facts and assess the concern, not pre-decide either that retaliation occurred or that it could not occur.
- D.** We can build a chronology first. Please separate what you remember clearly from anything you are unsure about, and identify the meetings as specifically as you can.

[Answers and explanations, page 153](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 05 / COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND EQUITY

Explain pay-range calculations and policy criteria while keeping fairness concerns and individual decisions open.

The midpoint is not an automatic salary

Employee Alex earns a USD 72,000 annual base salary in a role with a published USD 60,000-100,000 range. Alex assumes the USD 80,000 midpoint is what everyone should receive. HR partner Maya has a fictional policy stating that placement depends on role level, relevant experience, and an internal-equity review; midpoint placement is not automatic. A separate 5% target bonus is conditional, not guaranteed. No individual pay-review outcome or discrimination finding is supplied.

People: Alex, Employee; Maya, HR partner.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What is the range midpoint?

- A.** USD 60,000
- B.** USD 100,000
- C.** USD 80,000
- D.** USD 72,000

2. What does the fictional policy say about midpoint placement?

- A.** It replaces the individual review.
- B.** It is not automatic.
- C.** Everyone must immediately receive it.
- D.** It equals the guaranteed bonus.

3. What is the status of the 5% target bonus?

- A.** Included in the stated base salary
- B.** A confirmed salary increase
- C.** Conditional, not guaranteed
- D.** Already paid

[Answers and explanations, page 130](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

base salary

Fixed contractual salary before separate variable payments and benefits.

state the annual base salary

range minimum

The lower bound of the defined pay range.

identify the range minimum

midpoint

The central value of the defined range.

calculate the midpoint

range penetration

The share of the minimum-to-maximum interval reached by the salary.

calculate range penetration

job level

A defined category of responsibility and scope.

verify the job level

market benchmark

External pay information used for a defined comparison.

review the market benchmark

salary range

The stated minimum-to-maximum pay interval for a defined role or level.

publish a salary range

range maximum

The upper bound of the defined pay range.

identify the range maximum

compa-ratio

Base salary divided by the relevant range midpoint.

calculate the compa-ratio

pay grade

A category grouping roles within a compensation structure.

confirm the pay grade

job evaluation

Assessment of a role's relative requirements or value within a structure.

conduct a job evaluation

internal equity

Consistency and fairness of pay relationships within an organization.

review internal equity

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

base salary **BASE SALARY**

state the annual base salary

Keep the meaning precise: Fixed contractual salary before separate variable payments and benefits.

compa-ratio **COMPA-RATIO**

calculate the compa-ratio

Keep the meaning precise: Base salary divided by the relevant range midpoint.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

pay compression

A narrowing of pay differences between roles or experience levels.

examine pay compression

pay transparency

Openness about pay information, ranges, or decision processes.

explain pay transparency

promotion increase

A pay change associated with moving to a higher-level role.

distinguish a promotion increase

variable pay

Compensation dependent on specified results or conditions.

distinguish variable pay

total cash compensation

Base pay plus the relevant cash incentive payments.

define total cash compensation

benefits eligibility

The conditions for participating in a particular benefit.

confirm benefits eligibility

pay disparity

A difference in compensation requiring a defined comparison and context.

investigate a pay disparity

merit increase

A pay increase linked to performance under the applicable policy.

review a merit increase

market adjustment

A pay change intended to address relevant external market positioning.

assess a market adjustment

target bonus

A reference bonus amount subject to the plan's actual conditions.

explain the target bonus

total rewards

The wider package of pay, benefits, and other employment value.

describe total rewards

compensation review

A process for examining pay under the relevant criteria.

request a compensation review

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

internal equity INTERNAL EQUITY

review internal equity

Keep the meaning precise: Consistency and fairness of pay relationships within an organization.

promotion increase PROMOTION INCREASE

distinguish a promotion increase

Keep the meaning precise: A pay change associated with moving to a higher-level role.

Phrases that move the work forward

Acknowledge the question

I understand why the published midpoint prompted your question.

Explain the range

The published range runs from 60,000 to 100,000.

Separate policy from inference

The policy does not promise midpoint pay to every employee.

Define the ratio

Your base salary is 90% of the midpoint.

Separate the bonus

The 5% target is conditional variable pay.

Avoid guaranteed totals

A target total is not a promise of the actual payout.

Invite the specific concern

Which aspect of the placement or comparison would you like reviewed?

Avoid an unsupported outcome

I cannot promise a raise before the review.

State the base

Your annual base salary is 72,000 dollars.

Calculate the center

The midpoint is 80,000 dollars.

Name the criteria

Placement uses role level, relevant experience, and an internal-equity review.

Avoid a percentage mix-up

Thirty percent is range penetration, not the compa-ratio.

Quantify the target

At this base salary, the target amount is 3,600 dollars.

Keep fairness open

These calculations do not settle your individual equity concern.

Use the proper route

I can explain the compensation-review process and required facts.

Close with accountability

I will confirm the review owner and next update.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Calculate the center

Useful wording: The midpoint is 80,000 dollars.

Purpose: Separate policy from inference

Useful wording: The policy does not promise midpoint pay to every employee.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. What is Alex's compa-ratio?

- A.** 120%
- B.** 90%
- C.** 30%
- D.** 5%

2. What does 30% represent here?

- A.** The guaranteed annual raise
- B.** The employee's actual bonus payout
- C.** Salary position across the 60,000-100,000 interval
- D.** Salary as a share of the midpoint

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The upper bound of the defined pay range. Which term fits?

- A.** job level
- B.** range maximum
- C.** pay transparency
- D.** total cash compensation

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "The midpoint is not an automatic salary". Alex: "The statement shows ninety percent in one place and thirty percent in another. I thought at least one comparison must be wrong." Maya: [missing response] Alex: "Show me how thirty percent works, please. I do not want to challenge a calculation simply because it uses a different reference." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Your compa-ratio is ninety percent: seventy-two thousand divided by eighty thousand. That percentage compares base pay with the midpoint, not with the range width.
- B.** It means your base salary is eight thousand below that reference. It does not, by itself, tell us whether your placement followed the policy correctly.
- C.** They belong in the wider total rewards statement. That can explain the package without pretending every benefit is an extra dollar of base pay.
- D.** Your range penetration uses twelve thousand above the sixty-thousand minimum, divided by the forty-thousand interval. Both figures can be correct because their denominators differ.

[Answers and explanations, page 130](#)

One useful distinction

The midpoint is $(60,000 + 100,000) / 2 = 80,000$. Compa-ratio is $72,000 / 80,000 = 90\%$. Range penetration is $(72,000 - 60,000) / (100,000 - 60,000) = 30\%$. The two percentages answer different questions.

E Conversation

The midpoint is not an automatic salary

The midpoint is not an automatic salary

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

base salary / compensation review / total rewards / compa-ratio / range penetration / midpoint / internal equity / target bonus / pay disparity / variable pay

- 01 **Alex:** My base is seventy-two thousand dollars, but the published range has an eighty-thousand midpoint. Does that mean my salary is eight thousand short of what it should be?
- 02 **Maya:** It means your ¹ _____ is eight thousand below that reference. It does not, by itself, tell us whether your placement followed the policy correctly.
- 03 **Alex:** I read the middle of the range as the standard salary everyone should receive. Is that not what the figure means?
- 04 **Maya:** Not under this policy. The ² _____ is eighty thousand, while placement depends on role level, relevant experience, and an internal-equity review. It is not automatic.
- 05 **Alex:** The statement shows ninety percent in one place and thirty percent in another. I thought at least one comparison must be wrong.
- 06 **Maya:** Your ³ _____ is ninety percent: seventy-two thousand divided by eighty thousand. That percentage compares base pay with the midpoint, not with the range width.

E Conversation / continued

- 07 **Alex:** Show me how thirty percent works, please. I do not want to challenge a calculation simply because it uses a different reference.
- 08 **Maya:** Your ⁴ _____ uses twelve thousand above the sixty-thousand minimum, divided by the forty-thousand interval. Both figures can be correct because their denominators differ.
- 09 **Alex:** That answers the arithmetic. My concern is that my relevant experience was missed when my placement was set. Can somebody check that?
- 10 **Maya:** Yes, I will identify the owner for a ⁵ _____ and the facts they need. Being inside the range is not a reason to close your concern.

Conversation continues on the next page.

The midpoint is not an automatic salary

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Alex:** I also want the comparison to use roles with similar responsibilities. I am not asking you to disclose another employee's personal record.
- 12 **Maya:** That is relevant to ⁶ _____. The review needs the appropriate comparisons and policy criteria. I cannot promise its conclusion before those have been examined.
- 13 **Alex:** The five-percent bonus would add thirty-six hundred. Can I describe seventy-five thousand six hundred as my guaranteed annual cash amount?
- 14 **Maya:** No. The ⁷ _____ is conditional. The calculation gives the target amount, but the plan's conditions determine the actual payment, which is not confirmed here.
- 15 **Alex:** Then I will label that total base plus target, not guaranteed cash. Does the bonus increase my salary comparison from ninety percent to ninety-four point five?
- 16 **Maya:** No. This ratio uses base salary, not ⁸ _____. Adding a conditional incentive changes the numerator and stops it being the base-pay compa-ratio we calculated.
- 17 **Alex:** That distinction helps. Please show the benefits separately as well; I do not want to add every package item to my salary figure.
- 18 **Maya:** They belong in the wider ⁹ _____ statement. That can explain the package without pretending every benefit is an extra dollar of base pay.
- 19 **Alex:** Please confirm the reviewer and next contact date. I want the experience question addressed, even though neither the midpoint nor the bonus promises a raise.
- 20 **Maya:** I will confirm those details and retain your ¹⁰ _____ concern for review. We have explained the numbers, not reached a finding about your individual placement.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. base salary / 2. midpoint / 3. compa-ratio / 4. range penetration / 5. compensation review / 6. internal equity / 7. target bonus / 8. variable pay / 9. total rewards / 10. pay disparity

[Why these answers fit, page 131](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

The midpoint is not an automatic salary

Return to the case

Employee Alex earns a USD 72,000 annual base salary in a role with a published USD 60,000-100,000 range. Alex assumes the USD 80,000 midpoint is what everyone should receive. HR partner Maya has a fictional policy stating that placement depends on role level, relevant experience, and an internal-equity review; midpoint placement is not automatic. A separate 5% target bonus is conditional, not guaranteed. No individual pay-review outcome or discrimination finding is supplied.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. Which statement handles the fairness question properly?

- A. Below midpoint proves discrimination without further facts.
- B. Discussing the range automatically approves a raise.
- C. The range calculation does not replace review of your individual concern.
- D. Inside the range means every possible concern is invalid.

2. Alex adds the conditional bonus to base and divides 75,600 by 80,000. What is wrong with calling 94.5% the base-pay compa-ratio?

- A. That numerator includes a target incentive; the stated base-pay ratio remains $72,000 / 80,000 = 90\%$.
- B. Nothing; target incentives always become fixed base salary.
- C. The denominator should be the 40,000 range width for a compa-ratio.
- D. The arithmetic should produce 30%, because all range comparisons are identical.

[Answers and explanations, page 133](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Correct the proposed 94.5% base-pay ratio and keep the bonus conditional.

Explain without shutting down the concern

A correct calculation does not settle whether an individual pay decision is fair. Explain the range and the review process, then address the actual question. Avoid using policy language as a way to dismiss a concern, promise a raise, or discourage legitimate discussion of pay.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

A ratio and a target

Annual base salary is USD 54,000, the range midpoint is USD 60,000, and the conditional target bonus is 10% of base. No actual payout is confirmed.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

ninety / guaranteed / dollars / unconfirmed

- 01 **Employee:** My compa-ratio is ¹ _____ percent.
- 02 **HR:** The target bonus is 5,400 ² _____.
- 03 **Employee:** That target is not ³ _____.
- 04 **HR:** The actual payout remains ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. ninety / 2. dollars / 3. guaranteed / 4. unconfirmed

[Why these answers fit, page 133](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "The midpoint is not an automatic salary". Alex: "The five-percent bonus would add thirty-six hundred. Can I describe seventy-five thousand six hundred as my guaranteed annual cash amount?" Maya: [missing response] Alex: "Then I will label that total base plus target, not guaranteed cash. Does the bonus increase my salary comparison from ninety percent to ninety-four point five?" Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** No. The target bonus is conditional. The calculation gives the target amount, but the plan's conditions determine the actual payment, which is not confirmed here.
- B.** Not under this policy. The midpoint is eighty thousand, while placement depends on role level, relevant experience, and an internal-equity review. It is not automatic.
- C.** That is relevant to internal equity. The review needs the appropriate comparisons and policy criteria. I cannot promise its conclusion before those have been examined.
- D.** It means your base salary is eight thousand below that reference. It does not, by itself, tell us whether your placement followed the policy correctly.

[Answers and explanations, page 134](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 06 / POLICY COMMUNICATION AND COMPLIANCE

Acknowledge a work-adjustment request promptly and explain an individualized review without collecting unnecessary sensitive information.

Received is not approved or refused

Manager Sana receives a request from an employee to start at 9:30 rather than 8:30 from October 7 for a health-related reason. HR adviser Ben has not reviewed it. The request gives the desired schedule but does not explain the work barrier or coverage implications. No decision or temporary arrangement is approved. Sana asks whether the request is automatically accepted, or whether the standard-hours policy permits an immediate refusal. Ben must clarify the process and information boundaries.

People: Sana, Department manager; Ben, HR adviser.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What change has the employee requested?

- A. An approved change for every employee
- B. A completed medical determination
- C. A 9:30 start instead of 8:30 from October 7
- D. A confirmed permanent promotion

2. What is the current status?

- A. Automatically accepted
- B. Formally refused after review
- C. Implemented as a temporary arrangement
- D. Received but not yet reviewed or decided

3. Which information still needs appropriate clarification?

- A. The work barrier and relevant coverage implications
- B. The employee's complete private history for the whole team
- C. A predetermined reason to deny the request
- D. A diagnosis invented by the manager

[Answers and explanations, page 135](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

accommodation request

A request for a change addressing a relevant workplace barrier under applicable rules.

acknowledge an accommodation request

interactive process

A discussion to clarify needs and explore an effective arrangement.

engage in the interactive process

functional limitation

A restriction affecting the performance of an activity.

clarify a functional limitation

individualized assessment

A review of the particular person's circumstances and work needs.

conduct an individualized assessment

alternative arrangement

Another proposed way of addressing the stated need.

explore an alternative arrangement

coverage requirement

A stated need for staffing or task availability at particular times.

clarify coverage requirements

work adjustment

A change to working arrangements intended to address a stated need.

discuss a work adjustment

essential function

A fundamental duty of the position under the applicable framework.

identify essential functions

workplace barrier

A feature of work that creates a relevant difficulty or limitation.

identify a workplace barrier

effective accommodation

An arrangement that addresses the relevant barrier.

assess an effective accommodation

modified schedule

A change to the employee's usual work hours or timing.

assess a modified schedule

interim arrangement

A temporary measure pending a fuller decision or review.

confirm an interim arrangement

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

accommodation request ACCOMMODATION REQUEST

acknowledge an accommodation request

Keep the meaning precise: A request for a change addressing a relevant workplace barrier under applicable rules.

workplace barrier WORKPLACE BARRIER

identify a workplace barrier

Keep the meaning precise: A feature of work that creates a relevant difficulty or limitation.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

implementation date

The date an authorized arrangement is to begin.
confirm the implementation date

supporting documentation

Relevant information used to assess a request under the proper process.
handle supporting documentation

restricted access

Limiting information access to authorized people and purposes.
maintain restricted access

policy owner

The person or function responsible for a policy's interpretation and upkeep.
consult the policy owner

undue hardship

Under the US disability framework, significant difficulty or expense assessed in context.
assess undue hardship

decision rationale

The supported explanation for an authorized decision.
document the decision rationale

review checkpoint

A planned point for checking progress or effectiveness.
set a review checkpoint

medical confidentiality

Appropriate protection of medical information.
preserve medical confidentiality

data minimization

Collecting only information needed for the legitimate purpose.
apply data minimization

policy exception

An authorized departure from a general rule, where applicable.
document a policy exception

request status

The current stage of a request, distinct from its outcome.
communicate request status

review route

The applicable path for questioning or revisiting a decision.
explain the review route

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

interim arrangement **INTERIM ARRANGEMENT**

confirm an interim arrangement

Keep the meaning precise: A temporary measure pending a fuller decision or review.

restricted access **RESTRICTED ACCESS**

maintain restricted access

Keep the meaning precise: Limiting information access to authorized people and purposes.

Phrases that move the work forward

Acknowledge promptly

We have received your request and will arrange the appropriate discussion.

Clarify the need

What work barrier is the requested schedule intended to address?

Use the right channel

Any necessary sensitive information should go through the designated confidential route.

Avoid automatic approval

Receipt of a request is not confirmation of the arrangement.

Explore alternatives

An alternative must address the actual barrier, not merely be easier to offer.

Protect the information

Share only what is appropriate for the person's role in the process.

Give a realistic checkpoint

I will confirm the next review step and contact date.

Explain the outcome properly

Communicate the actual decision and its supported rationale through the proper process.

State the status

The request has not yet been reviewed or decided.

Separate dates

October 7 is the requested start date, not a confirmed implementation date.

Avoid a blanket refusal

The standard-hours policy does not replace an individual review.

Identify the work need

We need a clear description of the relevant coverage requirements.

Keep authority clear

Confirm who can approve an interim arrangement.

Limit the manager's question

I need the relevant work information, not a team-wide medical explanation.

Distinguish recommendation

A proposed arrangement is not yet an authorized change.

Keep questions possible

Explain the available review route without discouraging the request.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Separate dates

Useful wording: October 7 is the requested start date, not a confirmed implementation date.

Purpose: Use the right channel

Useful wording: Any necessary sensitive information should go through the designated confidential route.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which first response is appropriate?

