Delivering Effective Feedback

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Meet Our Team

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= Personal Growth and Team Success

Benefits of Working in teams

Extensive combined knowledge and experience

Can accomplish more than individuals alone

Diverse perspectives

Members learn from each other

Improved creativity

Greater productivity

Faster problem-solving

Create a sense of community and improve morale

Working with others is difficult

It's difficult to manage others…

Coordination issues
- Social loafing, diffusion of responsibility

Communication difficulties
- Misunderstandings, cultural differences

Interpersonal conflict
- Disagreements, interpersonal spats, tensions

Disagreements and conflict are ubiquitous when working with others

Opinions & Ideas	"We disagreed on points of view regarding the cases and what decisions should be made." "My group debates a lot in morning meetings about the right way to test" "We challenge each other's opinions about client needs in order to double-check ourselves"
Time and Resources	"We often had vastly different ideas about timing and amount of work needed." "We totally disagreed about how to divide up the work." "Some people didn't want to spend time or money in the initial stages of the project."
Contribution/ Not Meeting Expectations	"Conflicts regarding teams members showing up late or not showing up at all." "Some members do not meet their deadlines—it throws the group off track." "Commitments were made initially but not followed up or backed up w/required efforts."
Emotional & Status	"My team has ego clashes and a huge problem with arrogance." "No open fighting, just bottled-up resentment, occasional sarcasm." "One person always has to be right. This person is sometimes oppressive."

How we manage conflict is what really matters

Prevent Negative Emotion Spirals

Open and constructive communication norms
- Need disagreement to be seen as appropriate and normal
- Set parameters around how disagreements will be handled and expressed

Invest in a shared understanding
- Provide clear vision/mission, expectations
- Revisit team contracts
- Determine everyone's underlying motivations and concerns
- Ask lots of questions
- Use information to create agreements that reconcile differing needs

Prevent Negative Emotion Spirals

Emphasize shared goals and identity
- Focus on team rewards and outcomes
- Framing—describe activities as belonging to the team
  - "We" are jointly responsible for the final outcomes of the group
- Team goals
  - Goals should be focused on the overall goal of the team, rather than the individual contributions of the members

Build trust
- Build a relationship beyond the classroom
- Find similarities

Prevent Negative Emotion Spirals

Avoid escalation
- Don't reciprocate aggressive or hostile behavior
- Don't' get personal
  - Take a break to "cool off"
- Label the process
  - "We could argue all day about who's right and who's wrong but we are never going to agree about that. Let's see if we can move forward and discuss possible solutions."

Lytle, A. L., Brett, J. M., & Shapiro, D. L. (1999). The strategic use of interests, rights, and power to resolve disputes. *Negotiation Journal*, 15, 31-51.

Effective Feedback

What is Feedback?

Feedback is information provided to recipients about their behavior, performance, or understanding

The purpose of feedback is to facilitate self-awareness and behavioral reinforcement (positive feedback) or change (development feedback)

Feedback provides recipients with a comparison of their performance to a certain standard or goal with the aim of helping the recipient improve

What is Feedback?

Really three different things:

1. Appreciation
   - Motivates and encourages
2. Coaching
   - Helps increase knowledge, skill, capability, growth, or raises feelings in the relationship
3. Evaluation
   - Tells you where you stand, aligns expectations, and informs decision making

POSITIVE

Reinforces the behavior you want

DEVELOPMENTAL

Redirects behavior when change is needed

Benefits of Feedback

Effective feedback leads to better relationships, better performance, and better outcomes overall

McKinsey & Co. study compared top-performing firms to middle-of-the-pack firms on basis of financial performance.

What did top firms do differently? Among other things they…

- Made effective use of performance reviews
- Emphasized management development techniques
- Encouraged candid feedback

Chambers et al. (1998). Winning the War for Talent. McKinsey Quarterly (3).

However, people are bad at giving effective feedback

Feedback Difficulties

People have trouble delivering feedback:

- Overestimate the emotional harm that honest feedback would cause and thus, provide overly positive feedback (or prosocial lies)

- Misjudge how much people want to receive honest feedback

- Underestimate the benefits and usefulness of providing honest feedback

How do we provide effective feedback?

