

# **Giving Constructive Feedback**

## *Faculty*

### **1. Prepare to give feedback**

Before giving feedback to someone:

- Agree up front that giving and receiving feedback is an acceptable way to improve teamwork and patient care.
- Recognize and consider the power differential between you and the person to which you are giving feedback. What role will that difference play in how they might receive the feedback you give?
- Mentally review both positive and negative feedback you could give.
- Consider your timing--it's generally not wise to give feedback on issues when:
  - You or the other person seems low on self-esteem or is fatigued.
  - Your purpose is not improvement, but putting someone on the spot.
  - Time, place, and circumstances are inappropriate.
  - Emotions are running high.
  - The feedback is about something the person has no power to change.

### **2. Once you are prepared, know how to give feedback (Strategies)**

- Focus on one or two key points, not everything at once.
- Restrict your feedback to things you know for certain. Don't present your opinions as facts.
- Consider raising issues by inviting self-reflective feedback: "How do you think you that went?"
- Be descriptive, objective and behavior-focused; give specific examples.
- Help people hear and accept your compliments when giving positive feedback. Some people feel awkward, so it can be important to reinforce positive feedback to help them accept it.
- Don't exaggerate; be exact.
- Don't be judgmental; avoid loaded language, labels and words like "better," or "bad."
- Speak for yourself, not others or the person to whom you are giving feedback.
- For summation, use "and" rather than "but." (e.g. "You've done an outstanding job of keeping focused on doing this procedure well and I think the next step is to work on efficiency.")

### **3. For every issue you raise, suggest a potential action plan**

- What goal could the person to whom you are giving feedback set for themselves? (it should be achievable & measurable)
- What kind of support do you think would help this person achieve their goal?
- Ask the person what they need to attain their goal
- Help the person "find optimism, motivation, discipline"
- Place feedback & plan in context that is meaningful to the person
- Give fellow the opportunity to review & evaluate their progress later

### **4. Knowing how to receive feedback during an evaluation session is equally important**

- Slow down; prepare yourself to listen to the person to whom you are giving feedback .
- Listen carefully. Don't interrupt or discourage the feedback giver.
- Ask questions for clarity. Ask for specific examples.
- Acknowledge their feedback. Paraphrase the message in your own words to let the person know you understood what they said.
- Acknowledge valid points. Try to understand the other person's reaction.
- Take time to sort out what you heard, but don't use this time as an excuse to avoid the issue.

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### At-a-Glance Guide for Constructive Feedback

Sequence	Explanation
1. "When you..."	Start with a "When you..." statement that describes the behavior without judgment, exaggeration, labeling, attribution, or motives. Just state the facts as specifically as possible.
2. "I feel..."	Tell how the behavior you observe affects you (as observer). If you need more than a word or two to describe the thought or feeling, it's probably just some variation of joy, sorrow, anger, or fear.
3. "Because I..."	Now say why you (the observer) are affected that way. Describe the connection between the facts you observed and the thoughts or feeling they provoke in you. This helps the other person better understand the context in which you are interpreting their behavior.
4. (Pause for discussion.)	Let the other person respond.
5. "I would like..."	If the feedback involves a suggestion for change, describe the change you want the other person to consider...
6. "Because..."	...and why you think the change will alleviate the problem.
7. "What do you think?"	Listen to the other person's response. Be prepared to discuss options and compromise on a solution.