- A.** Refuse automatically because a standard schedule exists.
- B.** Acknowledge receipt and arrange the relevant discussion without promising the outcome.
- C.** Tell the team the employee's health details.
- D.** Approve automatically without review.

2. How should October 7 be described now?

- A.** Proof that review is unnecessary
- B.** The requested start date
- C.** The approved implementation date
- D.** The date of a completed refusal

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A fundamental duty of the position under the applicable framework. Which term fits?

- A.** essential function
- B.** alternative arrangement
- C.** supporting documentation
- D.** undue hardship

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "The message gives the preferred schedule, but not the difficulty it is intended to address. I want to ask a useful question without becoming intrusive." Ben: [missing response] Sana: "Would you handle any supporting health information? I do not want the employee to send it to a group mailbox that the whole department can open." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Yes, we will use the designated route for medical confidentiality. Any necessary supporting information should reach the authorized people under the applicable procedure, not become a general team update.
- B.** Ask about the workplace barrier through the appropriate process. We need enough relevant information to understand the request, not a public explanation of the employee's entire health history.
- C.** Any interim arrangement needs the relevant authorization and clear terms. A temporary label does not remove the need to state what is approved, for whom, and for how long.
- D.** That is part of the interactive process. An alternative has to address the relevant barrier; offering something unrelated does not become effective just because it sounds flexible.

[Answers and explanations, page 135](#)

One useful distinction

The requested start date is not an approved implementation date. Acknowledgment confirms receipt, not acceptance or refusal. An individualized process should clarify the relevant barrier and work requirements rather than treating a general schedule rule as the entire decision.

E Conversation

Received is not approved or refused

Received is not approved or refused

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

workplace barrier / decision rationale / medical confidentiality / implementation date / request status / interim arrangement / essential functions / individualized assessment / interactive process / accommodation request

- 01 **Sana:** An employee has asked to start at nine thirty instead of eight thirty from October seventh for a health-related reason. Does receiving the message mean I should approve it?
- 02 **Ben:** No. Acknowledge the ¹ _____ promptly and arrange the appropriate discussion. We have not reviewed the individual circumstances or approved an arrangement.
- 03 **Sana:** Our handbook lists the standard hours. I wondered whether I could simply quote that section and say the schedule cannot change.
- 04 **Ben:** The rule does not replace an ² _____. We need to understand the relevant need and work requirements, not jump from the existence of standard hours to a final refusal.
- 05 **Sana:** The message gives the preferred schedule, but not the difficulty it is intended to address. I want to ask a useful question without becoming intrusive.
- 06 **Ben:** Ask about the ³ _____ through the appropriate process. We need enough relevant information to understand the request, not a public explanation of the employee's entire health history.

Conversation / continued

- 07 **Sana:** Would you handle any supporting health information? I do not want the employee to send it to a group mailbox that the whole department can open.
- 08 **Ben:** Yes, we will use the designated route for ⁴ _____. Any necessary supporting information should reach the authorized people under the applicable procedure, not become a general team update.
- 09 **Sana:** I will list the early tasks and check which genuinely require eight-thirty coverage. Some may be scheduled that way simply because that is our usual routine.
- 10 **Ben:** Clarify the ⁵ _____ and the actual coverage needs. Separate a real task requirement from a customary schedule before treating them as interchangeable.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Received is not approved or refused

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Sana:** Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need.
- 12 **Ben:** That is part of the ⁶ _____. An alternative has to address the relevant barrier; offering something unrelated does not become effective just because it sounds flexible.
- 13 **Sana:** The employee asked to begin on October seventh. Should I tell payroll or the scheduling team that date is already confirmed?
- 14 **Ben:** Not as an ⁷ _____. It is the requested start date. We should move the review forward promptly and keep the status clear rather than quietly turn the request into an approved instruction.
- 15 **Sana:** What if there is a need for something temporary while the review continues? I should not improvise a promise outside my authority.
- 16 **Ben:** Any ⁸ _____ needs the relevant authorization and clear terms. A temporary label does not remove the need to state what is approved, for whom, and for how long.
- 17 **Sana:** I will acknowledge the request today and explain your contact route. Can we agree on the next update so the employee knows this is moving forward?
- 18 **Ben:** Exactly. Communicate ⁹ _____ accurately. Also establish a contact point and update time so the employee is not left wondering whether the request has disappeared.
- 19 **Sana:** If a decision is eventually made, we need to explain it clearly and provide the applicable route for questions, rather than send a bare yes or no.
- 20 **Ben:** Include the supported ¹⁰ _____ through the proper process. For now, the accurate message is received, review being arranged, and no decision or temporary schedule confirmed yet.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. accommodation request / 2. individualized assessment / 3. workplace barrier / 4. medical confidentiality / 5. essential functions / 6. interactive process / 7. implementation date / 8. interim arrangement / 9. request status / 10. decision rationale

[Why these answers fit, page 136](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

Received is not approved or refused

Return to the case

Manager Sana receives a request from an employee to start at 9:30 rather than 8:30 from October 7 for a health-related reason. HR adviser Ben has not reviewed it. The request gives the desired schedule but does not explain the work barrier or coverage implications. No decision or temporary arrangement is approved. Sana asks whether the request is automatically accepted, or whether the standard-hours policy permits an immediate refusal. Ben must clarify the process and information boundaries.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. Which information request respects the stated boundary?

- A. Collect unrelated private information just in case.
- B. Clarify the work barrier and use the designated route for any necessary sensitive support.
- C. Ask the employee to publish their complete medical history.
- D. Ask coworkers to guess a diagnosis.

2. HR proposes a different arrangement from the requested 9:30 start. What needs checking?

- A. Whether it addresses the actual barrier while meeting the relevant work requirements under the applicable process.
- B. Whether it is called flexible, which establishes that it is effective.
- C. Whether colleagues prefer it, which replaces individual assessment.
- D. Whether it avoids a schedule change, which establishes that no barrier remains.

[Answers and explanations, page 138](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles. Stress individualized review, relevant work information, and the designated confidential route.

Be prompt without pretending certainty

Acknowledge the request and arrange the appropriate discussion. A standard rule does not answer every individual case, and a request does not itself establish a decision. Ask about relevant work needs through the correct process; avoid making an employee disclose sensitive details in a team forum.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

Keep the requested date separate

An employee requests a schedule change from Monday. HR has acknowledged it, but assessment and approval are pending. No interim arrangement exists.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

requested / pending / approved / acknowledged

- 01 **Manager:** Monday is the ¹ _____ start date.
- 02 **HR:** The request has been ² _____.
- 03 **Manager:** The assessment is still ³ _____.
- 04 **HR:** No interim arrangement is ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. requested / 2. acknowledged / 3. pending / 4. approved

[Why these answers fit, page 138](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "The employee asked to begin on October seventh. Should I tell payroll or the scheduling team that date is already confirmed?" Ben: [missing response] Sana: "What if there is a need for something temporary while the review continues? I should not improvise a promise outside my authority." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Yes, we will use the designated route for medical confidentiality. Any necessary supporting information should reach the authorized people under the applicable procedure, not become a general team update.
- B.** Any interim arrangement needs the relevant authorization and clear terms. A temporary label does not remove the need to state what is approved, for whom, and for how long.
- C.** The rule does not replace an individualized assessment. We need to understand the relevant need and work requirements, not jump from the existence of standard hours to a final refusal.
- D.** Not as an implementation date. It is the requested start date. We should move the review forward promptly and keep the status clear rather than quietly turn the request into an approved instruction.

[Answers and explanations, page 139](#)

Review 3 / Meaning and context

Use language from the lessons you have completed. Choose one answer per question.

Case file

Revisit "Compensation, Benefits, and Equity" and "Policy Communication and Compliance". Choose precise terminology, then reconstruct the missing responses using both neighboring turns. The final two questions also revisit earlier conversations.

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The lower bound of the defined pay range. Which term fits?

- A. pay grade
- B. target bonus
- C. range minimum
- D. pay disparity

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: An arrangement that addresses the relevant barrier. Which term fits?

- A. implementation date
- B. accommodation request
- C. policy owner
- D. effective accommodation

3. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "Can you keep this entirely secret? I am uneasy about Reed hearing a different version of what I said before I have checked the summary." Imani: [missing response] Tomas: "I am still uneasy about who will hear this. Can you explain who may need the information and whom I should contact if anything changes?" Which response belongs in the gap?

- A. Thank you for telling me. This intake is for understanding your account and explaining next steps, not announcing a conclusion.
- B. Appropriate sharing should be on a need-to-know basis. I will explain the process and contact route without restricting protected reporting rights.
- C. I will explain the limits of confidentiality. I will handle the information carefully, but others may need to know to address the concern.
- D. I will identify them as a possible witness. We have not heard their account, so the note should not present their involvement as independent confirmation.

Review 3 / Meaning and context / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "I will acknowledge the request today and explain your contact route. Can we agree on the next update so the employee knows this is moving forward?" Ben: [missing response] Sana: "If a decision is eventually made, we need to explain it clearly and provide the applicable route for questions, rather than send a bare yes or no." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Include the supported decision rationale through the proper process. For now, the accurate message is received, review being arranged, and no decision or temporary schedule confirmed yet.
- B.** That is part of the interactive process. An alternative has to address the relevant barrier; offering something unrelated does not become effective just because it sounds flexible.
- C.** Exactly. Communicate request status accurately. Also establish a contact point and update time so the employee is not left wondering whether the request has disappeared.
- D.** Clarify the essential functions and the actual coverage needs. Separate a real task requirement from a customary schedule before treating them as interchangeable.

[Answers and explanations, page 156](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 07 / CONFLICT MEDIATION AND MANAGER COACHING

Coach a manager to separate positions from work needs and define a testable handoff without inventing shared fault or agreement.

Clarify the handoff before assigning blame

Manager Ken asks HR coach Daria for help with Rosa and Felix, who each say the other should own the weekly account reconciliation. Their role notes never assigned that recurring task. Ken proposes a two-week trial: Rosa assembles the inputs by Monday noon, Felix checks them by Tuesday 10:00, and Ken approves the result by Tuesday 15:00. The colleagues have not yet discussed or accepted the proposal. No misconduct allegation is supplied.

People: Ken, Team manager; Daria, HR coach.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What underlying gap is established?

- A. Ken already approved both completed reconciliations.
- B. The recurring task was never assigned in the role notes.
- C. Both colleagues signed the same clear ownership plan.
- D. A formal investigation proved equal misconduct.

2. Who would approve the result under Ken's proposal?

- A. Felix alone
- B. An unnamed client automatically
- C. Ken
- D. Rosa alone

3. What is the status of the two-week trial?

- A. Proposed, not yet discussed or accepted by the colleagues
- B. Already completed successfully
- C. A permanent policy accepted by everyone
- D. A disciplinary sanction already issued

[Answers and explanations, page 140](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

task ownership

Responsibility for ensuring a defined task is carried through.

clarify task ownership

position

A person's stated demand or preferred outcome in a disagreement.

distinguish a position

facilitated discussion

A conversation guided to clarify issues and possible arrangements.

arrange a facilitated discussion

ground rule

An agreed condition for how a discussion will proceed.

establish ground rules

paraphrase

A restatement used to check understanding of another person's meaning.

offer a neutral paraphrase

common ground

A relevant aim or fact the parties share.

identify common ground

role ambiguity

Uncertainty about responsibilities or expectations.

reduce role ambiguity

underlying interest

The need or concern behind a stated position.

identify underlying interests

mediation

A structured process using an impartial third party to help parties seek agreement.

assess whether mediation is appropriate

active listening

Listening that checks meaning before responding.

use active listening

reframing

Restating a conflict in terms that clarify the issue or shared work need.

use constructive reframing

boundary

A stated limit on responsibility, conduct, or authority.

clarify the boundary

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

task ownership TASK OWNERSHIP

clarify task ownership

Keep the meaning precise: Responsibility for ensuring a defined task is carried through.

mediation MEDIATION

assess whether mediation is appropriate

Keep the meaning precise: A structured process using an impartial third party to help parties seek agreement.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

handoff

Transfer of work or information between responsible people.

define the handoff

responsibility matrix

A record showing who performs, approves, or supports each task.

update the responsibility matrix

consulted party

Someone whose input is sought before a relevant decision or action.

identify consulted parties

working agreement

An explicit arrangement about how people will coordinate work.

record a working agreement

review meeting

A planned discussion assessing the arrangement or progress.

schedule a review meeting

coaching question

A question helping someone examine facts and choose a responsible action.

ask a coaching question

handoff criterion

The condition a work item must meet before transfer.

agree handoff criteria

accountable owner

The person answerable for the defined result.

name the accountable owner

escalation trigger

A stated condition requiring an issue to be referred.

define an escalation trigger

trial period

A limited time for testing an arrangement.

set a trial period

action log

A record of tasks, owners, dates, and status.

maintain an action log

false equivalence

Treating unequal or unestablished conduct as if responsibility were the same.

avoid false equivalence

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

boundary **BOUNDARY**

clarify the boundary

Keep the meaning precise: A stated limit on responsibility, conduct, or authority.

consulted party **CONSULTED PARTY**

identify consulted parties

Keep the meaning precise: Someone whose input is sought before a relevant decision or action.

Phrases that move the work forward

Start with the known gap

The role notes do not assign the recurring reconciliation.

Separate the positions

Each person says the other should own the task.

Reframe the issue

We need a reliable weekly handoff, not a contest over who cares more.

Name the dates

Inputs Monday noon, checks Tuesday 10:00, approval Tuesday 15:00.

Make a blockage visible

A missing-input problem needs a named escalation route.

Check understanding

Ask each colleague to restate their task and the handoff.

Assign accountability

Ken remains the named approver in this proposal.

Use the appropriate process

A task discussion does not replace formal handling of a serious complaint.

Avoid a blame shortcut

We have not established that both people failed an agreed duty.

Ask about the need

What information or authority does each person need to complete their part?

State the proposed sequence

Rosa prepares inputs, Felix checks, and Ken approves.

Define transfer quality

Specify what complete inputs must contain before they are handed over.

Keep the proposal honest

The two-week trial has not yet been accepted.

Preserve a disagreement

Record any remaining objection instead of writing agreement prematurely.

Limit the trial

Review the arrangement after two weekly cycles.

Close with a record

Document the actual arrangement, owners, deadlines, and review point.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Ask about the need

Useful wording: What information or authority does each person need to complete their part?

Purpose: Reframe the issue

Useful wording: We need a reliable weekly handoff, not a contest over who cares more.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which opening avoids an unsupported blame judgment?

- A.** The reconciliation task was not assigned; let us clarify the required handoff.
- B.** Both people are equally guilty by definition.
- C.** One must be lazy because they disagree.
- D.** The role notes prove a clear assignment to both.

2. Which addition would make the proposed Monday handoff more usable?

- A.** Give Felix final approval authority even though Ken remains the proposed approver.
- B.** Define the required input fields and a named route for reporting missing information before the handoff.
- C.** State Monday noon again without identifying what Felix needs to receive.
- D.** Mark the task agreed because Ken has drafted a sequence.

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The need or concern behind a stated position. Which term fits?

- A.** responsibility matrix
- B.** underlying interest
- C.** paraphrase
- D.** review meeting

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Clarify the handoff before assigning blame". Ken: "They both want the reconciliation finished on time. Can we start there and agree on the work sequence instead of opening with another argument about attitude?" Daria: [missing response] Ken: "My proposal is for Rosa to assemble the inputs by Monday noon, Felix to check them by Tuesday ten, and me to approve by Tuesday fifteen hundred." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Those are their stated positions. Ask what each needs to do the work reliably, including information, timing, and authority, instead of treating either statement as the complete explanation.
- B.** Define an escalation trigger and who receives it. That should expose the missing input early without implying either person can invent the information to satisfy the timetable.
- C.** First address the role ambiguity. The role notes never assigned this recurring task, so cooperation alone will not tell them who must prepare, check, or approve it.
- D.** Use that common ground to frame the discussion. It does not prove they agree about ownership, but it gives them a concrete result to organize the work around.

[Answers and explanations, page 140](#)

One useful distinction

The missing assignment is established; equal fault is not. Rosa preparing inputs, Felix checking, and Ken approving are three distinct responsibilities. A proposed sequence does not become a working agreement merely because it looks clear on paper.

