Engaged leaders are genuinely interested in the work their people are involved in. When demonstrated, this can have a significant impact on culture. One way to genuinely engage your workers is to consciously have leader-led conversations with individuals about their work.

All University leaders and managers are encouraged to be curious about the reality of normal work, regularly taking time to observe work in progress and talk informally to staff, research students and contractors. These conversations have even greater impact when you talk to workers who you are responsible for, but don't normally engage with directly.

Leader-led conversations about work may or may not involve discussion about safety and wellbeing. But when they do, the details should be recorded, and if necessary acted on. We refer to this as a leader-led safety conversation (LLSC).

**Planning the conversation**

Whilst these leader led conversations are intended to be informal, they also need to be planned.

1. Put aside some time in your diary, e.g. monthly
2. Identify work locations and types of work
3. Organise access via the relevant line managers and participate in any necessary inductions.

**Principles**

- Be relaxed and keep it informal
- Let the other person do most of the talking
- Be open to learning something new
- Remain engaged for the whole conversation
- Be respectful of local managers
- Finish on a positive note.

**Suggested approach**

1. Introduce yourself
2. Check that they have a few minutes to talk
3. Ask open questions to learn about their work
4. Use positive language encouraging insight into local successes
5. If safety issues come up, apply a risk based approach
6. Don’t jump to solve problems, ask about possible solutions
7. Thank the person for their time and let them know if you plan to take any action.

**Possible questions to ask**

- What are you working on at the moment?
- What is the most interesting aspect of your work?
- What does a really good day look like?
- What do you rely to get the job done?
- Has anything been frustrating you lately?
- What would help this be safer or more efficient?
- If you were me, what would you do?

**Recording a safety conversation**

There is a simple tool for recording your LLSC in Riskware. Check out this short instructional video.