

WILY MANAGER

*Just-in-Time
Management Advice*

Skip Level Meetings

Skip-level meetings are meetings between managers and team members who are one or more levels below them. The purpose of a skip-level meeting is for managers to get to know their team members, build trust with them, and understand their problems. Skip-level meetings can never take the place of direct communications within teams, but it can be a powerful adjunct to these efforts.

Key Concepts

- *Group round-table meetings* are more efficient than *one-on-one meetings* for skip level meetings.
- Leading organizational plan skip level meetings with every team or workgroup at least once per year.
- Don't wait for your boss or the HR department to arrange Skip Levels for your direct reports.
- There are **five key steps** to conducting effective skip level meetings:
 1. Plan the meeting
 2. Conduct the meeting and record the feedback
 3. Analyze the information collected
 4. Action plan on the feedback
 5. Follow up and report progress



This is one of a series of management cheat sheets available from www.wilymanager.com

- Has the feedback from last time been acted upon?
- Have skip level meetings been conducted in parallel business areas?
- Will the meeting be used to 'build a file' for disciplinary action on the leader of the group?
- Does my plan cover all five key steps for conducting effective skip level meetings?
- Do I need to improve my skills in any related areas? (see [Related Topic Bundles](#))

Potential Pitfalls

- Do not use skip level meetings to 'build a file' on a leader you want to fire.
- Tell all managers what you are doing and why.
- Don't include the manager in the meeting if your goal is to get back honest feedback.
- Don't ask about topics about which you are unable or unwilling to do anything.
- Provide some level of feedback to the manager about the feedback received from his/her direct reports.
- It is more damaging to do skip level meetings *poorly* than it is to not do them at all.

Planning Questions

- When was the last time a skip level meeting was conducted with this group?

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Get the complete '**Skip Level Meetings**' topic bundle at www.wilymanager.com

Related Topic Bundles

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Wily Manager Picks

[The Book of Management Wisdom: Classic Writings by Legendary Managers](#)
(Peter Krass)



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