

**5**  
TIPS



## How to give feedback

Five ways to aid the giving of valuable feedback to others.

**We all know it's hard to receive feedback no matter how well intentioned the advise is, so let's look at a handful of tips to aid you in giving really valuable feedback in a way which others will not only appreciate but also learn from.**

**1**

**Set the scene.** Provide some insight by explaining the purpose in giving the feedback which is going to help them. This context will aid the recipient in understanding why they are receiving this information, and allow them to see the impact of their previous behaviour, without having been criticised.

**2**

**Keep it simple.** Don't give too much feedback in one session, try and limit it to a single idea or action. Be positive and constructive emphasising strengths, simply pointing out areas of improvement. Better to come back at a later point and give another short piece of feedback than turn it into a monster meeting. Try to generate a relationship where frequent but simple feedback is the norm.

3

**Address the problem, not the person.** It is always better to address the feedback at the problem rather than the person. Here is an example of addressing the person; “Fred, I think you need to change how you have written this report...” and this is how it sounds when addressing the problem; “Fred, look, this report section, it might easily be misunderstood, it could be changed to improve it by...” So simple, so effective at removing any personal tension caused by the feedback.

4

**Make your feedback a joint effort.** A joint analysis of the problem is much easier for the recipient to accept, try using an opener like this; “Let’s sit down and see what we need to do to sort things out.” Engagement and involvement lead to acceptance and commitment, make them part of the solution.

5

**Ensure it’s done in complete private.** There is no substitute for this, find a sound proof room, or get right out of earshot before venturing any feedback. But not only that, keep it confidential, there’s no need to tell others about the feedback you’ve given someone. Think about it, it’s probably self satisfying, but it cannot help the individual to change if they know everyone is watching, talking about, or worse sniggering in the background.



**Feedback is one of the most useful things that enable us to learn and develop ourselves. However its value is often eroded because the feedback is given in a way that alienates the recipient and reduces the perceived value of the advise. Don’t shy away from giving feedback, just take the time to think it through using these 5 tips and then do it with a genuine concern for the development of the individual.**



#### Feedback prep list

1. Set the scene
2. Keep it simple
3. Address the problem
4. Make it joint
5. Keep it private

**Here are some additional things to keep in mind when giving constructive feedback.**



**Be Honest.**

Do not avoid difficult issues or skim over them. Give praise where it is due.



**Don't dump loads of stuff on people.**

Give feedback in manageable chunks, concentrating on priorities. Only give negative feedback when they can do something about it.



**Make the feedback relevant.**

Feedback needs to be related to the job that the individual is doing and not to some non-work or irrelevant behaviour.

Feedback must be related to the individual's performance and not attributed to that of a team. Where the individual is working in a team, choose the behaviours displayed which have been effective or ineffective.



**Make the feedback straightforward.**

Feedback should be given using simple language.

Give examples of good and poor behaviour, so that it is quickly and easily understood. Use unambiguous words and statements.



**Make the feedback describes what the person does.**

Judgements like 'not very good' and 'below average' are criticism not constructive feedback and will often result in resistance and a negative response.

A description of good behaviour enables the individual to use such behaviour again.

Specific description of 'poor' behaviour identifies which behaviours need changing.

Descriptions of the behaviour that an individual should be exhibiting, provides them with a goal to aim for, the failure to do this can leave the individual with nowhere to go.