Honesty

Conversations in which we are honest with others go better than people anticipate

- Are more enjoyable

- Lead to more social connection

- Feel more meaningful

- Lead to less relational harm

- Elicit less negative reactions from the recipient

Effective Feedback

Goal-oriented
- Feedback should be focused on behaviors critical to that team functioning well (e.g., meeting commitments; problem-solving)
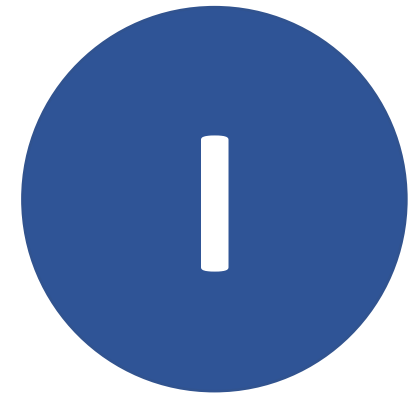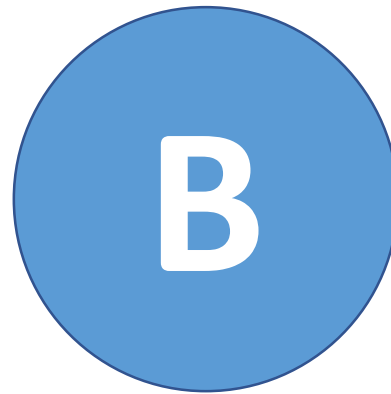
Actionable, specific, and timely
- Provide feedback that the recipient can use
- Identify the specific behavior so the person knows exactly what to continue to do or change
- Do not describe the person! Describe the behavior and the impact it had

Delivered privately in a neutral, non-judgmental tone

Cannon, M. D., Witherspoon, R. (2005). Actionable feedback: Unlocking the power of learning and performance improvement. Academy of Management Perspectives, 19(2).

Flawed Feedback

- Attacks the person rather than the person's behavior
- Vague or abstract assertions
- Without illustrations
- Ill-defined range of application
- Unclear impact and implications for action

Cannon, M. D., Witherspoon, R. (2005). Actionable feedback: Unlocking the power of learning and performance improvement. Academy of Management Perspectives, 19(2).

A Model for Feedback

S — **Situation**
Set the context. Help the person focus on what you are referring to.

B — **Behavior**
Focus on the **objective** behavior to be repeated or changed.

I — **Impact**
Share the direct impact of the behavior.

Adapted from Center for Creative Leadership

POSITIVE FEEDBACK EXAMPLE (SBI)

Issue: Current project has a last-minute problem appear at the end of the day.

S Mia, the other day, when we had agreed that everyone would send their project ideas to the group
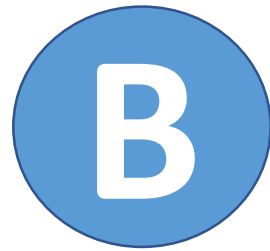
B I noticed that you sent everyone a reminder that hadn't sent their ideas in yet.

I Missing submissions could have delayed our team progress. Thanks for your willingness to take the initiative.

A Model for Feedback

S › **B** › **I** › **A**

Situation

Set the context. Help put the person in the focus on what you are referring to.

Behavior

Focus on the **objective** behavior to be repeated or changed.

Impact

Share the direct impact of the behavior.

Alternative

Share an alternative behavior to use next time.

DEVELOPMENTAL FEEDBACK (SBIA) EXAMPLE

S

Mia, the other day, when we had agreed that everyone would send their project ideas to the group

B

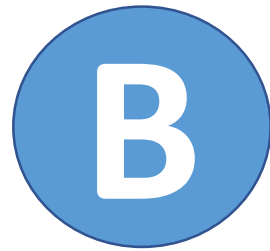I noticed that you never sent in your project ideas.

I

Because it didn't get done, our team couldn't meet to discuss the ideas as planned and now we are behind on our timeline.

A

When things happen, and they do, I need you to let us know that you will miss the deadline and try to make up the work as soon as possible so we can make a plan to move forward.

A Model for Feedback
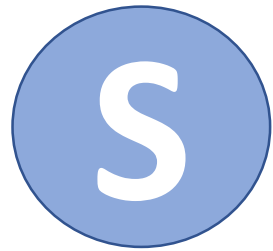
S › **B** › **I** › **I**

Situation

Set the context. Help put the person in the focus on what you are referring to.

Behavior

Focus on the **objective** behavior to be repeated or changed.

Impact

Share the direct impact of the behavior.

Inquire

Seek involvement from the performer to identify different actions next time.

A Model for Feedback

Inquiry creates dialogue

Ask. Listen.

Help your team produce their own specific solutions

"What is your perspective?"
"What did you notice?"
"What could you do differently next time?"
"What ideas do you have on how to get back on track?"