E Conversation

Clarify the handoff before assigning blame

Clarify the handoff before assigning blame

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

escalation trigger / trial period / responsibility matrix / handoff criterion /
working agreement / common ground / facilitated discussion / false equivalence /
role ambiguity / positions

- 01 **Ken:** Rosa and Felix each say the other should handle the weekly reconciliation. I was going to tell them both to stop blaming each other and cooperate.
- 02 **Daria:** First address the ¹ _____. The role notes never assigned this recurring task, so cooperation alone will not tell them who must prepare, check, or approve it.
- 03 **Ken:** That is true. Rosa says it belongs with Felix's reporting work, while Felix says Rosa has the client information and should own the whole task.
- 04 **Daria:** Those are their stated ² _____. Ask what each needs to do the work reliably, including information, timing, and authority, instead of treating either statement as the complete explanation.
- 05 **Ken:** They both want the reconciliation finished on time. Can we start there and agree on the work sequence instead of opening with another argument about attitude?
- 06 **Daria:** Use that ³ _____ to frame the discussion. It does not prove they agree about ownership, but it gives them a concrete result to organize the work around.
- 07 **Ken:** My proposal is for Rosa to assemble the inputs by Monday noon, Felix to check them by Tuesday ten, and me to approve by Tuesday fifteen hundred.
- 08 **Daria:** Put that in a ⁴ _____. Three named stages are clearer than saying both own it, provided the boundaries and resources are actually workable.
- 09 **Ken:** I also need to define what Rosa sends. Otherwise Felix may receive an incomplete file and the same conflict will reappear at the next stage.
- 10 **Daria:** Agree the ⁵ _____ for those inputs. A deadline is not enough if the receiver cannot tell whether the transferred work is complete and usable.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Clarify the handoff before assigning blame

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Ken:** What if information from a client is missing by Monday noon? I do not want the plan to hide a dependency neither colleague controls.
- 12 **Daria:** Define an ⁶ _____ and who receives it. That should expose the missing input early without implying either person can invent the information to satisfy the timetable.
- 13 **Ken:** I want to test this for two weeks and review the results. I should still hear their practical objections before writing that the arrangement is agreed.
- 14 **Daria:** Correct. A ⁷ _____ is a proposal until the relevant discussion and authorization occur. Record what is actually decided, including any point that remains unresolved.
- 15 **Ken:** I was going to ask both to apologize, but I cannot say they caused the problem equally. We never assigned the task clearly in the first place.
- 16 **Daria:** Avoid ⁸ _____. You can address any supported behavior separately without manufacturing equal blame simply to make the conversation look balanced.
- 17 **Ken:** Would a joint task discussion be appropriate here? There is no misconduct allegation in the information I have given you, just a recurring ownership dispute.
- 18 **Daria:** A ⁹ _____ may help clarify this work arrangement. If a different or serious concern emerges, use the relevant process rather than forcing every issue into an ownership compromise.
- 19 **Ken:** I will ask each person to restate the task, timing, and missing-input route. Then I can record the actual arrangement and review it after two cycles.
- 20 **Daria:** That produces a usable ¹⁰ _____ if the discussion supports it. Keep your approval responsibility explicit, and evaluate the trial against completed handoffs rather than the absence of visible disagreement.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. role ambiguity / **2.** positions / **3.** common ground / **4.** responsibility matrix / **5.** handoff criterion / **6.** escalation trigger / **7.** trial period / **8.** false equivalence / **9.** facilitated discussion / **10.** working agreement

[Why these answers fit, page 141](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

Clarify the handoff before assigning blame

Return to the case

Manager Ken asks HR coach Daria for help with Rosa and Felix, who each say the other should own the weekly account reconciliation. Their role notes never assigned that recurring task. Ken proposes a two-week trial: Rosa assembles the inputs by Monday noon, Felix checks them by Tuesday 10:00, and Ken approves the result by Tuesday 15:00. The colleagues have not yet discussed or accepted the proposal. No misconduct allegation is supplied.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. Which summary preserves the proposal's status?

- A. Ken proposes a two-week trial; the colleagues' responses are still needed.
- B. Everyone has accepted a permanent arrangement.
- C. The trial has passed two successful cycles.
- D. Neither colleague has any right to raise a practical concern.

2. Why is automatic equal blame inappropriate?

- A. Clarifying ownership requires finding both people guilty.
- B. The manager must ignore all evidence to stay neutral.
- C. The facts do not establish equivalent conduct or a previously assigned duty.
- D. Every disagreement always has exactly equal causes.

[Answers and explanations, page 143](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Keep the two-week trial proposed until the colleagues' actual responses are recorded.

A shared problem does not prove shared fault

A manager can clarify a work arrangement without deciding that both people were equally to blame. Distinguish the missing responsibility from the accusations. A facilitated task discussion may help here; it should not be treated as a substitute for the proper response to serious misconduct or protected complaints.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

Proposed is not agreed

A manager proposes that Ana prepares a file Monday, Bo checks it Tuesday, and the manager approves it Wednesday. Neither colleague has yet responded.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

pending / approval / prepare / check

- 01 **HR:** Ana's proposed role is to ¹ _____ the file.
- 02 **Manager:** Bo would ² _____ it on Tuesday.
- 03 **HR:** The manager would give ³ _____ on Wednesday.
- 04 **Manager:** The colleagues' responses remain ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. prepare / 2. check / 3. approval / 4. pending

[Why these answers fit, page 143](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Clarify the handoff before assigning blame". Ken: "I want to test this for two weeks and review the results. I should still hear their practical objections before writing that the arrangement is agreed." Daria: [missing response] Ken: "I was going to ask both to apologize, but I cannot say they caused the problem equally. We never assigned the task clearly in the first place." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** First address the role ambiguity. The role notes never assigned this recurring task, so cooperation alone will not tell them who must prepare, check, or approve it.
- B.** Agree the handoff criterion for those inputs. A deadline is not enough if the receiver cannot tell whether the transferred work is complete and usable.
- C.** Correct. A trial period is a proposal until the relevant discussion and authorization occur. Record what is actually decided, including any point that remains unresolved.
- D.** Put that in a responsibility matrix. Three named stages are clearer than saying both own it, provided the boundaries and resources are actually workable.

[Answers and explanations, page 144](#)

A Read the situation

LESSON 08 / RESTRUCTURING AND SENSITIVE COMMUNICATION

Communicate a restructuring proposal with empathy while separating confirmed facts, possible impacts, and unfinished decisions.

Do not call possible job losses small changes

HR director Mei and communications lead Owen review a restructuring announcement. Twelve positions are within the proposal's review scope, but no final position-elimination count or individual outcome is confirmed. The draft says small changes and no one should worry. A Friday 11:00 staff update is scheduled; it is not a promised decision date. Mei wants a clear message that acknowledges potential employment consequences, explains what remains open, and points employees to an appropriate contact without inventing assurances.

People: Mei, HR director; Owen, Communications lead.

Read the record

Choose one answer per question using the facts above.

1. What does the number twelve describe?

- A. The final severance payment
- B. A completed list of affected individuals
- C. Positions in the proposal's review scope
- D. Confirmed dismissals

2. What is confirmed for Friday at 11:00?

- A. Guaranteed confirmation that no jobs are affected
- B. Every employee's departure time
- C. A staff update
- D. A final decision on every position

3. Why is "small changes" unsuitable here?

- A. It accurately states a verified small impact.
- B. It gives the final position count.
- C. It identifies the complete consultation process.
- D. It minimizes possible employment consequences.

[Answers and explanations, page 145](#)

B Vocabulary in use

CORE TERMS

restructuring

A change to how an organization arranges its work, roles, or reporting.

communicate a restructuring proposal

business rationale

The stated business reason for a proposed change.

explain the business rationale

role impact

The effect of a change on a position's work or existence.

assess role impact

position elimination

Removal of a defined role from the organizational structure.

distinguish position elimination

redeployment

Moving an employee into another suitable role under the relevant process.

explore redeployment

selection criteria

The defined basis for a relevant choice among roles or people.

explain selection criteria

operating model

The arrangement through which an organization delivers its work.

review the operating model

review scope

The roles, activities, or issues included in an assessment.

define the review scope

at-risk position

A position potentially affected, not necessarily finally eliminated.

clarify at-risk positions

headcount

A count of people under a specified employment definition.

state the headcount basis

consultation

A process for seeking and considering relevant views under applicable arrangements.

conduct meaningful consultation

individual notification

Communication to a particular person about their situation.

arrange individual notification

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

restructuring **RESTRUCTURING**

communicate a restructuring proposal

Keep the meaning precise: A change to how an organization arranges its work, roles, or reporting.

at-risk position **AT-RISK POSITION**

clarify at-risk positions

Keep the meaning precise: A position potentially affected, not necessarily finally eliminated.

B Precision and professional shorthand

EXTEND YOUR RANGE

notice period

The applicable interval between employment notice and its effective end.

confirm the notice period

transition support

Assistance during a change in role or employment.

provide transition support

manager briefing

Information given to managers so they can communicate accurately.

prepare a manager briefing

message cascade

Planned communication through successive organizational levels.

coordinate the message cascade

confirmed fact

Information established sufficiently for the stated communication.

distinguish confirmed facts

employee assistance program

A workplace support service whose scope depends on the actual program.

explain the employee assistance program

severance

Separation-related pay or arrangements under applicable terms and rules.

explain severance terms

retention risk

The possibility of losing employees the organization seeks to retain.

assess retention risk

talking points

Key statements supporting a consistent conversation.

approve talking points

rumor

Unverified information circulating informally.

address a rumor accurately

open question

An issue for which a supported answer is not yet available.

record open questions

change fatigue

Strain associated with repeated or prolonged organizational change.

acknowledge change fatigue

Say it in context

Stress the highlighted expression. Keep the surrounding words connected; pause at the end of the phrase.

individual notification INDIVIDUAL NOTIFICATION

arrange individual notification

Keep the meaning precise: Communication to a particular person about their situation.

manager briefing MANAGER BRIEFING

prepare a manager briefing

Keep the meaning precise: Information given to managers so they can communicate accurately.

Phrases that move the work forward

Name the proposal

We are reviewing a restructuring proposal that may affect positions.

Separate the outcome

That is not a confirmed count of positions to be eliminated.

Acknowledge the stakes

I recognize that this uncertainty can be difficult for employees.

Explain what is missing

We cannot yet give a supported final count.

Keep the update

We will communicate the current status even if questions remain open.

Handle a rumor

We have not confirmed that claim and should not repeat it as a decision.

Give a contact

Name the appropriate route for individual questions.

Invite relevant questions

Record unanswered questions and assign follow-up ownership.

State the scope

Twelve positions are within the current review scope.

Avoid false comfort

We should not say no one will be affected when that is not known.

Preserve the status

No final individual outcome is confirmed in this briefing.

Distinguish the event

Friday at 11:00 is the next staff update, not a promised decision date.

Prepare managers

Give managers the same confirmed facts and limits.

Avoid invented benefits

Do not promise a package or redeployment option before its terms are established.

Protect personal information

Use the appropriate individual process for personal employment details.

Close with honesty

State what is known, what remains open, and when the next update will occur.

Precision in real exchanges

Purpose: Avoid false comfort

Useful wording: We should not say no one will be affected when that is not known.

Purpose: Acknowledge the stakes

Useful wording: I recognize that this uncertainty can be difficult for employees.

D Choose the response that fits

Choose one response for each situation. Preserve the facts, the decision boundary, and the purpose of the exchange.

1. Which announcement keeps scope, employment outcome, and update timing separate?

- A.** Final eliminations remain unconfirmed, but every individual outcome will be settled Friday 11:00.
- B.** Twelve positions are under review; final changes are unconfirmed; Friday 11:00 is a status update.
- C.** Twelve employees will leave, with their final decisions announced Friday 11:00.
- D.** Twelve roles are under review, so exactly twelve redeployment places are guaranteed.

2. Which phrase offers empathy without an unsupported guarantee?

- A.** Nobody has any reason to worry because all jobs are safe.
- B.** Everyone will receive a guaranteed replacement role.
- C.** This is too minor for questions.
- D.** I recognize this uncertainty is difficult, and we will provide the next update Friday.

3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The roles, activities, or issues included in an assessment. Which term fits?

- A.** redeployment
- B.** confirmed fact
- C.** review scope
- D.** transition support

D Choose the response that fits / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes". Owen: "What approved explanation can we give for considering the change? The message needs a reason, but I should not invent a savings figure to fill the gap." Mei: [missing response] Owen: "We also need to distinguish a proposal from a final decision. I do not want an unfinished process presented as though employees are hearing the outcome." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Do not promise guaranteed redeployment or a particular package. Explain only the support and process that are actually established, with the appropriate route for individual questions.
- B.** Call it the review scope. Twelve positions are within the proposal's assessment, but that is not a confirmed position-elimination count or an individual notification.
- C.** Use the approved business rationale when it is available. Do not invent savings, performance problems, or strategic reasons merely to make the announcement sound complete.
- D.** Prepare a manager briefing with what is known, what remains open, and the contact route. It should help them acknowledge questions without improvising employment assurances.

[Answers and explanations, page 145](#)

One useful distinction

Twelve positions in scope does not mean twelve people will leave. Roles, current incumbents, and final employment outcomes are different categories. Friday 11:00 is the next update; it is not evidence that all decisions will be complete then.

E Conversation

Do not call possible job losses small changes

Do not call possible job losses small changes

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

open question / rumor / confirmed fact / individual notification / role impact /
business rationale / review scope / redeployment / manager briefing / consultation

- 01 **Owen:** The draft announcement calls this small changes and says no one should worry. I was trying to keep the tone calm, but those phrases may go too far.
- 02 **Mei:** They minimize the possible ¹ _____. People may face serious consequences, and we do not yet know the final outcome. Calm language still needs to acknowledge that.
- 03 **Owen:** We know that twelve positions are being examined. Some readers may assume that means twelve people have already been selected to leave.
- 04 **Mei:** Call it the ² _____. Twelve positions are within the proposal's assessment, but that is not a confirmed position-elimination count or an individual notification.
- 05 **Owen:** What approved explanation can we give for considering the change? The message needs a reason, but I should not invent a savings figure to fill the gap.
- 06 **Mei:** Use the approved ³ _____ when it is available. Do not invent savings, performance problems, or strategic reasons merely to make the announcement sound complete.

E Conversation / continued

- 07 **Owen:** We also need to distinguish a proposal from a final decision. I do not want an unfinished process presented as though employees are hearing the outcome.
- 08 **Mei:** Correct. If ⁴ _____ is part of the applicable process, describe it accurately. The message must not suggest a choice is open when it has already been settled, or settled when it remains open.
- 09 **Owen:** Friday at eleven is booked for a staff update. I originally wrote that everyone would know their position then, which is more than we have agreed.
- 10 **Mei:** That is not a ⁵ _____. The appointment is an update, not a promised decision date. We must communicate the current status even if the review is unfinished.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Do not call possible job losses small changes

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Owen:** Managers are going to get questions before Friday. Can we give them the verified facts, open points, and contact route now so they do not improvise answers?
- 12 **Mei:** Prepare a ⁶ _____ with what is known, what remains open, and the contact route. It should help them acknowledge questions without improvising employment assurances.
- 13 **Owen:** There is already a rumor about a final list. Should the announcement deny it outright, even though we have not checked the specific claim?
- 14 **Mei:** Address the ⁷ _____ with the actual verified status. We should neither repeat an unconfirmed list nor promise the opposite just to counter it.
- 15 **Owen:** People may also ask about alternative roles or separation arrangements. It would be tempting to promise broad support now and work out the details later.
- 16 **Mei:** Do not promise guaranteed ⁸ _____ or a particular package. Explain only the support and process that are actually established, with the appropriate route for individual questions.
- 17 **Owen:** We should keep personal employment information out of the broad announcement. A general update should not become an accidental disclosure about a named person.
- 18 **Mei:** Use the appropriate ⁹ _____ process when there is an actual supported message for that person. Do not imply it has happened merely because the staff update is scheduled.
- 19 **Owen:** I will replace small changes with a clear description of the proposal and potential impact. The closing will acknowledge uncertainty and confirm Friday's update.
- 20 **Mei:** Also record each ¹⁰ _____ with a follow-up owner. Employees deserve a truthful account of what we know and a reliable next contact, even when we cannot yet supply the answer they most want.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. role impact / 2. review scope / 3. business rationale / 4. consultation / 5. confirmed fact / 6. manager briefing / 7. rumor / 8. redeployment / 9. individual notification / 10. open question

[Why these answers fit, page 147](#)

F Check accuracy and scope

Do not call possible job losses small changes

Return to the case

HR director Mei and communications lead Owen review a restructuring announcement. Twelve positions are within the proposal's review scope, but no final position-elimination count or individual outcome is confirmed. The draft says small changes and no one should worry. A Friday 11:00 staff update is scheduled; it is not a promised decision date. Mei wants a clear message that acknowledges potential employment consequences, explains what remains open, and points employees to an appropriate contact without inventing assurances.

Choose one answer per question. Use the case facts and keep any uncertainty or limits intact.

1. What should managers do with a rumor about a final list?

- A. Promise the opposite without evidence.
- B. Distinguish it from confirmed facts and use the authorized question route.
- C. Repeat it as a decision because several people heard it.
- D. Create an unofficial list from guesses.

2. If decisions remain open on Friday, what should the update say?

- A. State the current status, unresolved questions, and next contact arrangements.
- B. Pretend the review is complete to avoid discomfort.
- C. Cancel all future communication without explanation.
- D. Announce a random final number.

[Answers and explanations, page 148](#)

Listen for the distinction

Switch roles for turns 11-20. Read the Friday 11:00 update commitment without promising a final list or redeployment.

Reassurance should not erase the stakes

People may hear an upbeat phrase as evasive when their employment could be affected. Name the proposal and uncertainty plainly, acknowledge the impact, and offer a real contact and update. Avoid implying that an unfinished decision is final or that a genuine risk does not exist.

F Say it / transfer to a new case

Scope is not an outcome

Eight positions are included in a proposal review. Final changes are not decided. A Wednesday 14:00 update is scheduled, with no guaranteed individual outcome then.

Complete the four gaps. With a partner, read alternate roles, then switch. Studying alone, read both roles and pause before each response.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

update / decided / scope / outcome

- 01 **HR:** Eight positions are in the review ¹ _____.
- 02 **Manager:** Final changes are not yet ² _____.
- 03 **HR:** Wednesday at 14:00 is the next ³ _____.
- 04 **Manager:** We cannot promise an individual ⁴ _____ then.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. scope / 2. decided / 3. update / 4. outcome

[Why these answers fit, page 148](#)

Rebuild the exchange

Choose the missing response. Read the completed three-turn exchange aloud, changing roles on the second reading.

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes". Owen: "There is already a rumor about a final list. Should the announcement deny it outright, even though we have not checked the specific claim?" Mei: [missing response] Owen: "People may also ask about alternative roles or separation arrangements. It would be tempting to promise broad support now and work out the details later." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Call it the review scope. Twelve positions are within the proposal's assessment, but that is not a confirmed position-elimination count or an individual notification.
- B.** Use the approved business rationale when it is available. Do not invent savings, performance problems, or strategic reasons merely to make the announcement sound complete.
- C.** Address the rumor with the actual verified status. We should neither repeat an unconfirmed list nor promise the opposite just to counter it.
- D.** Prepare a manager briefing with what is known, what remains open, and the contact route. It should help them acknowledge questions without improvising employment assurances.

