

Understanding individual and cultural expectations is essential to being an effective and helpful manager and leader. In order to understand the expectations within your organization, it's good to begin by examining your own.

In this Expectations Inventory, think about the behavioral expectations you have at work. Very often there are details within our expectations that we don't even know think about until we take the time to look. It's the assumptions we make about these details ("Doesn't everybody know this?!") that often cause confusion and trouble at work. **Here's what to do on the pages that follow:**

1. **List** the behaviors you find frustrating at work (frustrations can be a shortcut to identifying your expectations)
2. **Connect** the things that frustrate you to your own expectations and discover where they came from
3. **Examine** your own behavior around expectations and how well (or poorly) you communicate them to others
4. **Notice** and listen for the expectations of others

Unmet and unshared expectations are a common source of frustration in every workplace.

But you are about to do something uncommon: you are going to get to know your own expectations so you can share them well with others. Once you can do this for yourself, **you will have tools to discover and discuss expectations of others, too.**

In the chart below, list the **TOP THREE BEHAVIORS** that frustrate you at work.*

FRUSTRATING BEHAVIOR	SPECIFIC INSTANCE	BEHAVIOR YOU EXPECTED	
		General Behavior	* Expectation *
<i>Example:</i> people who dominate a conversation and talk over the ideas and input of others	In our team's weekly check-ins, two senior members routinely talk over junior staff and dismiss their questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I expect better manners • I expect people to be attentive to each other's contributions • I expect a meeting facilitator to intervene. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courtesy & listening • Curiosity • Direction & Structure • Respectful use of authority
1			
2			
3			

* For this exercise, we're looking at other people's behaviors. Looking at the behaviors you find frustrating in yourself, too, is a very worthwhile exercise and can help you understand where you might not be meeting your own expectations.

Expectations Inventory

Clarifying expectations is a vital part of creating a productive and engaged organization. Knowing your own expectations, where they came from, and why they are important to you is a key step in being able to make use of them.

Take a look at the **Expectations** you identified on the previous page. In the space below, list a few of them and explore how you came to expect these behaviors in the workplace. Then consider how flexible they are: are they circumstantial, are they dependent on specific information or skills? Ask yourself if others have or can meet this expectation? Then rank them: which of these expectations are the most important? Also ask yourself if your expectations are interdependent: can you have one of them without the others or are they always connected?

Expectation	When you learn it & from whom?	Why is it important to you?	How flexible is this? Is it circumstantial?	Can People Meet This?*	Rank/ Relationship
Example: Courtesy	I learned it from my granddad when I was a little kid	I know it's useful to build and maintain relationships at work; I like knowing I 'm using what I learned from my granddad	I always expect it from myself and others, though the level of formality can change	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most important • It makes other expectations easier to meet
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

* "High Standards" can be good, but your standards are never met, it can be a signal to explore the expectations that created those standards. Examining who always or never meets one's expectations can be a good place to start uncovering implicit cultural biases.

Expectations Inventory

The first page of the **Expectations Inventory** has to do with what you expect of others in the workplace. On this page, **reflect on what others can expect of you.**

What is your style of management and when are the traits of your style easy to notice? How do you respond when people do not meet your expectations? Do people know your expectations? If you're not sure ("I think they do..."), ask them. Reflect on the relationship between what you expect of others and what they can expect of you.

Management Trait	Circumstances when this is evident	Associated Expectations (and detail)	*How I respond when expectations are:		I know others are clear about how to meet this expectation
			Met	NOT met	Yes, No, ???
<i>Example:</i> I'm a stickler for punctuality. I am very aware of how everyone uses their time - and mine.	I'm conscientious about starting and ending things on time. Timelines and deliverable dates for projects are vital	People should be on time. It shows respect "On time" for meetings = 5 min early. For projects = the due date or earlier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel good about how time is used the schedule is moving & lively share greater responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I get frustrated because it makes more work for the whole team I stop relying on late people 	??? They know, right?
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

* This document is just for YOU, so write down the good , the bad, and ugly here. Don't ignore the stuff that isn't "perfect" management behavior. When you look at your expectations and how they inform your leadership and management style, you can start to see how expectations inform behavior. When you know your own expectations, it makes it easier to ask about other's and work to create shared expectations and success.