

5-Day Connection Challenge¹

“Connection is the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship”. Brene Brown

As leaders, you are the **Collaborative Hosts** of the wards. This challenge helps you build small, meaningful habits that foster belonging and trust.

MONDAY: Create moments for connection

“Moments of connection bond us together” Chip & Dan Heath.

The Goal	The Habit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for a milestone to mark - welcoming a new team member, someone back from leave, a work anniversary or a team win. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring it into the handover, huddle, one-on-one, or team meeting. • Ask the team: “How would you like to celebrate these wins?”. • This builds shared responsibility and collaboration.

TUESDAY: Discover what matters

To lead with warmth, we need to see the person behind the ‘scrubs’.

The Goal	The Habit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose one team member today for a brief “meaningful minute” conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask a curious question: <i>What gives you a sense of satisfaction at work? Or How can I best support you to feel part of the team?</i> • Knowing what drives them helps you provide better support.

¹ Adapted from Center for Creative Leadership Belonging Conversation Guide

WEDNESDAY: 🤝 Keeping commitments and promises

“Every time we keep a promise, we make a deposit into the Emotional Bank Account”
Stephen Covey.

The Goal	The Habit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow-up on a commitment today, no matter how small.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you’ve promised to do something, provide an update. If it’s slipped or you can’t get it done yet, be open about it and set a new timeframe.• Sincerity and admitting missteps builds trust and psychological safety.

THURSDAY: 🛑 Check-in before diving in

When the team is flat-out, it’s easy to jump straight into tasks. Today, we ‘Connect, then Lead’.

The Goal	The Habit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before starting a meeting or handover, pause for a moment of connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask: What’s gone well today and why? Or What support would be helpful?• Putting the person before the process ensures they feel valued as a default

FRIDAY: 🌟 The power of recognition

Catch someone doing something positive and acknowledge it in the moment.

The Goal	The Habit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make success a team effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use Simon Sinek’s approach: If someone has a win, ask them, <i>Who helped you get this done?</i> Then, go and thank those people too.• This creates a ripple that success is built on everyone’s efforts.

NOTE: Remember, connection isn't another thing on your to-do list—it's your superpower and the way you do everything on your list

References

1. Center for Creative Leadership (2025). Retrieved from: <https://www.ccl.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/belonging-conversation-guide-center-for-creative-leadership.pdf>
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3. Heath, C & D. (2017) The Power of Moments. How to Create a Defining Moment. Retrieved from: <https://heathbrothers.com/resources/overview/>
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