[Answers and explanations, page 149](#)

Review 4 / Meaning and context

Use language from the lessons you have completed. Choose one answer per question.

Case file

Revisit "Conflict Mediation and Manager Coaching" and "Restructuring and Sensitive Communication". Choose precise terminology, then reconstruct the missing responses using both neighboring turns. The final two questions also revisit earlier conversations.

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A person's stated demand or preferred outcome in a disagreement. Which term fits?

- A. position
- B. trial period
- C. active listening
- D. handoff criterion

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A count of people under a specified employment definition. Which term fits?

- A. headcount
- B. restructuring
- C. message cascade
- D. notice period

3. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "I will list the early tasks and check which genuinely require eight-thirty coverage. Some may be scheduled that way simply because that is our usual routine." Ben: [missing response] Sana: "Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A. Exactly. Communicate request status accurately. Also establish a contact point and update time so the employee is not left wondering whether the request has disappeared.
- B. Clarify the essential functions and the actual coverage needs. Separate a real task requirement from a customary schedule before treating them as interchangeable.
- C. No. Acknowledge the accommodation request promptly and arrange the appropriate discussion. We have not reviewed the individual circumstances or approved an arrangement.
- D. That is part of the interactive process. An alternative has to address the relevant barrier; offering something unrelated does not become effective just because it sounds flexible.

Review 4 / Meaning and context / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes". Owen: "We should keep personal employment information out of the broad announcement. A general update should not become an accidental disclosure about a named person." Mei: [missing response] Owen: "I will replace small changes with a clear description of the proposal and potential impact. The closing will acknowledge uncertainty and confirm Friday's update." Which response belongs in the gap?

- A.** Do not promise guaranteed redeployment or a particular package. Explain only the support and process that are actually established, with the appropriate route for individual questions.
- B.** They minimize the possible role impact. People may face serious consequences, and we do not yet know the final outcome. Calm language still needs to acknowledge that.
- C.** Use the appropriate individual notification process when there is an actual supported message for that person. Do not imply it has happened merely because the staff update is scheduled.
- D.** That is not a confirmed fact. The appointment is an update, not a promised decision date. We must communicate the current status even if the review is unfinished.

[Answers and explanations, page 159](#)

Language for the next case

The time record shows six hours the payslip does not

time record

The time record provides the hours actually worked in the relevant workweek and is compared with the payroll entry.

Ada: I am sorry this has happened. Let us link the approved time record to this payslip and raise the discrepancy with payroll promptly.

Gross pay

Gross pay is the amount before deductions; the calculated \$1,176 is not a promise of the same amount being deposited.

Ada: Yes, on the facts supplied. Gross pay is different from the amount deposited after the applicable deductions.

off-cycle payment

An off-cycle payment is processed outside the normal payroll run; its availability and timing need confirmation rather than a casual promise.

Ada: I will flag the urgency and ask payroll for the required correction timing, including any off-cycle payment arrangement. I cannot promise a payment date before they confirm it.

overtime rate

The overtime rate in this case is one and one-half times the confirmed \$24 regular rate, or \$36 per overtime hour.

Ada: For the stated case, the overtime rate is thirty-six dollars. Six unpaid overtime hours therefore account for two hundred sixteen dollars of gross pay.

pay adjustment

The pay adjustment should accurately correct the missing earnings and their basis, rather than disguise them under an unrelated payment label.

Ada: The pay adjustment needs the correct earnings description and record. Payroll should preserve the connection to this workweek and the original error.

audit trail

The audit trail connects the original entry, identified error, correction, and resulting payment without silently rewriting the earlier record.

Ada: Yes. The audit trail should show what changed and why, including confirmation of the actual payment.

Read the phrases aloud. Then complete the conversation on the following pages using the word bank.

Conversation

The time record shows six hours the payslip does not

In this simplified US case, an employee covered by federal overtime rules and not exempt from them worked 46 hours in one workweek. Payroll has confirmed a \$24 regular hourly rate with no other pay elements affecting it. Only 40 hours at \$24 were paid. The employee and HR adviser discuss the missing gross amount; applicable correction deadlines and any additional requirements still need payroll review.

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

time record / pay adjustment / Gross pay / off-cycle payment / audit trail / overtime rate

- 01 **Sam:** My time record shows forty-six hours, but the payslip only includes forty. I need to know whether the extra six hours have been lost.
- 02 **Ada:** I am sorry this has happened. Let us link the approved ¹ _____ to this payslip and raise the discrepancy with payroll promptly.
- 03 **Sam:** My supervisor says the extra work was not approved in advance. Does that mean those hours can simply disappear from the record?
- 04 **Ada:** No. Record the hours actually worked. A question about prior authorization must not be used to erase time or withhold pay that is due.
- 05 **Sam:** Payroll confirmed my regular rate is twenty-four dollars. How much is missing in this example before taxes and other deductions?
- 06 **Ada:** For the stated case, the ² _____ is thirty-six dollars. Six unpaid overtime hours therefore account for two hundred sixteen dollars of gross pay.

Conversation / continued

- 07 **Sam:** So the full gross amount for that workweek should be nine hundred sixty plus two hundred sixteen, or eleven hundred seventy-six dollars?
- 08 **Ada:** Yes, on the facts supplied. ³ _____ is different from the amount deposited after the applicable deductions.
- 09 **Sam:** Could someone just call the difference a discretionary bonus? I would like the correction to show which hours were missing.
- 10 **Ada:** The ⁴ _____ needs the correct earnings description and record. Payroll should preserve the connection to this workweek and the original error.

Conversation continues on the next page.

The time record shows six hours the payslip does not

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Sam:** When will I receive it? I have a bill due, and waiting until the next normal payday could be difficult.
- 12 **Ada:** I will flag the urgency and ask payroll for the required correction timing, including any ⁵ _____ arrangement. I cannot promise a payment date before they confirm it.
- 13 **Sam:** Please do not let the case close just because a ticket has been created. I need an answer I can plan around.
- 14 **Ada:** Agreed. I will give you a status update today and identify the owner. The case remains open until the correction and employee communication are resolved.
- 15 **Sam:** Do you need my full bank statement to check this? It contains unrelated transactions I would rather not share.
- 16 **Ada:** Do not send that unnecessarily. We will use the relevant payroll records and the designated secure route for any information actually needed.
- 17 **Sam:** I can check the corrected statement against the hours and amount once it is issued. Will the original entry remain traceable?
- 18 **Ada:** Yes. The ⁶ _____ should show what changed and why, including confirmation of the actual payment.
- 19 **Sam:** Thank you. Please send the case reference and today's update time so I know whom to contact if I hear nothing.
- 20 **Ada:** I will. We will address the missing pay promptly and keep any separate discussion about scheduling approval from obscuring the earnings issue.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. time record / 2. overtime rate / 3. Gross pay / 4. pay adjustment / 5. off-cycle payment / 6. audit trail

[Why these answers fit, page 162](#)

A gross correction is mistaken for a promised deposit

Payroll confirms that a \$180 gross earnings correction is due. The final deductions and payment date have not yet been confirmed.

Complete the exchange using each phrase once. Read both roles, then switch roles and repeat with the bank covered.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

amount / status / payment / record

- 01 **Adviser:** The confirmed correction is a gross earnings ¹ _____.
- 02 **Employee:** Please confirm the payment date rather than just the ticket ² _____.
- 03 **Adviser:** Payroll must identify the applicable deductions and net ³ _____.
- 04 **Employee:** Keep the correction linked to the original pay ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. amount / 2. status / 3. payment / 4. record

[Why these answers fit, page 162](#)

Keep the distinction audible

Acknowledge a pay discrepancy, explain a bounded calculation, and arrange prompt follow-up.

Language for the next case

Selected for the role, but the transfer date is still open

selection decision

The selection decision identifies the preferred candidate; it does not by itself establish approved terms or an agreed transfer date.

Leah: Please wait. The selection decision is recorded, but the formal terms and transfer date are still open.

secondment

A secondment is a temporary assignment with its own terms; uncertainty about timing does not convert a permanent move into one.

Leah: Correct that. A secondment is a different arrangement. We should not change the nature of the role just to describe an unfinished handover.

transition plan

A transition plan identifies the work, knowledge transfer, owners, and timing needed for the move rather than leaving release indefinitely undefined.

Leah: Ask for a bounded transition plan. Identify the report, a receiving owner, and practical training needs, then escalate unresolved timing through the applicable process.

release date

The release date identifies the agreed transition out of the current role; a manager's preferred timing does not establish it unilaterally here.

Leah: That is a request to discuss, not an agreed release date. We need Amira and the relevant decision makers included in the timing conversation.

offer terms

Offer terms specify the actual employment or assignment conditions being offered, rather than only the role's general salary range.

Leah: The approved offer terms, including the relevant pay and conditions. Please do not let an informal conversation become a promise before that review is complete.

confirmation

Confirmation communicates the actual agreed terms and effective date; it should replace conflicting informal messages without inventing an outcome.

Leah: Let us coordinate one written confirmation once the relevant approvals and her response are complete. I will coordinate it and keep both managers informed.

Read the phrases aloud. Then complete the conversation on the following pages using the word bank.

Conversation

Selected for the role, but the transfer date is still open

An internal candidate has been selected for a permanent analyst vacancy. The formal terms and transfer date have not been approved. The receiving manager proposes November 2, while the current manager requests a four-week handover. The recruiter and receiving manager must resolve the outstanding points without presenting either manager's preference as an agreed condition.

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

release date / transition plan / offer terms / secondment / confirmation /
selection decision

- 01 **Kofi:** The panel selected Amira. I would like to announce that she joins us on November second so the team can start assigning work.
- 02 **Leah:** Please wait. The ¹ _____ is recorded, but the formal terms and transfer date are still open.
- 03 **Kofi:** I thought an internal move would be simpler than an external hire. Her current manager is now asking for a four-week handover.
- 04 **Leah:** That is a request to discuss, not an agreed ² _____. We need Amira and the relevant decision makers included in the timing conversation.
- 05 **Kofi:** The vacancy is permanent. Someone has started calling it a secondment because the start date is uncertain.
- 06 **Leah:** Correct that. A ³ _____ is a different arrangement. We should not change the nature of the role just to describe an unfinished handover.

Conversation / continued

- 07 **Kofi:** What is still needed on compensation? The role has a salary range, but I have not made an individual offer.
- 08 **Leah:** The approved ⁴ _____, including the relevant pay and conditions. Please do not let an informal conversation become a promise before that review is complete.
- 09 **Kofi:** Understood. Can I at least discuss the work she would take on and the training she would need?
- 10 **Leah:** Yes, explain the role accurately and hear her questions. Keep preparation distinct from assigning work under a transfer that has not taken effect.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Selected for the role, but the transfer date is still open

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **Kofi:** Her current team says only Amira knows one monthly report. I do not want the handover to become an indefinite reason to delay her.
- 12 **Leah:** Ask for a bounded ⁵ _____. Identify the report, a receiving owner, and practical training needs, then escalate unresolved timing through the applicable process.
- 13 **Kofi:** We should also avoid asking her to do both full roles for several weeks. That would hide the capacity problem rather than solve it.
- 14 **Leah:** Agreed. Make any overlap duties and limits explicit. The two managers need to resolve competing assignments instead of leaving Amira to negotiate them alone.
- 15 **Kofi:** Who should confirm the final arrangement to her? At the moment she has three different messages from us.
- 16 **Leah:** Let us coordinate one written ⁶ _____ once the relevant approvals and her response are complete. I will coordinate it and keep both managers informed.
- 17 **Kofi:** I will pause the announcement and send you the proposed first-month responsibilities. November second will stay a proposal for now.
- 18 **Leah:** Thank you. I will arrange the timing discussion and tell Amira what remains outstanding, with a clear date for the next update.
- 19 **Kofi:** When we do announce it, we should use the agreed title and date, not repeat the earlier secondment description.
- 20 **Leah:** Exactly. A clear internal move needs consistent terms, a workable handover, and the employee included in the decisions affecting the transition.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. selection decision / 2. release date / 3. secondment / 4. offer terms / 5. transition plan / 6. confirmation

[Why these answers fit, page 164](#)

A manager announces a date the employee has not agreed

A manager proposes December 1 for an internal transfer. Formal terms and the employee's response are still outstanding.

Complete the exchange using each phrase once. Read both roles, then switch roles and repeat with the bank covered.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

terms / discussion / agreed / approvals

- 01 **Recruiter:** December first is proposed, not yet ¹ _____.
- 02 **Manager:** I will pause the announcement while we resolve the ² _____.
- 03 **Recruiter:** Include the employee in the transition ³ _____.
- 04 **Manager:** Send one accurate confirmation after the required ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. agreed / 2. terms / 3. discussion / 4. approvals

[Why these answers fit, page 164](#)

Keep the distinction audible

Clarify an internal move without confusing selection, approved terms, and handover arrangements.

Language for the next case

Twelve employees do not equal twelve full-time equivalents

headcount

Headcount counts people in the defined population; the department has twelve employees, while its two vacancies are not employees.

Ravi: The headcount is twelve. The two vacancies belong in a separate field because there are no employees occupying them.

FTE

FTE means full-time equivalent; four hundred scheduled hours divided by the stated forty-hour basis gives ten FTE.

Ravi: Exactly. The FTE is ten under this definition. I will correct the arithmetic and keep the basis beside the result.

vacancy

A vacancy is an unfilled position, not an existing employee or a confirmed amount of staffed capacity.

Ravi: Right. We need the approved hours for those positions before adding any projected capacity. A vacancy does not supply hours merely because it appears on the organization chart.

scheduled hours

Scheduled hours total the planned weekly hours: eight times forty plus four times twenty equals four hundred.

Ravi: That is four hundred scheduled hours a week: three hundred twenty from the eight full-time schedules and eighty from the four part-time schedules.

Actual hours

Actual hours describe recorded time for the specified period and are different from the scheduled-hours basis used in this example.

Ravi: No. This uses scheduled hours. Actual hours, absence, training, and the work performed would need their own data and definitions.

skills coverage

Skills coverage considers whether the required capabilities are available, which an aggregate FTE figure cannot establish on its own.

Ravi: That is why the skills coverage view matters alongside the total. Ten FTE does not mean every required task or shift is covered.

Read the phrases aloud. Then complete the conversation on the following pages using the word bank.

Conversation

Twelve employees do not equal twelve full-time equivalents

A department has eight employees scheduled for 40 hours a week and four scheduled for 20 hours. For this internal report, one full-time equivalent equals 40 scheduled weekly hours. Two additional positions are vacant. A draft shows 14 employees and 14 full-time equivalents. No skill coverage, absence, or productivity data is supplied.

Complete the numbered gaps. Use each bank entry once; some entries contain several words.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

vacancy / scheduled hours / Actual hours / headcount / FTE / skills coverage

- 01 **June:** The staffing slide says fourteen people and fourteen full-time equivalents. That sounds like enough coverage, but the team says we are stretched.
- 02 **Ravi:** The ¹ _____ is twelve. The two vacancies belong in a separate field because there are no employees occupying them.
- 03 **June:** Eight people work forty hours and four work twenty. Can you show how that becomes a capacity figure without losing the number of people?
- 04 **Ravi:** That is four hundred ² _____ a week: three hundred twenty from the eight full-time schedules and eighty from the four part-time schedules.
- 05 **June:** So four hundred divided by forty gives ten full-time equivalents. The four people on half-time schedules contribute two full-time equivalents, but they remain four people.
- 06 **Ravi:** Exactly. The ³ _____ is ten under this definition. I will correct the arithmetic and keep the basis beside the result.

Conversation / continued

- 07 **June:** Does the ten tell us how many productive hours the department actually delivered last week?
- 08 **Ravi:** No. This uses scheduled hours. ⁴ _____, absence, training, and the work performed would need their own data and definitions.
- 09 **June:** Then the slide should not claim that filling two vacancies automatically gives us twelve full-time equivalents either.
- 10 **Ravi:** Right. We need the approved hours for those positions before adding any projected capacity. A ⁵ _____ does not supply hours merely because it appears on the organization chart.

Conversation continues on the next page.

Twelve employees do not equal twelve full-time equivalents

CONVERSATION / CONTINUED

- 11 **June:** One of the open roles requires a specialist qualification. General additional hours would not necessarily cover that work.
- 12 **Ravi:** That is why the ⁶ _____ view matters alongside the total. Ten FTE does not mean every required task or shift is covered.
- 13 **June:** Can you split the report into employees, scheduled FTE, vacancies, and the outstanding capability questions?
- 14 **Ravi:** Yes. I will also give the reporting date and population so another department does not compare it with a month-average figure by mistake.
- 15 **June:** We use a different hours basis in one external return. Should we force this internal calculation into that form as well?
- 16 **Ravi:** No. Follow each report's applicable definition and explain the difference. A familiar label does not make two calculation methods interchangeable.
- 17 **June:** The corrected slide will therefore show twelve employees, ten scheduled FTE, and two vacancies with hours still to confirm.
- 18 **Ravi:** Correct. It will not infer a productivity result, a sufficient staffing level, or a hiring decision from those totals alone.
- 19 **June:** Please include the skill gap as an open question for our workforce review. That is the discussion the original fourteen-person headline obscured.
- 20 **Ravi:** I will. We can make the staffing decision clearer by keeping people, hours, vacant positions, and required capabilities visible separately.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. headcount / 2. scheduled hours / 3. FTE / 4. Actual hours / 5. vacancy / 6. skills coverage

[Why these answers fit, page 166](#)

Three half-time roles are counted as three FTE

For this internal calculation, one FTE is 40 scheduled hours a week. Three employees each work 20 scheduled hours a week.

Complete the exchange using each phrase once. Read both roles, then switch roles and repeat with the bank covered.