DEVELOPMENTAL FEEDBACK (SBII) EXAMPLE

S Mia, the other day, when we had agreed that everyone would send their project ideas to the group

B I noticed that you never sent in your project ideas.

I Because it didn't get done, our team couldn't meet to discuss the ideas as planned and now we are behind on our timeline.

I What is your perspective on this? What can you do next time to make sure this doesn't happen again?

Feedback Delivery

Honest AND Benevolent

- Provide honest information in a way that promotes the recipient's well-being

Providers and recipients must overcome barriers to receptivity and discerning the truth

Receptivity to feedback entails being open to considering the information provided by the feedback-giver and acting on it if change is warranted

Discerning the truth in feedback entails determining the meaning and veracity of the information provided by the feedback-giver

Krueger, K. L., Fulham, N., Cooper, B., Levine, E. E., & Cohen, T. R. (2023)

Feedback Support

Criticism and developmental feedback can be difficult to hear and engage with

One strategy to address this problem is to provide support when providing critical feedback

Support should match the recipient's needs and goals to help them cope with negative information and facilitate their growth and development

Krueger, K. L., Fulham, N., Cooper, B., Levine, E. E., & Cohen, T. R. (2023)

Feedback Support

Express care for the recipient's well-being

- Express empathy and concern
- Express joint outcome or involvement ("we are in this together; I am here for you; I care about getting you to your goal")

Strive to understand how they are feeling

- Ask questions and voice understanding ("I see; I understand")
- Summarize and paraphrase what the recipient is telling you to show comprehension

Carnegie Mellon University
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Krueger, K. L., Fulham, N., Cooper, B., Levine, E. E., & Cohen, T. R. (2023)

Feedback Support

Validate their experience

- Acknowledge their feelings as justified and valid ("I understand how you feel and your feelings are valid")
- Validate their effort and hardwork ("I see the effort that you've already put into this")
- Express reassurance and encouragement ("I know this was difficult, but you can improve")
- Express confidence in them ("I believe in you; I believe in your ability")

Feedback Support

About acknowledging the difficulty of the situation and helping the recipient cope with their negative feelings and improve

What do they need? How can you meet their needs?
- Ask and listen

Fulham, N. M., Krueger, K. L., & Cohen, T. R. (2022). Honest feedback: Barriers to receptivity and discerning the truth in feedback. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 46.*

Effective Feedback

Praise is NOT support
- Praise is any positive comment about the recipient or something they have done (e.g., approval; admiration; general positivity)

Avoid the "Feedback sandwich"
- Sandwiching critical information between positive statements may lead the recipient to believe that the feedback is not honest *(barrier to receptivity)*
- The feedback sandwich is often confusing because important information is obscured by irrelevant comments *(barrier to discerning the truth)*

Focus on integrating honesty and benevolence

Fulham, N. M., Krueger, K. L., & Cohen, T. R. (2022). Honest feedback: Barriers to receptivity and discerning the truth in feedback. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 46.*

How do we effectively receive feedback?

Ask for Feedback

Be explicit about your needs
- Do you want coaching vs. evaluation?
- Do you have a preference for how you receive feedback?
- Remind them to be honest—you cannot learn effectively without high-quality feedback

Be prepared to listen with an open mind

Ask often!
- You can't get better if you don't know how you are truly doing
- Don't be afraid to ask for feedback or advice
- Express appreciation for their candor

Putting it all together…

Try it!

Register on iDecision Games
• Click on the link and login with your CMU email

Complete the Team Assessment Survey on IDecisionGames
• Complete the assessment before your next recitation
• You will provide feedback to your teammates
• You will rate your team on a number of attributes

Team Feedback

Create an action plan together

What goals to work toward (and why)
How to achieve them (objective, measurable behavior/outcomes)
Where to perform (context)
When (timeline, progress checks)

Agree on what constitutes evidence of improvement
- These must be observable, objective metrics

Action Plan Example

What to Work Toward	How, Where, and When	Metrics for achievement
Speak up more in team meetings	Prior to meetings, prepare specific points that you want to make	More speaking time in meetings
Everyone completing their part of the work by the deadline	Make a timeline for when deliverables are due that everyone has access to Check-in with reminders Take personal responsibility for your role on the team	Completion of individual work

Try it!

You will receive an aggregated report of your teammates' responses and the feedback they provided to you at recitation
- You will not see how any one person responded or know which piece of feedback came from which person

You will discuss the evaluations and feedback report with your team members during your next recitation

Thank you!

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