

GUIDELINES FOR GIVING FEEDBACK

Be authentic - *freely offer feedback with positive intent of helping the other person.*

Ask for self-assessment - *it brings the employee into the feedback process early and promotes an open atmosphere for dialogue.*

Solicit feedback - *ask the person if you can give them feedback and if they say no, collaborate to select a better time.*

Time it - *it is most effective when feedback is given as soon as possible after the situation occurs. Don't pile it up and unload the dump truck! There should not be any huge surprises at performance reviews.*

Be specific and direct - *make specific statements and support general statements with specific examples. The receiver is asking themselves: "What did I do right?" "What do I continue doing?" and "What precisely do I change?"*

Ineffective: You are not building rapport with the customer.

Effective: When you were talking to Michael, our top client, I noticed that you forgot to use his name.

Ineffective: You did well on that project.

Effective: You finished the project before the deadline and kept your costs under budget.

Use "I messages" - *take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Do not transfer ownership to other people, management, or the task force, etc.*

"I" Statements - Force you to formulate your needs and ideas in your own mind before you actually say anything. By using "I" statements you steer away from the "we think"

The XYZ Technique:

- I feel....."X".....(describe your feelings)
- when you....."Y".....(describe their behavior) and the result is
- "Z".....(describe the effect it has on you)

Then ask: How do you feel about that? (**Be silent** - encourage the person to take their time)

Ineffective: You're really rude.

Effective: I feel powerless when you cut me off at meetings because I lose confidence in my ideas.

Focus on specific behaviors the person can change - *explain to the individual the direct impact of his or her actions on you, other individuals, the program, team, or department.*

For example - "I am afraid to tell you the truth when you get angry and use abrasive language, so I just tell you what I think you want to hear."

Keep it objective, and focus on the facts (not impressions) - avoid: blaming, judging, over generalizing exaggerating, offering emotional accounts, or getting personal.

Ineffective: Your actions were utterly inappropriate.

Effective: Our team was embarrassed when you arrived 45 minutes late to the President's meeting because he asked where you were and we did not know.

Give balanced feedback - comment on strengths and positive aspects of individual's performance as well as areas of improvement.

Offer "Chewable Chunks" - observe personal limits and don't overload (give too much at once). Choose one or two critical issues or behaviors of job performance and concentrate on those.

Initiate action and offer ideas - it is best to end the discussion with clear action steps, including follow-up dates. Review what is working and what needs to be adjusted (identify the desired performance or result and how it can be achieved) and by when. Get an individual to offer his or her ideas for solutions and build on those ideas when you offer your suggestions for improvement.

For example - "Have you thought about...?" "Your options include..." "What can I do to help you?"

*If you are combining positive praise and constructive feedback, bridge the two with the word **AND** rather than **BUT** to build on the positive comments, rather than discounting them. Stay away from "**YOU SHOULD...**"

GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Approach feedback as a partnership - *not a debate.*

Select a time that is good for you - *you don't want to be stressed or rushed.*

Be clear about your expectations for the session - *it will help conversations stay focused. If you have a specific question, ask it.*

Be approachable - *your receptiveness to feedback is obvious through your body language (use open gestures and maintain eye contact).*

Listen to understand and paraphrase major points - *reflect what you hear back to the provider. They will appreciate this and it will show that you are trying hard to understand. If possible, take notes to use for your plan of action to improve in those areas.*

Paraphrasing - *Using your own words to repeat back the other person's ideas. This gives that person a chance to judge whether he/she is being heard correctly and reflect on what was said. You want to clarify what the other person is saying so that you truly understand the communication*

Example: "I don't think people should drop in at their own convenience."

Paraphrase: " You are saying you don't want to meet with people without an appointment?"

Reflecting - *You can reflect exact words or feelings*

Example: "This change order should never have been approved!"

Paraphrase: " You feel angry because it was approved."

Seek clarification - *if appropriate ask questions. Effective questioning lets the other person know you are interested in what they are saying or going to say. Appropriate questions are absolutely necessary to listen and clarify your understanding of another person.*

Use open-ended questions and statements to encourage the other person to give more detail.

Examples: "What do you think?" "How do you see things?" "Tell me more..." "Describe for me..."

Close-ended questions can be answered with a simple yes or no or a one word response

Examples: "Do you?" "Did you?" "Who?" "Can you?" "Have you?" "When?" "Which?" "How many?"

***Avoid using "WHY?"** - This puts people in a defensive position

Ask for examples of your behavior if they are not offered - *can you please give me an example of what you mean?*

Seek a balance between positive and constructive - *if you only receive one, ask for the other.*

Avoid reacting defensively or trying to justify your behavior - *avoid explanations of "Why I did that" and all the reasons behind your decisions, unless asked. Try not to interrupt.*

Try to suspend judgement and respect the other person's experience - *by learning the views of the provider, you learn about yourself and how your actions are interpreted by others in the world. Remember, that just because a person gives you feedback, it doesn't mean that person is right. They see your actions, but interpret them through their own perceptual screen and life experiences.*

Check in with others to determine the reliability of the feedback - *if only one person believes it about you, it may just be him or her, and not you.*

Think about the feedback - *you are the only one who has the right to decide what to do with it. You may say "Thanks, I need to think about it", "That makes sense, I'll try in the future to...". Even a simple "Yes... uh-huh" or a nod of the head shows that you are listening to key points.*

Thank the person for the feedback - *Acknowledge and show appreciation for the effort it took the other person to give you feedback.*