WORD AND PHRASE BANK

sixty / productivity / employees / FTE

- 01 **Director:** The headcount is three ¹ _____.
- 02 **Analyst:** Their scheduled weekly hours total ² _____.
- 03 **Director:** On a forty-hour basis, that gives one point five ³ _____.
- 04 **Analyst:** That figure alone does not establish actual ⁴ _____.

CHECK THE GAPS

1. employees / 2. sixty / 3. FTE / 4. productivity

[Why these answers fit, page 166](#)

Keep the distinction audible

Explain workforce measures and reject unsupported conclusions about staffing capacity.

01 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. Which tasks are actually required?

B. Client follow-up and escalation of conflicting deadlines

The brief identifies two work requirements, not a preferred personality or social background.

[Return to the exercise, page 4](#)

A2. What is wrong with the draft scorecard?

A. It uses impressions without observable evidence criteria.

Confidence and shared interests do not explain how candidates will demonstrate the required tasks.

[Return to the exercise, page 4](#)

A3. What is the current selection status?

D. No applicant has been scored.

The brief explicitly places this discussion before the panel scores applicants.

[Return to the exercise, page 4](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which question best elicits behavioral evidence for the required escalation skill?

B. Tell us about a deadline conflict, what you escalated, and the result.

An actual past event, action, and result supplies behavioral evidence. The hypothetical question is job-related but situational, not evidence of what the applicant previously did.

[Return to the exercise, page 8](#)

D2. A panelist says, "I liked their energy, so I scored follow-up highly." What is the best response?

D. Which example shows how they followed through on a client commitment?

The question redirects an impression toward evidence relevant to the competency being scored.

[Return to the exercise, page 8](#)

01 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A useful attribute that is not a minimum requirement. Which term fits?

C. desirable criterion

A Not here. candidate experience: How applicants experience the recruitment process and communication. The usual combination is "improve the candidate experience".

B Not here. situational question: A question asking how someone would address a supplied scenario. The usual combination is "use a situational question".

C Correct. desirable criterion: A useful attribute that is not a minimum requirement. The usual combination is "distinguish desirable criteria".

D Not here. shortlist: Candidates selected for a further assessment stage. The usual combination is "develop a shortlist".

[Return to the exercise, page 8](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "Could we ask candidates to describe a time when two clients needed something at once? I would want to hear how they handled the competing commitments." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "Can we agree on the scoring before the first interview? I do not want us changing the standard because the opening candidate gives a polished answer." Which response belongs in the gap?

D. That is a useful behavioral question. Follow it with what they did, who they contacted, and the result, using the same core prompts across candidates.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Marcus says: "Can we agree on the scoring before the first interview? I do not want us changing the standard because the opening candidate gives a polished answer." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 20, after Marcus says: "Agreed. We will revise the criteria, brief the panel, and complete the interviews. No one should imply an offer is ready merely because a candidate was shortlisted." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Marcus says: "Then let us replace confident with something we can assess. What would show that a candidate follows up with clients and raises a deadline problem early?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Lina's response in turn 6. It connects Marcus's preceding point with Marcus's follow-up. A behavioral question asks for an actual past example, here involving conflicting client commitments.

[Return to the exercise, page 8](#)

E / Conversation

1. job-related competency

Turn 2. The competency must connect the preference to required work rather than social similarity.

01 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. role profile

Turn 4. The role profile defines the position's work before candidate preferences become assessment criteria.

3. behavioral question

Turn 6. A behavioral question asks for an actual past example, here involving conflicting client commitments.

4. scoring rubric

Turn 8. A scoring rubric supplies the common standards for judging responses before the panel scores candidates.

5. affinity bias

Turn 10. Affinity bias favors perceived similarity, such as shared interests, rather than evidence of relevant capability.

6. rating anchors

Turn 12. Rating anchors describe score levels so assessors can explain why particular evidence earns a rating.

7. structured interview

Turn 14. A structured interview uses common questions and standards while allowing appropriate access arrangements.

8. candidate experience

Turn 16. Candidate experience includes the clarity and reliability of recruitment communication, not just the interview itself.

9. selection rationale

Turn 18. The selection rationale links the decision to relevant evidence and agreed criteria rather than a vague impression.

10. Offer approval

Turn 20. Offer approval is authorization for proposed employment terms, separate from shortlisting or a positive interview.

[Return to the conversation, page 10](#)

01 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. What belongs in a selection rationale?

B. Relevant evidence linked to the agreed criteria

A defensible explanation connects the observed response to the stated assessment standard.

[Return to the exercise, page 12](#)

F2. Which candidate update is supported before selection?

C. We are completing interviews and will update you on the stated date.

A process update can be promised without falsely announcing a hiring outcome.

[Return to the exercise, page 12](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. evidence

Recruiter: A shared hobby is not job-related evidence.

Turn 1. The hobby does not demonstrate the teamwork behavior the panel needs to assess.

2. criterion

Manager: We need an example against the agreed criterion.

Turn 2. The assessment must refer to the stated teamwork requirement rather than personal similarity.

3. rationale

Recruiter: The score needs a supported rationale.

Turn 3. A rating needs an explanation connected to actual relevant evidence.

4. approved

Manager: No offer has been approved.

Turn 4. The supplied facts explicitly leave the hiring decision without approval.

[Return to the conversation, page 13](#)

01 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "Some candidates will have questions about the assessment format. We should explain it early enough for them to raise any access needs." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "We also need to tell candidates when they will hear from us. A long silence can make a well-organized interview feel careless." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Yes. A structured interview does not mean refusing an appropriate adjustment. Explain the process and route requests through the relevant procedure without making assumptions about the person.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Marcus says: "One panelist likes people who share the team's interests. I understand the impulse, but that does not show whether someone can manage client commitments." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Marcus says: "We also need to tell candidates when they will hear from us. A long silence can make a well-organized interview feel careless." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Lina's response in turn 14. It connects Marcus's preceding point with Marcus's follow-up. A structured interview uses common questions and standards while allowing appropriate access arrangements.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Marcus says: "Then let us replace confident with something we can assess. What would show that a candidate follows up with clients and raises a deadline problem early?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 13](#)

02 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What is already complete?

B. Equipment and account setup

The checklist covers setup tasks, not the employee's full readiness for independent work.

[Return to the exercise, page 14](#)

A2. What is proposed for day ten?

B. Review five sample cases

The proposed first milestone is five sample cases checked against the stated requirements.

[Return to the exercise, page 14](#)

A3. What must precede independent case ownership?

B. Nora's sign-off

The brief explicitly requires the manager's sign-off before independent ownership.

[Return to the exercise, page 14](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which checklist status is accurate on day three?

D. System setup complete; role learning not yet complete

The completed tasks concern equipment and accounts, while role expectations remain to be agreed.

[Return to the exercise, page 18](#)

D2. Which day-ten milestone combines quantity, timing, and an assessment basis?

D. Review five sample cases by day ten, checking required fields and the escalation route.

The first milestone checks the specified work and criteria. Access, an automatic authority claim, or reading alone does not satisfy the proposed case review.

[Return to the exercise, page 18](#)

02 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: Creation of the required system accounts and permissions. Which term fits?

C. access provisioning

A Not here. readiness review: An assessment of preparedness for a defined responsibility. The usual combination is "conduct a readiness review".

B Not here. stakeholder map: A guide to people affected by or involved in the role's work. The usual combination is "review the stakeholder map".

C Correct. access provisioning: Creation of the required system accounts and permissions. The usual combination is "confirm access provisioning".

D Not here. milestone: A meaningful point used to track progress. The usual combination is "set a learning milestone".

[Return to the exercise, page 18](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "What will you check in the samples? I can count five completed files, but that would not tell me whether I handled them correctly." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "I also need to know what to do when a sample contains an unclear request. Should I choose an answer or bring the uncertainty to you?" Which response belongs in the gap?

A. We need explicit success criteria. I will check the required fields and whether you identified the correct escalation route for each case.

A Correct. This is Nora's response in turn 6. It connects Evan's preceding point with Evan's follow-up. Success criteria specify required fields and the escalation route, not just the number of completed cases.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Evan says: "That would help. I have several training links and messages from colleagues, but no clear order or definition of what I should produce first." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Evan says: "After the samples, I would like to see how a colleague handles live cases. The examples alone may not show the pace of the real queue." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Evan says: "My accounts and laptop are working, but the checklist says onboarding is complete. I still do not know which work matters most this month." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 18](#)

E / Conversation

1. access provisioning

Turn 2. Access provisioning establishes working accounts and permissions, not readiness for the whole role.

02 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. first-month plan

Turn 4. The first-month plan puts the proposed learning tasks and review points into a clear sequence.

3. success criteria

Turn 6. Success criteria specify required fields and the escalation route, not just the number of completed cases.

4. escalation route

Turn 8. The escalation route identifies where Evan should refer uncertainty beyond the scope of his current responsibility.

5. shadowing

Turn 10. Shadowing means observing an experienced colleague at work before or alongside practice.

6. decision authority

Turn 12. Decision authority distinguishes who can approve work from a colleague who provides informal guidance.

7. readiness review

Turn 14. The readiness review assesses preparedness on day thirty without guaranteeing independent ownership then.

8. sign-off

Turn 16. Sign-off is the explicit manager approval required before Evan takes independent ownership.

9. dependency

Turn 18. The missing sample folder is a resource needed to complete the first milestone.

10. role clarity

Turn 20. Role clarity makes the responsibilities, sequence, support, and authority understandable to both parties.

[Return to the conversation, page 20](#)

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. What does the day-thirty meeting establish in advance?

D. A planned readiness assessment, not a guaranteed outcome

A scheduled review does not determine what the assessment will find.

[Return to the exercise, page 22](#)

02 / Answers and explanations / continued

F2. How should Evan raise missing sample access?

B. I need access to the sample cases to meet the day-ten milestone.

This statement connects a specific missing resource to the agreed work and date.

[Return to the exercise, page 22](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. complete

Employee: Account setup is complete.

Turn 1. Monday's finished setup supports that status only for the accounts.

2. sample

Manager: The next milestone is three sample cases.

Turn 2. The briefing identifies three sample cases as the next defined task.

3. review

Employee: Independent processing still requires a review.

Turn 3. The supplied condition requires a supervisor assessment before independent processing.

4. confirmed

Manager: That approval is not yet confirmed.

Turn 4. The required review has not occurred, so approval cannot be reported as confirmed.

[Return to the conversation, page 23](#)

02 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "The day-thirty date sounds like a target for working independently. Should I tell other teams they can send cases directly to me from then?" Nora: [missing response] Evan: "I will tell the other teams it is a review date, then. What specifically has to happen before I can accept cases independently?" Which response belongs in the gap?

D. Not yet. It is a readiness review, not an automatic change in responsibility. We will assess the evidence and identify any remaining support you need.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Evan says: "My accounts and laptop are working, but the checklist says onboarding is complete. I still do not know which work matters most this month." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 6, after Evan says: "What will you check in the samples? I can count five completed files, but that would not tell me whether I handled them correctly." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Evan says: "I will tell the other teams it is a review date, then. What specifically has to happen before I can accept cases independently?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Nora's response in turn 14. It connects Evan's preceding point with Evan's follow-up. The readiness review assesses preparedness on day thirty without guaranteeing independent ownership then.

[Return to the exercise, page 23](#)

03 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What was missing from the two reports?

C. The agreed summary section

The brief identifies one omitted section in each report, not wholesale failure of the work.

[Return to the exercise, page 26](#)

A2. What does the draft note wrongly assume?

C. A motive and personality judgment not established by the facts

Careless and unmotivated go beyond the observed omissions and imply unsupported explanations.

[Return to the exercise, page 26](#)

A3. What is the current meeting status?

D. Feedback without a formal disciplinary decision

The brief explicitly states that no formal warning or disciplinary decision has been made.

[Return to the exercise, page 26](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which opening is most precise?

A. The September 11 and 18 reports omitted the required summary.

Two dated examples support a specific completeness concern, not a universal character judgment.

[Return to the exercise, page 30](#)

D2. Which note preserves the distinction between an account and a verified cause?

C. Daniel said he used an older template; comparison with the current file is pending.

The employee has supplied an explanation, not a completed document comparison. Acknowledging an omission neither proves its cause nor admits a motive.

[Return to the exercise, page 30](#)

03 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A discussion of work, its effects, and improvement. Which term fits?

B. feedback conversation

A Not here. review date: The planned date for checking progress or an outcome. The usual combination is "set a review date".

B Correct. feedback conversation: A discussion of work, its effects, and improvement. The usual combination is "hold a feedback conversation".

C Not here. attribution: An explanation assigning an outcome to a cause or person. The usual combination is "check the attribution".

D Not here. performance improvement plan: A structured plan specifying improvements, support, and review arrangements. The usual combination is "review the performance improvement plan".

[Return to the exercise, page 30](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict". Priya: "I will remove them. Before I revise the note, can you show me the file you used and explain how you prepared the reports?" Daniel: [missing response] Priya: "Then I will attribute that explanation to you and mark the version check outstanding. I will not record a template fault as already proven." Which response belongs in the gap?

D. Yes. My employee response is that I used an older template without a summary heading. I will send it, but we have not compared the versions yet.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Priya says: "For September twenty-fifth, the report needs the summary as well as the supporting tables. I will review it against the current agreed template." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 14, after Priya says: "Agreed. The next step is a complete report on September twenty-fifth, checked against that file. It is not an instruction simply to show more enthusiasm." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Priya says: "Thanks for meeting with me. The reports dated September eleventh and eighteenth both omitted the required summary. I had to request it separately before finishing my review." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Daniel's response in turn 6. It connects Priya's preceding point with Priya's follow-up. The employee response is Daniel's explanation, which the manager can record and check.

[Return to the exercise, page 30](#)

E / Conversation

1. performance gap

Turn 2. The performance gap is the missing required summary, not a judgment about Daniel's character.

03 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. impact statement

Turn 4. The impact statement explains the extra request and delayed review caused by the omission.

3. employee response

Turn 6. The employee response is Daniel's explanation, which the manager can record and check.

4. factual record

Turn 8. A factual record separates the observed omissions from unsupported motive judgments and unverified explanations.

5. performance standard

Turn 10. The performance standard specifies the summary and supporting tables required in the next report.

6. support commitment

Turn 12. The support commitment is the manager's specific promise to provide and clarify the current template.

7. measurable objective

Turn 14. The measurable objective is a complete September 25 report checked against the specified template.

8. informal coaching

Turn 16. Informal coaching describes the stated feedback stage rather than inventing a formal disciplinary outcome.

9. acknowledgment of receipt

Turn 18. Acknowledgment of receipt confirms the note arrived without automatically agreeing to every statement.

10. follow-up evidence

Turn 20. Follow-up evidence is the next report assessed against the agreed completeness standard.

[Return to the conversation, page 32](#)

03 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. Which objective is measurable?

B. Include the required summary in the September 25 report and check it against the agreed template.

The objective identifies the work, required feature, date, and review basis.

[Return to the exercise, page 34](#)

F2. What does a receipt acknowledgment alone establish?

D. The note was received

Receipt is a communication fact and should not be treated as agreement or a disciplinary outcome.

[Return to the exercise, page 34](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. codes

Manager: Two timesheets omitted the project codes.

Turn 1. The observable issue is the missing codes in two specified records.

2. unavailable

Employee: My explanation is that the list was unavailable.

Turn 2. The supplied employee account identifies unavailable information as the reported barrier.

3. verified

Manager: That explanation still needs to be verified.

Turn 3. The briefing explicitly says the reported cause has not yet been checked.

4. Friday

Employee: The corrected next timesheet is due Friday.

Turn 4. The stated next deadline is Friday, not an unspecified future improvement date.

[Return to the conversation, page 35](#)

03 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Two missing summaries, not a personality verdict".

Priya: "Agreed. The next step is a complete report on September twenty-fifth, checked against that file. It is not an instruction simply to show more enthusiasm."

Daniel: [missing response] **Priya:** "I also need to correct the meeting label. This is a feedback discussion; no formal warning or other disciplinary decision has been made." Which response belongs in the gap?

D. I can work to that measurable objective. If the current file still leaves something unclear, I will ask before submitting rather than omit the section again.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 6, after Priya says: "I will remove them. Before I revise the note, can you show me the file you used and explain how you prepared the reports?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Priya says: "Thanks for meeting with me. The reports dated September eleventh and eighteenth both omitted the required summary. I had to request it separately before finishing my review." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 18, after Priya says: "I will send the revised note for you to check. Please identify any remaining factual errors and let me know that you received it." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Daniel's response in turn 14. It connects Priya's preceding point with Priya's follow-up. The measurable objective is a complete September 25 report checked against the specified template.

[Return to the exercise, page 35](#)

04 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What evidence is available at the start?

B. Tomas's initial account

The brief supplies one account while documents and possible witness information remain unchecked.

[Return to the exercise, page 36](#)

A2. What is Imani's role in this conversation?

B. Receive and clarify the concern

This is an intake conversation, not a completed investigation or outcome meeting.

[Return to the exercise, page 36](#)

A3. What is known about the possible witness?

B. Tomas thinks someone may have heard the comment.

Possible witness knowledge is reported but has not been established by a direct account.

[Return to the exercise, page 36](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which intake note is most accurate?

A. Tomas reported exclusion from two meetings; invitations have not yet been reviewed.

The note attributes the report and preserves the missing-evidence status without prejudging the case.

[Return to the exercise, page 40](#)

D2. Which question avoids adding facts to the September 15 account?

C. Where did the comment occur, who was present, and which words do you recall?

The brief dates the comment but does not place it at a meeting or establish intent, corroboration, or misconduct. The neutral question asks for those details without assuming them.

[Return to the exercise, page 40](#)

04 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A person raising a complaint under a defined process. Which term fits?

D. complainant

A Not here. contemporaneous record: A document or note created at or near the event. The usual combination is "preserve contemporaneous records".

B Not here. impartiality: An approach not favoring a person or predetermined conclusion. The usual combination is "maintain impartiality".

