

## EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Providing both informal, day-to-day coaching and feedback, as well as within scheduled meetings, can be a positive way of building rapport and encouraging results. The following are some guidelines for giving effective feedback.

### BALANCE YOUR FEEDBACK

We all need feedback to grow. This includes recognition for successes and strengths, as well as support for areas where we can learn, grow and develop. People are more likely to be open to hearing feedback and viewing it as helpful when a strong level of trust is established. Establish a routine of providing regular, balanced feedback to create positive conditions for trusting relationships.

### CLARIFY YOUR INTENTION

The aim of providing feedback is to help the other person grow or develop in some way. Clearly stating your intention in giving feedback helps the individual feel respected and valued. Show empathy and respect for the individual and their situation by actively listening, being clear, and remaining optimistic that growth and change are possible.

### USE THE EXPERIENCE CUBE (From [Clear Leadership](#) by Gervase Bushe)

The experience cube can be a helpful tool to plan and manage your feedback conversation. Using the four elements of the experience cube: Observations, Thoughts, Feelings and Wants helps you to separate your experience with the situation from your potential judgements about the situation. This approach removes blame and minimizes defensiveness, facilitating a positive discussion.

#### Observations

*only facts*

#### Thoughts

*beliefs, expectations, assumptions*

**Observations:** Sensory data (information you take in through your senses), primarily what you see and hear. What a video camera would record.

**Thoughts:** The meaning you add to your observations (i.e., the way you make sense of them, including your beliefs, expectations, assumptions, judgments, values and principles). We call this the “story you make up”.

#### Wants

*what outcome do you seek*

#### Feelings

*sad, mad, glad, scared.*

**Feelings:** Your emotional or physiological response to the thoughts and observations. Feelings words such as sad, mad, glad, scared, or a description of what is happening in your body.

**Wants:** Clear description of the outcome you seek. Wants go deeper than a simple request for action. Once you clearly state what you want, there may be different ways to achieve it.

### GET COMFORTABLE USING THE CUBE – FIND YOUR OWN VOICE

Walking the cube does not need to be a linear process, you can start anywhere in the Cube and intersperse questions and check-in points. Ensure that you own your story find your own words. Use “I” statements:

- **I observe:** “I’ve noticed...”, “I saw that...”, “I heard you say...”
- **I think:** “I believe that was...”, “I think it is...”, “My story is...”
- **I feel:** “I’m really pleased...”, “It concerned me when...”, “I appreciate your commitment to...”, “It troubled me ...”
- **I want:** “I want to...”; “I need...”; “I wish...”, “I hope...”

Here are some color-coded examples:

- “**I’m really pleased to see your efforts to communicate more frequently with other departments. I think the communication is greatly improved. I want you to continue to build relationships with this department** Thank you and well done!”
- “**I see you sharing your ideas with the group.** However, in this morning’s meeting, **I noticed that you spoke over a couple of people** and **I was concerned** that **they might have felt shut down. I believe this contributed to them not wanting to go ahead with your idea. I want everyone to have a voice in team decisions.** How might you have handled it differently?”

### REMAIN CURIOUS AND ASK QUESTIONS

Feedback should be part of a positive, two-way conversation. Use appreciative, appropriate questions to encourage the other person to self-reflect and find their own answers.

#### CHECK-IN FOR UNDERSTANDING:

Throughout the conversation, it can be helpful to check for mutual understanding. (E.g. “Does that feedback make sense?”)

#### AGREE ON NEXT STEPS

Restating the strategies that have been discussed, commitments made, and a timeframe to check-in is a great way to ensure that you are both clear on the next steps. For example: “Let’s go over what you have committed to do so that we are both clear and can check-in with each other at the end of the month.”

#### PLANNING TIPS FOR YOUR FEEDBACK CONVERSATION

1. What is your intention in giving the feedback?
2. What observable facts can you identify that support your feedback?
3. What stories are you making up? What assumptions are you making? What judgments do you have based on your own beliefs, values, and worldview? How can you check these assumptions? What clarifying questions would you need to ask?
4. What feelings do these thoughts evoke for you? Where do you think those feelings are coming from?
5. What do you want? How can you align your request with your intention?