

How to Give [and Get] **Feedback**



Why feedback

Feedback has
a direct impact
on employee
engagement

matters

When done right:



Feedback helps
employees feel valued
for their contributions



Feedback builds trust
in work relationships.



However, only **27 percent** of employees think the feedback they're getting now helps them do their work better.¹

Great leaders – like you! – need to lead the

charge in giving effective feedback.

Don't worry, we'll show you how.



How to give **feedback** positive

Giving positive feedback may seem like a no-brainer, but there are ways to make sure it delivers the effect you want: **happy, productive and engaged employees.**

When to give positive feedback

Feedback is best served fresh (i.e. as soon after the behavior or action as possible)!

But more specifically...



When good work and resourceful behavior made a positive impact

When it will improve or reinforce a person's skills

When your employee is expecting it

A handy feedback model!



Tip: It's easy to give feedback when you have regular check-ins with employees. Positive feedback can also be given digitally (email, work newsletter, etc.) or with an old-school hand-written note.



Step 1: Observation

Explain to the employee exactly what positive behavior or action you saw and when it happened.



Step 2: Impact

Communicate the impact this behavior or action has on your business and/or your team.



Step 3: Action

Work with the employee to find ways to reinforce the behavior.



To be meaningful, recognition has to:

Be specific

“Thank you for researching the cost-benefit of our latest purchase. Your thoughtful analysis and attention to detail helped us make an informed decision.”



Detail the benefits of the behavior

“Because of your cost-benefit research we were able to make a purchase decision quickly. This was a huge time and resources saving for us.”



To be meaningful, recognition has to:

Reinforce the value of the behavior going forward

“When you step up and
take on this kind of research
role, you show your critical-
thinking and leadership skills.
It’s a great example
for the team.”



Invite input

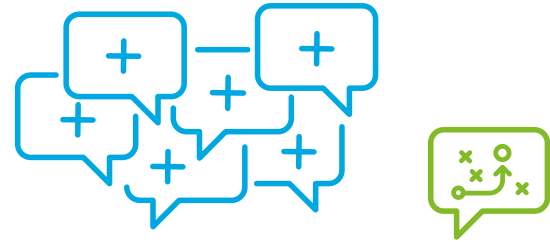
“What made this project
so successful? How can we
replicate this success?”



To be meaningful, recognition has to:

Discuss the right next step

“This kind of thorough research and analysis is just what our company needs to stay competitive. Would you be interested in giving a presentation on your research methods for your colleagues?”



Why this approach works

Best practices recommend using a 6:1 ratio of positive to constructive feedback.³ It builds credibility and trust, and makes constructive feedback seem less threatening.

So share appreciation and positive feedback regularly!

Ways to give praise and recognition



A verbal thank you in a team setting, or during a 1:1 check-in



A mention in your company newsletter



A hand-written note



A gift card



A non-cash bonus (like a parking spot close to the building!)




An employee or team lunch



A well-deserved day off



A treat! Ice-cream on a hot day, cookies any time!



How
to give
constructive
feedback



Giving constructive feedback is challenging for even the most experienced managers.

But when employees and managers have built a trusting relationship by exchanging regular positive feedback, the constructive feedback doesn't feel like a negative experience. And when given effectively, employees learn the most from constructive feedback.

When to give constructive feedback

Ideally, feedback should be given as soon after an event as possible.

But specifically...

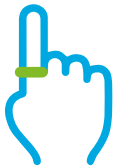
When the behavior has a negative impact on the team

When it will improve a person's skills

When you see an issue with performance



A handy feedback model!



Tip: Regular check-ins with employees are a great place to give constructive feedback. Don't give it in a group setting or by email. It's best done privately and face-to-face. Giving it by phone is okay if that's the only other option.



Step 1: Observation

Explain to the employee exactly what negative behavior or action you saw and when it happened.



Step 2: Impact

Communicate the impact this behavior or action has on your business and/or your team.



Step 3: Action

Work with the employee to find ways to remedy the behavior.



To be meaningful, constructive feedback has to:

Be specific

"We need to discuss the report you delivered to the customer two days late."



Focus on desired behavior instead of the negative behavior.

"I need you to be more conscientious in meeting the deadlines you set with customers."