C Not here. evidence preservation: Keeping relevant original information available and intact. The usual combination is "arrange evidence preservation".

D Correct. complainant: A person raising a complaint under a defined process. The usual combination is "contact the complainant".

[Return to the exercise, page 40](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "The comment was said directly to me. The reason I think I was excluded from the meetings is that I heard about them afterward from someone else." Imani: [missing response] Tomas: "There was a colleague nearby. I can give you the name, but I have not asked what they heard, so I cannot say they will confirm my account." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. That distinction matters. The comment is part of your firsthand account, while the meeting information has another source. I will not combine them as though you directly observed everything.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 14, after Tomas says: "Will Reed be disciplined? Part of me wants a clear answer now, but I realize you have only heard from me." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Tomas says: "I can describe the comment, although I would like a moment to remember the exact words. I do not have the invitations open right now." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Imani's response in turn 6. It connects Tomas's preceding point with Tomas's follow-up. A firsthand account concerns what Tomas directly heard, unlike his inference about why invitations were missing.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 18, after Tomas says: "My biggest worry is what happens after I raise this. If my assignments suddenly change, I would want someone to examine that rather than assume it is unrelated." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 40](#)

E / Conversation

1. intake

Turn 2. Intake is the initial receipt and clarification of the concern, not a decision about its outcome.

04 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. chronology

Turn 4. A chronology places the meetings and comment in time order so the account can be examined accurately.

3. firsthand account

Turn 6. A firsthand account concerns what Tomas directly heard, unlike his inference about why invitations were missing.

4. witness

Turn 8. The colleague is only a possible witness because their presence and knowledge have not yet been checked.

5. confidentiality

Turn 10. Confidentiality involves careful information handling, not a guarantee that no appropriate person will need access.

6. need-to-know basis

Turn 12. A need-to-know basis limits sharing to legitimate process needs rather than general workplace circulation.

7. allegation

Turn 14. An allegation is a claim requiring assessment; the intake does not establish a disciplinary outcome.

8. evidence preservation

Turn 16. Evidence preservation keeps relevant original messages and records available without changing them to fit an account.

9. retaliation concern

Turn 18. A retaliation concern should be raised and assessed, not dismissed or automatically treated as a proven legal violation.

10. case update

Turn 20. A case update reports process status without promising that the review will be finished or a particular result reached.

[Return to the conversation, page 42](#)

04 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. What is the best response to a request for total secrecy?

A. Explain careful handling and the limits of necessary, appropriate sharing.

Honest limits allow appropriate review without making a promise the adviser may be unable to keep.

[Return to the exercise, page 44](#)

F2. What does a temporary separation arrangement establish by itself?

C. A temporary process measure, not a finding of guilt

An interim measure manages the situation while the assessment remains separate.

[Return to the exercise, page 44](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. account

Adviser: The note records the employee's account.

Turn 1. The note attributes the information to the person who supplied it.

2. contacted

Manager: The possible witness has not yet been contacted.

Turn 2. The briefing says the witness has not been approached for information.

3. finding

Adviser: The review has not produced a finding.

Turn 3. The current record contains a report, not an assessed conclusion.

4. update

Manager: Tuesday is the promised status update.

Turn 4. The promised event is communication about progress, not a guaranteed outcome.

[Return to the conversation, page 45](#)

04 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "Will Reed be disciplined? Part of me wants a clear answer now, but I realize you have only heard from me." **Imani:** [missing response] **Tomas:** "I can provide the messages and identify the invitations I expected. Some details may support my interpretation, while others may show something I did not know." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. We have an allegation, not a finding. The relevant review needs to examine the information fairly, and I cannot promise a particular outcome from this conversation.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Tomas says: "I can describe the comment, although I would like a moment to remember the exact words. I do not have the invitations open right now." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Tomas says: "There was a colleague nearby. I can give you the name, but I have not asked what they heard, so I cannot say they will confirm my account." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Imani's response in turn 14. It connects Tomas's preceding point with Tomas's follow-up. An allegation is a claim requiring assessment; the intake does not establish a disciplinary outcome.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Tomas says: "I can provide the messages and identify the invitations I expected. Some details may support my interpretation, while others may show something I did not know." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 45](#)

05 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What is the range midpoint?

C. USD 80,000

The midpoint is the average of the 60,000 minimum and 100,000 maximum.

[Return to the exercise, page 48](#)

A2. What does the fictional policy say about midpoint placement?

B. It is not automatic.

The supplied policy lists placement criteria and expressly rejects an automatic midpoint entitlement.

[Return to the exercise, page 48](#)

A3. What is the status of the 5% target bonus?

C. Conditional, not guaranteed

The brief distinguishes the target bonus from base pay and says its payment is conditional.

[Return to the exercise, page 48](#)

D / Response choices

D1. What is Alex's compa-ratio?

B. 90%

Dividing the 72,000 base salary by the 80,000 midpoint gives 0.90, or 90%.

[Return to the exercise, page 52](#)

D2. What does 30% represent here?

C. Salary position across the 60,000-100,000 interval

The salary is 12,000 above the minimum across a 40,000 range width, giving 30%.

[Return to the exercise, page 52](#)

05 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The upper bound of the defined pay range. Which term fits?

B. range maximum

A Not here. job level: A defined category of responsibility and scope. The usual combination is "verify the job level".

B Correct. range maximum: The upper bound of the defined pay range. The usual combination is "identify the range maximum".

C Not here. pay transparency: Openness about pay information, ranges, or decision processes. The usual combination is "explain pay transparency".

D Not here. total cash compensation: Base pay plus the relevant cash incentive payments. The usual combination is "define total cash compensation".

[Return to the exercise, page 52](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "The midpoint is not an automatic salary". Alex: "The statement shows ninety percent in one place and thirty percent in another. I thought at least one comparison must be wrong." Maya: [missing response] Alex: "Show me how thirty percent works, please. I do not want to challenge a calculation simply because it uses a different reference." Which response belongs in the gap?

A. Your compa-ratio is ninety percent: seventy-two thousand divided by eighty thousand. That percentage compares base pay with the midpoint, not with the range width.

A Correct. This is Maya's response in turn 6. It connects Alex's preceding point with Alex's follow-up. Compa-ratio divides 72,000 base salary by the 80,000 midpoint, producing 90%.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Alex says: "My base is seventy-two thousand dollars, but the published range has an eighty-thousand midpoint. Does that mean my salary is eight thousand short of what it should be?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 18, after Alex says: "That distinction helps. Please show the benefits separately as well; I do not want to add every package item to my salary figure." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Alex says: "Show me how thirty percent works, please. I do not want to challenge a calculation simply because it uses a different reference." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 52](#)

E / Conversation

1. base salary

Turn 2. Base salary is the fixed annual pay being compared with the range, excluding the conditional bonus.

05 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. midpoint

Turn 4. The midpoint is the central range reference, 80,000 dollars, not an automatic individual salary under this policy.

3. compa-ratio

Turn 6. Compa-ratio divides 72,000 base salary by the 80,000 midpoint, producing 90%.

4. range penetration

Turn 8. Range penetration measures 12,000 above minimum across a 40,000 range width, producing 30%.

5. compensation review

Turn 10. The compensation review examines individual placement under the stated criteria rather than inferring fairness from one ratio.

6. internal equity

Turn 12. Internal equity concerns consistent and fair pay relationships, requiring relevant comparison rather than an unsupported individual conclusion.

7. target bonus

Turn 14. The target bonus is conditional, so the calculated 3,600 amount cannot be treated as guaranteed payment.

8. variable pay

Turn 16. Variable pay depends on specified conditions and must be distinguished from fixed base salary.

9. total rewards

Turn 18. Total rewards includes benefits and other employment value beyond base salary and cash incentives.

10. pay disparity

Turn 20. A pay disparity is a difference to examine with relevant facts, not automatically proof of an unlawful decision.

[Return to the conversation, page 54](#)

05 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. Which statement handles the fairness question properly?

C. The range calculation does not replace review of your individual concern.

Numerical position alone neither resolves the concern nor establishes a legal conclusion.

[Return to the exercise, page 57](#)

F2. Alex adds the conditional bonus to base and divides 75,600 by 80,000. What is wrong with calling 94.5% the base-pay compa-ratio?

A. That numerator includes a target incentive; the stated base-pay ratio remains $72,000 / 80,000 = 90\%$.

The 94.5% arithmetic is correct for that different numerator, but the defined compa-ratio compares base salary with midpoint. Range penetration uses a separate formula.

[Return to the exercise, page 57](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. ninety

Employee: My compa-ratio is ninety percent.

Turn 1. Dividing 54,000 by the 60,000 midpoint gives ninety percent.

2. dollars

HR: The target bonus is 5,400 dollars.

Turn 2. Ten percent of the 54,000 base produces a 5,400-dollar target amount.

3. guaranteed

Employee: That target is not guaranteed.

Turn 3. The briefing describes a conditional incentive, not a guaranteed payout.

4. unconfirmed

HR: The actual payout remains unconfirmed.

Turn 4. No actual payment has been confirmed in the supplied facts.

[Return to the conversation, page 58](#)

05 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "The midpoint is not an automatic salary". Alex: "The five-percent bonus would add thirty-six hundred. Can I describe seventy-five thousand six hundred as my guaranteed annual cash amount?" Maya: [missing response] Alex: "Then I will label that total base plus target, not guaranteed cash. Does the bonus increase my salary comparison from ninety percent to ninety-four point five?" Which response belongs in the gap?

A. No. The target bonus is conditional. The calculation gives the target amount, but the plan's conditions determine the actual payment, which is not confirmed here.

A Correct. This is Maya's response in turn 14. It connects Alex's preceding point with Alex's follow-up. The target bonus is conditional, so the calculated 3,600 amount cannot be treated as guaranteed payment.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Alex says: "I read the middle of the range as the standard salary everyone should receive. Is that not what the figure means?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Alex says: "I also want the comparison to use roles with similar responsibilities. I am not asking you to disclose another employee's personal record." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Alex says: "My base is seventy-two thousand dollars, but the published range has an eighty-thousand midpoint. Does that mean my salary is eight thousand short of what it should be?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 58](#)

06 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What change has the employee requested?

C. A 9:30 start instead of 8:30 from October 7

The briefing states a requested schedule change, not a broader employment decision.

[Return to the exercise, page 59](#)

A2. What is the current status?

D. Received but not yet reviewed or decided

HR has not reviewed the request and no arrangement has been approved.

[Return to the exercise, page 59](#)

A3. Which information still needs appropriate clarification?

A. The work barrier and relevant coverage implications

The brief identifies work-related questions while sensitive information requires appropriate handling.

[Return to the exercise, page 59](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which first response is appropriate?

B. Acknowledge receipt and arrange the relevant discussion without promising the outcome.

The response is prompt and useful while preserving the need for an appropriate individual assessment.

[Return to the exercise, page 63](#)

D2. How should October 7 be described now?

B. The requested start date

The employee requested that date, but the relevant decision has not been made.

[Return to the exercise, page 63](#)

06 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A fundamental duty of the position under the applicable framework. Which term fits?

A. essential function

A Correct. essential function: A fundamental duty of the position under the applicable framework. The usual combination is "identify essential functions".

B Not here. alternative arrangement: Another proposed way of addressing the stated need. The usual combination is "explore an alternative arrangement".

C Not here. supporting documentation: Relevant information used to assess a request under the proper process. The usual combination is "handle supporting documentation".

D Not here. undue hardship: Under the US disability framework, significant difficulty or expense assessed in context. The usual combination is "assess undue hardship".

[Return to the exercise, page 63](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "The message gives the preferred schedule, but not the difficulty it is intended to address. I want to ask a useful question without becoming intrusive." Ben: [missing response] Sana: "Would you handle any supporting health information? I do not want the employee to send it to a group mailbox that the whole department can open." Which response belongs in the gap?

B. Ask about the workplace barrier through the appropriate process. We need enough relevant information to understand the request, not a public explanation of the employee's entire health history.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Sana says: "Would you handle any supporting health information? I do not want the employee to send it to a group mailbox that the whole department can open." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Correct. This is Ben's response in turn 6. It connects Sana's preceding point with Sana's follow-up. The workplace barrier is the relevant difficulty the requested schedule is intended to address.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Sana says: "What if there is a need for something temporary while the review continues? I should not improvise a promise outside my authority." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Sana says: "Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 63](#)

E / Conversation

1. accommodation request

Turn 2. The accommodation request starts a relevant review; receipt alone does not decide the arrangement.

06 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. individualized assessment

Turn 4. An individualized assessment considers the particular need and work circumstances rather than applying a blanket answer.

3. workplace barrier

Turn 6. The workplace barrier is the relevant difficulty the requested schedule is intended to address.

4. medical confidentiality

Turn 8. Medical confidentiality requires appropriate handling of sensitive information, separate from ordinary team circulation.

5. essential functions

Turn 10. Essential functions are the fundamental duties that help frame the work assessment, not every customary scheduling preference.

6. interactive process

Turn 12. The interactive process clarifies needs and explores effective options through discussion, not a predetermined outcome.

7. implementation date

Turn 14. An implementation date belongs to an authorized arrangement; October 7 remains only the requested date here.

8. interim arrangement

Turn 16. An interim arrangement is a temporary measure that still needs appropriate authority and clearly stated terms.

9. request status

Turn 18. Request status names the current process stage, here received and awaiting review, rather than an invented outcome.

10. decision rationale

Turn 20. The decision rationale explains the authorized outcome based on the review, not an assumption made at intake.

[Return to the conversation, page 65](#)

06 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. Which information request respects the stated boundary?

B. Clarify the work barrier and use the designated route for any necessary sensitive support.

Relevant work questions and appropriately handled supporting information avoid unnecessary disclosure.

[Return to the exercise, page 68](#)

F2. HR proposes a different arrangement from the requested 9:30 start. What needs checking?

A. Whether it addresses the actual barrier while meeting the relevant work requirements under the applicable process.

An alternative must be assessed for effectiveness in the individual circumstances; its label, popularity, or similarity to the standard schedule cannot establish that.

[Return to the exercise, page 68](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. requested

Manager: Monday is the requested start date.

Turn 1. The employee asked for Monday, but the arrangement has not been authorized.

2. acknowledged

HR: The request has been acknowledged.

Turn 2. HR has confirmed receipt without deciding the substance of the request.

3. pending

Manager: The assessment is still pending.

Turn 3. The briefing states that the review is not yet complete.

4. approved

HR: No interim arrangement is approved.

Turn 4. No temporary arrangement exists under the supplied facts.

[Return to the conversation, page 69](#)

06 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "The employee asked to begin on October seventh. Should I tell payroll or the scheduling team that date is already confirmed?" Ben: [missing response] Sana: "What if there is a need for something temporary while the review continues? I should not improvise a promise outside my authority." Which response belongs in the gap?

D. Not as an implementation date. It is the requested start date. We should move the review forward promptly and keep the status clear rather than quietly turn the request into an approved instruction.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Sana says: "Would you handle any supporting health information? I do not want the employee to send it to a group mailbox that the whole department can open." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Sana says: "What if there is a need for something temporary while the review continues? I should not improvise a promise outside my authority." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Sana says: "Our handbook lists the standard hours. I wondered whether I could simply quote that section and say the schedule cannot change." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Ben's response in turn 14. It connects Sana's preceding point with Sana's follow-up. An implementation date belongs to an authorized arrangement; October 7 remains only the requested date here.

[Return to the exercise, page 69](#)

07 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What underlying gap is established?

B. The recurring task was never assigned in the role notes.

The brief identifies an undocumented responsibility, not a proven refusal to follow an agreed assignment.

[Return to the exercise, page 72](#)

A2. Who would approve the result under Ken's proposal?

C. Ken

The proposed sequence names Ken as the approver by Tuesday 15:00.

[Return to the exercise, page 72](#)

A3. What is the status of the two-week trial?

A. Proposed, not yet discussed or accepted by the colleagues

The briefing expressly states that the colleagues have not yet discussed or accepted the proposal.

[Return to the exercise, page 72](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which opening avoids an unsupported blame judgment?

A. The reconciliation task was not assigned; let us clarify the required handoff.

The opening uses the established documentation gap instead of assuming motive or equal fault.

[Return to the exercise, page 76](#)

D2. Which addition would make the proposed Monday handoff more usable?

B. Define the required input fields and a named route for reporting missing information before the handoff.

A handoff needs a content standard and a way to surface blockages. Repeating the time does not supply either, and the proposal does not establish acceptance or different approval rights.

[Return to the exercise, page 76](#)

07 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The need or concern behind a stated position. Which term fits?

B. underlying interest

A Not here. responsibility matrix: A record showing who performs, approves, or supports each task. The usual combination is "update the responsibility matrix".

B Correct. underlying interest: The need or concern behind a stated position. The usual combination is "identify underlying interests".

C Not here. paraphrase: A restatement used to check understanding of another person's meaning. The usual combination is "offer a neutral paraphrase".

D Not here. review meeting: A planned discussion assessing the arrangement or progress. The usual combination is "schedule a review meeting".

[Return to the exercise, page 76](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "Clarify the handoff before assigning blame". Ken: "They both want the reconciliation finished on time. Can we start there and agree on the work sequence instead of opening with another argument about attitude?"

Daria: [missing response] Ken: "My proposal is for Rosa to assemble the inputs by Monday noon, Felix to check them by Tuesday ten, and me to approve by Tuesday fifteen hundred." Which response belongs in the gap?

D. Use that common ground to frame the discussion. It does not prove they agree about ownership, but it gives them a concrete result to organize the work around.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Ken says: "That is true. Rosa says it belongs with Felix's reporting work, while Felix says Rosa has the client information and should own the whole task." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Ken says: "What if information from a client is missing by Monday noon? I do not want the plan to hide a dependency neither colleague controls." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Ken says: "Rosa and Felix each say the other should handle the weekly reconciliation. I was going to tell them both to stop blaming each other and cooperate." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Correct. This is Daria's response in turn 6. It connects Ken's preceding point with Ken's follow-up. Common ground is the shared need for a reliable, timely reconciliation rather than assumed agreement on responsibility.

