

GIVING FEEDBACK

The Basics

1. **Focus on the behavior not the person.** You are offering your point of view, not "the truth"! Be specific and factual while sharing information.
2. **Cite exact actions and their impact on particular situations.** Generic statements are of little value. Precise feedback leaves no room for a person's interpretation.
3. **Stay away from using labels and harsh language.** Avoid judging the person's motives or intentions as well as making vague or absolute statements that may be a turn off.
4. **Take responsibility for your comments, thoughts, and opinions.** Use "I" statements or some other non-targeted reference, when appropriate.
5. **Make marked distinctions in your feedback.** Point out both strengths and developmental opportunities. Use words that accurately identify these areas with tact and finesse.
6. **Balance feedback on areas for improvement with positive comments.** Detailed information is especially helpful for items considered highly positive or remarkably low. Jointly brainstorm ideas on what could be done differently in the future to facilitate change.
7. **Consider the limitations of your comments, if you are putting them in writing.** Humans tend to take most observations about their behaviors extremely personally. Remember that written comments don't allow for reading the recipient's reactions neither do they give the opportunity to rephrase a sentence that may be misinterpreted. So, always take giving feedback very seriously. The person on the receiving end most certainly will!

The Process

- STEP 1. Share the behavior.** In concrete terms, share your observed behavior.
- STEP 2. Explain the impact.** Explain to the recipient, what occurred as a result.
- STEP 3. Discuss desired change** (if applicable). This step only applies for corrective feedback.
- STEP 4. Thank the recipient.** Always show gratitude to the other party for listening.

The Preparation

FEEDBACK IS... Information about the past that is helpful to modify present behavior as it impacts future outcomes.

PUT SOME THOUGHT INTO THE ABC'S OF YOUR COMMENTS TO THE RECIPIENT

A. Write down three concrete examples of positive behaviors you have personally observed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Write down three concrete situations that illustrate areas for improvement:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C. What non-intrusive suggestions do you have to support behavioral changes in this person?

D. What pitfalls should you watch out for while giving feedback to this individual? (e.g. prior conflicts, personality clashes, unhealthy competition, unexplained tension)