[Return to the exercise, page 76](#)

E / Conversation

1. role ambiguity

Turn 2. Role ambiguity is the missing assignment in the role notes, which must be clarified before assuming a breached duty.

07 / Answers and explanations / continued

2. positions

Turn 4. Positions are the competing claims about ownership; the underlying practical needs may be different.

3. common ground

Turn 6. Common ground is the shared need for a reliable, timely reconciliation rather than assumed agreement on responsibility.

4. responsibility matrix

Turn 8. A responsibility matrix distinguishes preparing, checking, and approving instead of assigning vague shared ownership.

5. handoff criterion

Turn 10. The handoff criterion specifies what complete inputs must contain before Felix receives the work.

6. escalation trigger

Turn 12. An escalation trigger makes a missing-input problem visible through a stated referral point instead of silent delay.

7. trial period

Turn 14. A trial period limits the proposed arrangement to two weeks and creates a defined opportunity to assess it.

8. false equivalence

Turn 16. False equivalence would assign equal fault without evidence of equal conduct or an agreed prior responsibility.

9. facilitated discussion

Turn 18. A facilitated discussion can clarify the stated task dispute but is not a substitute for appropriate handling of other serious concerns.

10. working agreement

Turn 20. A working agreement records the actual coordination arrangement, not a proposal falsely described as accepted.

[Return to the conversation, page 78](#)

07 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. Which summary preserves the proposal's status?

A. Ken proposes a two-week trial; the colleagues' responses are still needed.

The supplied facts establish a proposal, not acceptance or evidence of successful operation.

[Return to the exercise, page 80](#)

F2. Why is automatic equal blame inappropriate?

C. The facts do not establish equivalent conduct or a previously assigned duty.

Fair handling follows the evidence rather than forcing an equal-fault conclusion.

[Return to the exercise, page 80](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. prepare

HR: Ana's proposed role is to prepare the file.

Turn 1. The proposal assigns Ana the preparation stage rather than checking or approval.

2. check

Manager: Bo would check it on Tuesday.

Turn 2. The stated second stage is Bo's Tuesday check.

3. approval

HR: The manager would give approval on Wednesday.

Turn 3. The proposal reserves the final approval stage for the manager.

4. pending

Manager: The colleagues' responses remain pending.

Turn 4. Neither colleague has responded, so their acceptance cannot yet be reported.

[Return to the conversation, page 81](#)

07 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Clarify the handoff before assigning blame". Ken: "I want to test this for two weeks and review the results. I should still hear their practical objections before writing that the arrangement is agreed." Daria: [missing response] Ken: "I was going to ask both to apologize, but I cannot say they caused the problem equally. We never assigned the task clearly in the first place." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Correct. A trial period is a proposal until the relevant discussion and authorization occur. Record what is actually decided, including any point that remains unresolved.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Ken says: "Rosa and Felix each say the other should handle the weekly reconciliation. I was going to tell them both to stop blaming each other and cooperate." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Ken says: "I also need to define what Rosa sends. Otherwise Felix may receive an incomplete file and the same conflict will reappear at the next stage." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Daria's response in turn 14. It connects Ken's preceding point with Ken's follow-up. A trial period limits the proposed arrangement to two weeks and creates a defined opportunity to assess it.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Ken says: "My proposal is for Rosa to assemble the inputs by Monday noon, Felix to check them by Tuesday ten, and me to approve by Tuesday fifteen hundred." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 81](#)

08 / Answers and explanations

A / Read the situation

A1. What does the number twelve describe?

C. Positions in the proposal's review scope

The brief defines a review scope, not a final count of eliminated roles or individual outcomes.

[Return to the exercise, page 82](#)

A2. What is confirmed for Friday at 11:00?

C. A staff update

The scheduled event is a communication update, explicitly not a promised decision deadline.

[Return to the exercise, page 82](#)

A3. Why is "small changes" unsuitable here?

D. It minimizes possible employment consequences.

The draft minimizes a potentially serious effect that has not yet been determined.

[Return to the exercise, page 82](#)

D / Response choices

D1. Which announcement keeps scope, employment outcome, and update timing separate?

B. Twelve positions are under review; final changes are unconfirmed; Friday 11:00 is a status update.

The case confirms the review scope and an update, not an elimination count, replacement roles, or a completed-decision date.

[Return to the exercise, page 86](#)

D2. Which phrase offers empathy without an unsupported guarantee?

D. I recognize this uncertainty is difficult, and we will provide the next update Friday.

The statement acknowledges the stakes and promises a real communication event without inventing job security.

[Return to the exercise, page 86](#)

08 / Answers and explanations / continued

D3. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The roles, activities, or issues included in an assessment. Which term fits?

C. review scope

A Not here. redeployment: Moving an employee into another suitable role under the relevant process. The usual combination is "explore redeployment".

B Not here. confirmed fact: Information established sufficiently for the stated communication. The usual combination is "distinguish confirmed facts".

C Correct. review scope: The roles, activities, or issues included in an assessment. The usual combination is "define the review scope".

D Not here. transition support: Assistance during a change in role or employment. The usual combination is "provide transition support".

[Return to the exercise, page 86](#)

D4. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes".

Owen: "What approved explanation can we give for considering the change? The message needs a reason, but I should not invent a savings figure to fill the gap."

Mei: [missing response] Owen: "We also need to distinguish a proposal from a final decision. I do not want an unfinished process presented as though employees are hearing the outcome." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Use the approved business rationale when it is available. Do not invent savings, performance problems, or strategic reasons merely to make the announcement sound complete.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Owen says: "People may also ask about alternative roles or separation arrangements. It would be tempting to promise broad support now and work out the details later." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Owen says: "We know that twelve positions are being examined. Some readers may assume that means twelve people have already been selected to leave." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Mei's response in turn 6. It connects Owen's preceding point with Owen's follow-up. The business rationale explains the reason for the proposal but must come from actual approved information.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Owen says: "Managers are going to get questions before Friday. Can we give them the verified facts, open points, and contact route now so they do not improvise answers?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 86](#)

08 / Answers and explanations / continued

E / Conversation

1. role impact

Turn 2. Role impact includes potential changes to positions or employment, which the draft should not trivialize.

2. review scope

Turn 4. Review scope identifies the twelve positions being assessed, not a final elimination count or individual decision.

3. business rationale

Turn 6. The business rationale explains the reason for the proposal but must come from actual approved information.

4. consultation

Turn 8. Consultation involves seeking and considering views under the applicable process, not disguising a completed choice as open.

5. confirmed fact

Turn 10. The confirmed fact is the scheduled update, not a promise that all individual decisions will be ready.

6. manager briefing

Turn 12. A manager briefing gives leaders the same established facts, uncertainty boundaries, and contact routes.

7. rumor

Turn 14. A rumor is unverified information and should not become a confirmed decision through repetition or unsupported denial.

8. redeployment

Turn 16. Redeployment concerns another suitable role under the relevant process and cannot be guaranteed without established options.

9. individual notification

Turn 18. Individual notification addresses a particular person's situation through the proper process rather than a general announcement.

08 / Answers and explanations / continued

10. open question

Turn 20. Open questions remain visibly unanswered with follow-up ownership instead of being filled by invented assurances.

[Return to the conversation, page 88](#)

F / Accuracy and scope

F1. What should managers do with a rumor about a final list?

B. Distinguish it from confirmed facts and use the authorized question route.

Repetition does not verify a rumor, and unsupported counter-assurances are equally unreliable.

[Return to the exercise, page 91](#)

F2. If decisions remain open on Friday, what should the update say?

A. State the current status, unresolved questions, and next contact arrangements.

The promised update can honestly report continuing uncertainty while keeping follow-up concrete.

[Return to the exercise, page 91](#)

F / Guided speaking

1. scope

HR: Eight positions are in the review scope.

Turn 1. The number describes positions included in assessment, not a final elimination count.

2. decided

Manager: Final changes are not yet decided.

Turn 2. The supplied facts leave the final outcome open.

3. update

HR: Wednesday at 14:00 is the next update.

Turn 3. The scheduled event is communication about status rather than a guaranteed decision.

4. outcome

Manager: We cannot promise an individual outcome then.

Turn 4. No individual decision has been guaranteed for that appointment.

[Return to the conversation, page 92](#)

08 / Answers and explanations / continued

F / Rebuild the exchange

1. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes". Owen: "There is already a rumor about a final list. Should the announcement deny it outright, even though we have not checked the specific claim?" Mei: [missing response] Owen: "People may also ask about alternative roles or separation arrangements. It would be tempting to promise broad support now and work out the details later." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Address the rumor with the actual verified status. We should neither repeat an unconfirmed list nor promise the opposite just to counter it.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Owen says: "We know that twelve positions are being examined. Some readers may assume that means twelve people have already been selected to leave." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 6, after Owen says: "What approved explanation can we give for considering the change? The message needs a reason, but I should not invent a savings figure to fill the gap." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Mei's response in turn 14. It connects Owen's preceding point with Owen's follow-up. A rumor is unverified information and should not become a confirmed decision through repetition or unsupported denial.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Owen says: "Managers are going to get questions before Friday. Can we give them the verified facts, open points, and contact route now so they do not improvise answers?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 92](#)

Review 1 / Explanations

Cumulative review

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A requirement necessary for the particular role. Which term fits?

D. essential criterion

A Not here. screening call: An initial conversation checking relevant requirements and interest. The usual combination is "arrange a screening call".

B Not here. behavioral question: A question asking about an actual past action or experience. The usual combination is "ask a behavioral question".

C Not here. work sample: A job-related task used to observe relevant performance. The usual combination is "evaluate a work sample".

D Correct. essential criterion: A requirement necessary for the particular role. The usual combination is "define essential criteria".

[Return to the exercise, page 24](#)

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A stated basis for judging whether work meets expectations. Which term fits?

D. success criterion

A Not here. buddy: A colleague assigned to help with everyday orientation and questions. The usual combination is "assign an onboarding buddy".

B Not here. onboarding: The process of helping a new employee enter and become effective in a role. The usual combination is "plan the onboarding".

C Not here. check-in: A scheduled conversation about progress, needs, or concerns. The usual combination is "hold a weekly check-in".

D Correct. success criterion: A stated basis for judging whether work meets expectations. The usual combination is "agree success criteria".

[Return to the exercise, page 24](#)

Review 1 / Explanations / continued

3. Rebuild the exchange from "What does good fit actually mean?". Marcus: "One panelist likes people who share the team's interests. I understand the impulse, but that does not show whether someone can manage client commitments." Lina: [missing response] Marcus: "After each interview, should we compare scores immediately? I want disagreements about evidence to surface before the final shortlist discussion." Which response belongs in the gap?

A. That is where affinity bias can enter. Bring the discussion back to the required work without turning the panel review into an argument about who seems friendly.

A Correct. This is Lina's response in turn 10. It connects Marcus's preceding point with Marcus's follow-up. Affinity bias favors perceived similarity, such as shared interests, rather than evidence of relevant capability.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 14, after Marcus says: "Some candidates will have questions about the assessment format. We should explain it early enough for them to raise any access needs." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Marcus says: "Then let us replace confident with something we can assess. What would show that a candidate follows up with clients and raises a deadline problem early?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Marcus says: "We also need to tell candidates when they will hear from us. A long silence can make a well-organized interview feel careless." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 24](#)

Review 1 / Explanations / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "One thing is blocking the first task: I cannot open the sample-case folder. The general account works, but that folder still gives me an access error." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "Let me confirm: five samples, then supervised live cases, then a readiness review. We will record the criteria and approval condition with those dates." Which response belongs in the gap?

B. That is a dependency for the first milestone. I will arrange the access and check progress with you rather than treating the existing setup tick as proof everything is available.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 20, after Evan says: "Let me confirm: five samples, then supervised live cases, then a readiness review. We will record the criteria and approval condition with those dates." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Correct. This is Nora's response in turn 18. It connects Evan's preceding point with Evan's follow-up. The missing sample folder is a resource needed to complete the first milestone.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Evan says: "I will tell the other teams it is a review date, then. What specifically has to happen before I can accept cases independently?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 14, after Evan says: "The day-thirty date sounds like a target for working independently. Should I tell other teams they can send cases directly to me from then?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 24](#)

Review 2 / Explanations

Cumulative review

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A difference between expected and observed performance. Which term fits?

D. performance gap

A Not here. barrier: A factor that may prevent the expected work. The usual combination is "explore a work barrier".

B Not here. support commitment: Assistance the manager or organization agrees to provide. The usual combination is "record the support commitment".

C Not here. formal warning: A notice issued under an applicable formal employment process. The usual combination is "distinguish a formal warning".

D Correct. performance gap: A difference between expected and observed performance. The usual combination is "identify a performance gap".

[Return to the exercise, page 46](#)

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: Independent information supporting an account. Which term fits?

D. corroboration

A Not here. leading question: A question suggesting the answer or assuming a contested fact. The usual combination is "avoid leading questions".

B Not here. retaliation concern: A concern about adverse treatment connected to protected conduct or reporting. The usual combination is "raise a retaliation concern".

C Not here. employee relations: Work addressing the employment relationship and workplace concerns. The usual combination is "manage employee-relations concerns".

D Correct. corroboration: Independent information supporting an account. The usual combination is "seek corroboration".

[Return to the exercise, page 46](#)

Review 2 / Explanations / continued

3. Rebuild the exchange from "The laptop is ready; the role is not". Evan: "After the samples, I would like to see how a colleague handles live cases. The examples alone may not show the pace of the real queue." Nora: [missing response] Evan: "Will that colleague approve my work, or will you? I do not want friendly advice to become an approval I was never actually given." Which response belongs in the gap?

A. We can arrange shadowing before your supervised cases. I will identify the colleague so you know who to ask about everyday workflow.

A Correct. This is Nora's response in turn 10. It connects Evan's preceding point with Evan's follow-up. Shadowing means observing an experienced colleague at work before or alongside practice.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 6, after Evan says: "What will you check in the samples? I can count five completed files, but that would not tell me whether I handled them correctly." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Evan says: "My accounts and laptop are working, but the checklist says onboarding is complete. I still do not know which work matters most this month." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Evan says: "That would help. I have several training links and messages from colleagues, but no clear order or definition of what I should produce first." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 46](#)

Review 2 / Explanations / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "My biggest worry is what happens after I raise this. If my assignments suddenly change, I would want someone to examine that rather than assume it is unrelated." **Imani:** [missing response] **Tomas:** "Before we finish, could you read back the main points? I want the note to distinguish my recollection, what I inferred, and what still needs checking." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Please report any retaliation concern through the available route. We should record the facts and assess the concern, not pre-decide either that retaliation occurred or that it could not occur.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 20, after Tomas says: "Before we finish, could you read back the main points? I want the note to distinguish my recollection, what I inferred, and what still needs checking." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 6, after Tomas says: "The comment was said directly to me. The reason I think I was excluded from the meetings is that I heard about them afterward from someone else." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Imani's response in turn 18. It connects Tomas's preceding point with Tomas's follow-up. A retaliation concern should be raised and assessed, not dismissed or automatically treated as a proven legal violation.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 4, after Tomas says: "I can describe the comment, although I would like a moment to remember the exact words. I do not have the invitations open right now." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 46](#)

Review 3 / Explanations

Cumulative review

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: The lower bound of the defined pay range. Which term fits?

C. range minimum

A Not here. pay grade: A category grouping roles within a compensation structure. The usual combination is "confirm the pay grade".

B Not here. target bonus: A reference bonus amount subject to the plan's actual conditions. The usual combination is "explain the target bonus".

C Correct. range minimum: The lower bound of the defined pay range. The usual combination is "identify the range minimum".

D Not here. pay disparity: A difference in compensation requiring a defined comparison and context. The usual combination is "investigate a pay disparity".

[Return to the exercise, page 70](#)

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: An arrangement that addresses the relevant barrier. Which term fits?

D. effective accommodation

A Not here. implementation date: The date an authorized arrangement is to begin. The usual combination is "confirm the implementation date".

B Not here. accommodation request: A request for a change addressing a relevant workplace barrier under applicable rules. The usual combination is "acknowledge an accommodation request".

C Not here. policy owner: The person or function responsible for a policy's interpretation and upkeep. The usual combination is "consult the policy owner".

D Correct. effective accommodation: An arrangement that addresses the relevant barrier. The usual combination is "assess an effective accommodation".

[Return to the exercise, page 70](#)

Review 3 / Explanations / continued

3. Rebuild the exchange from "Receive the concern without deciding the case".

Tomas: "Can you keep this entirely secret? I am uneasy about Reed hearing a different version of what I said before I have checked the summary." **Imani:** [missing response] **Tomas:** "I am still uneasy about who will hear this. Can you explain who may need the information and whom I should contact if anything changes?" Which response belongs in the gap?

C. I will explain the limits of confidentiality. I will handle the information carefully, but others may need to know to address the concern.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Tomas says: "I was left out of two project meetings, and Reed made a dismissive comment on September fifteenth. I am worried that bringing this up will make things worse." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Tomas says: "I am still uneasy about who will hear this. Can you explain who may need the information and whom I should contact if anything changes?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Imani's response in turn 10. It connects Tomas's preceding point with Tomas's follow-up. Confidentiality involves careful information handling, not a guarantee that no appropriate person will need access.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 8, after Tomas says: "There was a colleague nearby. I can give you the name, but I have not asked what they heard, so I cannot say they will confirm my account." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 70](#)

Review 3 / Explanations / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "I will acknowledge the request today and explain your contact route. Can we agree on the next update so the employee knows this is moving forward?" Ben: [missing response] Sana: "If a decision is eventually made, we need to explain it clearly and provide the applicable route for questions, rather than send a bare yes or no." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Exactly. Communicate request status accurately. Also establish a contact point and update time so the employee is not left wondering whether the request has disappeared.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 20, after Sana says: "If a decision is eventually made, we need to explain it clearly and provide the applicable route for questions, rather than send a bare yes or no." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Sana says: "Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Ben's response in turn 18. It connects Sana's preceding point with Sana's follow-up. Request status names the current process stage, here received and awaiting review, rather than an invented outcome.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Sana says: "I will list the early tasks and check which genuinely require eight-thirty coverage. Some may be scheduled that way simply because that is our usual routine." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 70](#)

Review 4 / Explanations

Cumulative review

1. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A person's stated demand or preferred outcome in a disagreement. Which term fits?

A. position

A Correct. position: A person's stated demand or preferred outcome in a disagreement. The usual combination is "distinguish a position".

B Not here. trial period: A limited time for testing an arrangement. The usual combination is "set a trial period".

C Not here. active listening: Listening that checks meaning before responding. The usual combination is "use active listening".

D Not here. handoff criterion: The condition a work item must meet before transfer. The usual combination is "agree handoff criteria".

[Return to the exercise, page 93](#)

2. A colleague needs the term for this meaning: A count of people under a specified employment definition. Which term fits?

A. headcount

A Correct. headcount: A count of people under a specified employment definition. The usual combination is "state the headcount basis".

B Not here. restructuring: A change to how an organization arranges its work, roles, or reporting. The usual combination is "communicate a restructuring proposal".

C Not here. message cascade: Planned communication through successive organizational levels. The usual combination is "coordinate the message cascade".

D Not here. notice period: The applicable interval between employment notice and its effective end. The usual combination is "confirm the notice period".

[Return to the exercise, page 93](#)

Review 4 / Explanations / continued

3. Rebuild the exchange from "Received is not approved or refused". Sana: "I will list the early tasks and check which genuinely require eight-thirty coverage. Some may be scheduled that way simply because that is our usual routine." Ben: [missing response] Sana: "Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need." Which response belongs in the gap?

B. Clarify the essential functions and the actual coverage needs. Separate a real task requirement from a customary schedule before treating them as interchangeable.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 18, after Sana says: "I will acknowledge the request today and explain your contact route. Can we agree on the next update so the employee knows this is moving forward?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Correct. This is Ben's response in turn 10. It connects Sana's preceding point with Sana's follow-up. Essential functions are the fundamental duties that help frame the work assessment, not every customary scheduling preference.

C Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Sana says: "An employee has asked to start at nine thirty instead of eight thirty from October seventh for a health-related reason. Does receiving the message mean I should approve it?" It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 12, after Sana says: "Could a different schedule or another arrangement address the difficulty? I want to leave room for options without promising one before we understand the need." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 93](#)

Review 4 / Explanations / continued

4. Rebuild the exchange from "Do not call possible job losses small changes". Owen: "We should keep personal employment information out of the broad announcement. A general update should not become an accidental disclosure about a named person." Mei: [missing response] Owen: "I will replace small changes with a clear description of the proposal and potential impact. The closing will acknowledge uncertainty and confirm Friday's update." Which response belongs in the gap?

C. Use the appropriate individual notification process when there is an actual supported message for that person. Do not imply it has happened merely because the staff update is scheduled.

A Not here. This line belongs to turn 16, after Owen says: "People may also ask about alternative roles or separation arrangements. It would be tempting to promise broad support now and work out the details later." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

B Not here. This line belongs to turn 2, after Owen says: "The draft announcement calls this small changes and says no one should worry. I was trying to keep the tone calm, but those phrases may go too far." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

C Correct. This is Mei's response in turn 18. It connects Owen's preceding point with Owen's follow-up. Individual notification addresses a particular person's situation through the proper process rather than a general announcement.

D Not here. This line belongs to turn 10, after Owen says: "Friday at eleven is booked for a staff update. I originally wrote that everyone would know their position then, which is more than we have agreed." It addresses that point, not the missing turn in the supplied exchange.

[Return to the exercise, page 93](#)

Additional case 1 / Explanations

Extended conversation

1. time record

Turn 2. The time record provides the hours actually worked in the relevant workweek and is compared with the payroll entry.

2. overtime rate

Turn 6. The overtime rate in this case is one and one-half times the confirmed \$24 regular rate, or \$36 per overtime hour.

3. Gross pay

Turn 8. Gross pay is the amount before deductions; the calculated \$1,176 is not a promise of the same amount being deposited.

4. pay adjustment

Turn 10. The pay adjustment should accurately correct the missing earnings and their basis, rather than disguise them under an unrelated payment label.

5. off-cycle payment

Turn 12. An off-cycle payment is processed outside the normal payroll run; its availability and timing need confirmation rather than a casual promise.

6. audit trail

Turn 18. The audit trail connects the original entry, identified error, correction, and resulting payment without silently rewriting the earlier record.

[Return to the conversation, page 96](#)

Transfer exchange

1. amount

Adviser: The confirmed correction is a gross earnings amount.

Turn 1. Gross earnings are stated before deductions and do not establish the exact deposit.

Additional case 1 / Explanations / continued

2. status

Employee: Please confirm the payment date rather than just the ticket status.

Turn 2. An open ticket does not tell the employee when the money will actually be paid.

3. payment

Adviser: Payroll must identify the applicable deductions and net payment.

Turn 3. The net payment reflects the relevant deductions rather than automatically matching the gross correction.

4. record

Employee: Keep the correction linked to the original pay record.

Turn 4. The original record and correction should remain connected in the audit trail.

[Return to the conversation, page 99](#)

Additional case 2 / Explanations

Extended conversation

1. selection decision

Turn 2. The selection decision identifies the preferred candidate; it does not by itself establish approved terms or an agreed transfer date.

2. release date

Turn 4. The release date identifies the agreed transition out of the current role; a manager's preferred timing does not establish it unilaterally here.

3. secondment

Turn 6. A secondment is a temporary assignment with its own terms; uncertainty about timing does not convert a permanent move into one.

4. offer terms

Turn 8. Offer terms specify the actual employment or assignment conditions being offered, rather than only the role's general salary range.

5. transition plan

Turn 12. A transition plan identifies the work, knowledge transfer, owners, and timing needed for the move rather than leaving release indefinitely undefined.

6. confirmation

Turn 16. Confirmation communicates the actual agreed terms and effective date; it should replace conflicting informal messages without inventing an outcome.

[Return to the conversation, page 101](#)

Transfer exchange

1. agreed

Recruiter: December first is proposed, not yet agreed.

Turn 1. The supplied facts establish a suggested date rather than a completed agreement.

Additional case 2 / Explanations / continued

2. terms

Manager: I will pause the announcement while we resolve the terms.

Turn 2. Outstanding formal terms must not be hidden by announcing a settled move.

3. discussion

Recruiter: Include the employee in the transition discussion.

Turn 3. The employee should be involved rather than receiving conflicting decisions from separate managers.

4. approvals

Manager: Send one accurate confirmation after the required approvals.

Turn 4. The final communication should reflect actual approvals and the agreed position.

[Return to the conversation, page 104](#)

Additional case 3 / Explanations

Extended conversation

1. headcount

Turn 2. Headcount counts people in the defined population; the department has twelve employees, while its two vacancies are not employees.

2. scheduled hours

Turn 4. Scheduled hours total the planned weekly hours: eight times forty plus four times twenty equals four hundred.

3. FTE

Turn 6. FTE means full-time equivalent; four hundred scheduled hours divided by the stated forty-hour basis gives ten FTE.

4. Actual hours

Turn 8. Actual hours describe recorded time for the specified period and are different from the scheduled-hours basis used in this example.

5. vacancy

Turn 10. A vacancy is an unfilled position, not an existing employee or a confirmed amount of staffed capacity.

6. skills coverage

Turn 12. Skills coverage considers whether the required capabilities are available, which an aggregate FTE figure cannot establish on its own.

[Return to the conversation, page 106](#)

Transfer exchange

1. employees

Director: The headcount is three employees.

Turn 1. Headcount counts the three people rather than converting them into full-time units.

Additional case 3 / Explanations / continued

2. sixty

Analyst: Their scheduled weekly hours total sixty.

Turn 2. Three employees multiplied by twenty hours equals sixty scheduled hours.

3. FTE

Director: On a forty-hour basis, that gives one point five FTE.

Turn 3. Sixty divided by forty equals one and one-half full-time equivalents.

4. productivity

Analyst: That figure alone does not establish actual productivity.

Turn 4. A scheduled-hours measure does not show how much useful work was actually completed.

[Return to the conversation, page 109](#)

Find a phrase by purpose

Recruiting, Screening, and Candidate Experience

Clarify the preference: What specific work behavior do you mean by good fit?

Return to the role: The role requires client follow-up and timely escalation.

Separate the criteria: Which requirements are essential and which are desirable?

[Full phrase bank, page 7](#)

Onboarding and Role Clarity

Distinguish setup: My accounts work, but the role priorities are not yet clear.

Ask for sequence: Which deliverable should I complete first?

Name the first milestone: Review five sample cases by day ten.

[Full phrase bank, page 17](#)

Performance Feedback and Documentation

Open with the work: I want to discuss the September 11 and 18 reports.

Name the gap: Both reports omitted the agreed summary section.

State the impact: I had to request the summary separately before completing my review.

[Full phrase bank, page 29](#)

Employee Relations and Investigations

Acknowledge the concern: Thank you for bringing this to me.

Invite the sequence: Please describe what happened and when.

Clarify direct knowledge: Which parts did you personally see or hear?

[Full phrase bank, page 39](#)

Find a phrase by purpose / continued

Compensation, Benefits, and Equity

Acknowledge the question: I understand why the published midpoint prompted your question.

State the base: Your annual base salary is 72,000 dollars.

Explain the range: The published range runs from 60,000 to 100,000.

[Full phrase bank, page 51](#)

Policy Communication and Compliance

Acknowledge promptly: We have received your request and will arrange the appropriate discussion.

State the status: The request has not yet been reviewed or decided.

Clarify the need: What work barrier is the requested schedule intended to address?

[Full phrase bank, page 62](#)

Conflict Mediation and Manager Coaching

Start with the known gap: The role notes do not assign the recurring reconciliation.

Avoid a blame shortcut: We have not established that both people failed an agreed duty.

Separate the positions: Each person says the other should own the task.

[Full phrase bank, page 75](#)

Restructuring and Sensitive Communication

Name the proposal: We are reviewing a restructuring proposal that may affect positions.

State the scope: Twelve positions are within the current review scope.

Separate the outcome: That is not a confirmed count of positions to be eliminated.

[Full phrase bank, page 85](#)

Vocabulary index

access provisioning[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**accountable owner**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**action log**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**Actual hours**[Case 3, p. 105](#)**allegation**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**at-risk position**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**audit trail**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**base salary**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**behavioral question**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**boundary**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**business rationale**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**calibration meeting**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**candidate pipeline**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**change fatigue**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**chronology**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**common ground**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**compensation review**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**confidentiality**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**confirmed fact**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**consultation**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**contemporaneous note**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**corroboration**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**accommodation request**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**acknowledgment of receipt**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**active listening**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**affinity bias**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**alternative arrangement**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**attribution**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**barrier**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**behavioral evidence**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**benefits eligibility**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**buddy**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**calibration**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**candidate experience**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**case update**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**check-in**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**coaching question**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**compa-ratio**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**complainant**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**confirmation**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**conflict of interest**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**consulted party**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**contemporaneous record**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**coverage requirement**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)

Vocabulary index / continued

data minimization[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**decision rationale**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**dependency**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**effective accommodation**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**employee relations**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**escalation route**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**essential criterion**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**evidence preservation**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**factual record**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**feedback conversation**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**finding**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**firsthand account**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**formal warning**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**functional limitation**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**ground rule**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**handoff**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**headcount**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#), [Case 3, p. 105](#)**impartiality**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**improvement action**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**individual notification**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**informal coaching**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**interactive process**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**decision authority**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**deliverable**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**desirable criterion**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**employee assistance program**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**employee response**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**escalation trigger**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**essential function**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**facilitated discussion**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**false equivalence**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**feedback loop**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**first-month plan**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**follow-up evidence**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**FTE**[Case 3, p. 105](#)**Gross pay**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**halo effect**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**handoff criterion**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**impact statement**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**implementation date**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**independent ownership**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**individualized assessment**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**intake**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**interim arrangement**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)

Vocabulary index / continued

interim measure[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**interview panel**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**job level**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**job-related competency**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**line manager**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**market adjustment**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**measurable objective**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**medical confidentiality**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**message cascade**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**milestone**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**need-to-know basis**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**notice period**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**off-cycle payment**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**offer terms**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**onboarding completion**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**operating model**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**overtime rate**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**pay adjustment**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**pay disparity**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**pay transparency**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**performance gap**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**performance standard**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**internal equity**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**job evaluation**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**job requisition**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**leading question**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**manager briefing**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**market benchmark**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**mediation**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**merit increase**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**midpoint**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**modified schedule**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**neutral question**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**observable behavior**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**offer approval**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**onboarding**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**open question**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**orientation**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**paraphrase**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**pay compression**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**pay grade**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**performance expectation**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**performance improvement plan**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**policy exception**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)

Vocabulary index / continued

policy owner[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**position elimination**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**promotion increase**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**range maximum**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**range penetration**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**readiness review**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**recency bias**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**reframing**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**reported account**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**respondent**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**restricted access**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**retaliation concern**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**review checkpoint**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**review meeting**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**review scope**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**role ambiguity**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**role impact**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**rumor**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**scheduled hours**[Case 3, p. 105](#)**scoring rubric**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**secondment**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**selection decision**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**position**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**preboarding**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**ramp-up period**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**range minimum**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**rating anchor**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**reasonable adjustment**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**redeployment**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**release date**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**request status**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**responsibility matrix**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**restructuring**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**retention risk**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**review date**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**review route**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**right of response**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**role clarity**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**role profile**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**salary range**[Lesson 05, p. 49](#)**scope of inquiry**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**screening call**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**selection criteria**[Lesson 08, p. 83](#)**selection rationale**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)

Vocabulary index / continued

severance[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**shortlist**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**situational question**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**specific example**[Lesson 03, p. 27](#)**structured interview**[Lesson 01, p. 5](#)**success criterion**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**support commitment**[Lesson 03, p. 28](#)**talking points**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**task ownership**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**time to fill**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**total rewards**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**transition support**[Lesson 08, p. 84](#)**underlying interest**[Lesson 07, p. 73](#)**vacancy**[Case 3, p. 105](#)**witness**[Lesson 04, p. 37](#)**work sample**[Lesson 01, p. 6](#)**workplace barrier**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**shadowing**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**sign-off**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**skills coverage**[Case 3, p. 105](#)**stakeholder map**[Lesson 02, p. 16](#)**substantiated**[Lesson 04, p. 38](#)**supervised practice**[Lesson 02, p. 15](#)**supporting documentation**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**target bonus**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**time record**[Case 1, p. 95](#)**total cash compensation**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**transition plan**[Case 2, p. 100](#)**trial period**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)**undue hardship**[Lesson 06, p. 61](#)**variable pay**[Lesson 05, p. 50](#)**work adjustment**[Lesson 06, p. 60](#)**working agreement**[Lesson 07, p. 74](#)

References and publication notes

All cases, organizations, figures, and conversations are fictional teaching material, not transcripts. Communication practice does not replace qualified advice or current workplace procedures.

[1] US Office of Personnel Management. Structured Interviews.

Background on job-related competencies, consistent questions, and common rating standards. The selection exercise and candidates are fictional. Source checked 10 October 2026.

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/structured-interviews/>

[2] US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Prohibited Employment Policies/Practices.

US background on discrimination and retaliation. This book does not determine whether any fictional or real act meets a legal test. Source checked 10 October 2026.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/prohibited-employment-policiespractices>

[3] US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Disability Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodation: Medical Inquiries, Leave and Telework.

US background on individualized accommodation discussions and information handling. No request in this book is legally adjudicated. Source checked 10 October 2026.

<https://www.eeoc.gov/disability-discrimination-and-reasonable-accommodation-medical-inquiries-leave-and-telework>

[4] Acas. Carrying Out an Investigation.

UK background on fair fact gathering and objective evidence review. Local procedures and rights must be checked separately. Source checked 10 October 2026.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/investigations-for-discipline-and-grievance-step-by-step/step-3-carrying-out-an-investigation>

Companion course

The website offers the eight-lesson course and related practice. This book can be used independently. No audio access or external account is needed for its exercises.

<https://englishladder.com/efsp-human-resources.html>

Be clear about expectations. Be careful with people.

Eight people-management conversations connecting fair questions, clear expectations, and accurate records.

Recruiting, Screening, and Candidate Experience

Good cultural fit is too vague to score consistently. Define the actual behavior: following up on commitments and raising deadline conflicts. A shared interest, accent, or outgoing manner does not itself establish either competency.

Performance Feedback and Documentation

The observed fact is that two dated reports lacked a required section. That supports feedback about completeness, not a conclusion that Daniel is unmotivated. An employee explanation is a reported account until the relevant facts are checked.

Onboarding and Role Clarity

A completed equipment checklist establishes access, not competence or decision authority. Day thirty is a review point, not an automatic promise of independent ownership. The scope and approval condition must stay visible in the plan.

Employee Relations and Investigations

Write Tomas reported that he was excluded, not Reed deliberately excluded Tomas as an established finding. Record exact words only when they are actually supplied, and label uncertain recollection. A possible witness is not yet corroboration.

Phil Stilwell

© 2026 Phil Stilwell. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the author, except as permitted by law.

English Ladder / English for Work / Revised 2026 edition

This publication includes AI-generated text and cover illustration, revised and checked during production. Brand artwork remains the English Ladder mark. This edition makes no claim of independent professional certification.

Typeface: Bitstream Vera, embedded under its accompanying license. Illustration created with OpenAI's native image generator for this edition. The copyright notice is not a claim to ownership of third-party frameworks or references.