To be meaningful, constructive feedback has to:

Detail the benefits of making the change

“Meeting these deadlines elevates your status as customer service leader and supports a stronger customer relationship long-term.”



Invite input

“Tell me why the deadline was missed. Do you need more resources or is the timeframe impractical?”



To be meaningful, constructive feedback has to:

Discuss the right next step

“Your next deadline is Tuesday. What do you suggest is the best way to ensure you meet it?”

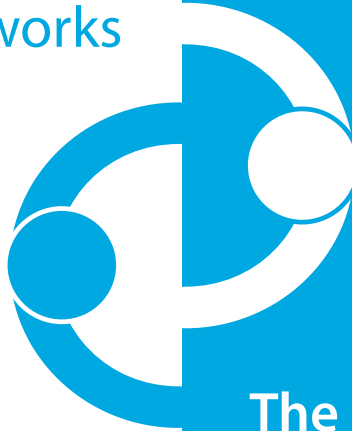


Follow-up

“I’ll email you our agreed upon next steps. Let’s set up a time in the next couple of days to discuss your progress.”



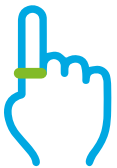
Why this approach works



The message is **honest**

and addresses what **WILL** happen when the employee develops a new approach.

It involves the employee in coming up with a solution to meet the desired behavior change.



Tip: Provide positive feedback when the behavior does change! If it doesn't, have another conversation to address why.

upward feedback

How to give

Managers shouldn't be the only ones giving feedback: Employees should too. It may be intimidating, but it's important for building relationships where you feel comfortable giving feedback.

Steps to giving upward feedback:

1. If it's not requested from you directly, ask if your manager would like your feedback.

"I have a perspective on the outcome of our last team meeting. Would you like to hear it?"



2. If so, share what you observed or heard, and the associated impact.

"There were a few questions left unanswered at the end of the meeting. I'm concerned the team doesn't have all the information they need from you to complete the project on time."



Steps to giving upward feedback:

3. Ask questions to correct any assumptions.

“Is there a reason we didn’t address the questions during the meeting?”



4. Ask if the feedback was helpful.

“Do you think my feedback will help with future team meetings?”



Tips for giving upward feedback:



Be certain your manager is open to receiving feedback before giving it.



Give feedback with the intent to help your manager improve.



Don't offer your opinion on the right next step unless invited to do so.



Consider what objections your manager may have to your point-of-view and be prepared to address





Don't share what you would do if you were the manager. It's not about you.




If the feedback is sensitive and will negatively impact your relationship, don't give it. Instead, look for ways to provide anonymous feedback.


The **dos** and **don'ts** of giving feedback

 **Do** plan your feedback conversation (using a feedback model) in advance.


 **Don't** sandwich constructive feedback between positive feedback. It undermines the impact of the feedback.



 **Do** provide feedback with the intent to help. Otherwise, it can be seen as unappreciative or petty.

 **Don't** assume your feedback will be welcome. Ask if it's a good time. If not, follow up later.



 **Do** keep your cool. Give feedback when you know all the facts and once heated emotions have settled.

 **Don't** assume you have all the information.



✓ **Do** offer a solution when giving constructive feedback. Ask for their input and listen to their suggestions.

✗ **Don't** provide constructive feedback by email or in front of a group.



✓ **Do** keep a record of the positive and constructive feedback you've given. It can be used for performance and compensation discussions!

✗ **Don't** avoid giving feedback just because it's going to be a difficult conversation.



✓ **Do** make your feedback timely and specific.

✗ **Don't** provide feedback when a person appears highly emotional or vulnerable.

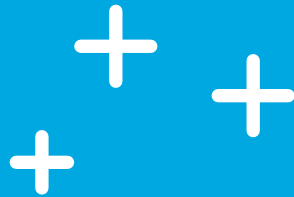


✓ **Do** be aware of body language when giving or receiving feedback – it can suggest aggression or defensiveness.

✗ **Don't** give feedback on the person; give feedback on their actions. Not: "You were wrong," but "What do you think went wrong?"



How to receive positive feedback



Receiving positive feedback may seem straightforward, but some people find it difficult to accept praise – or worse, downplay their own efforts. You may think you’re appearing humble, but **others might see it as a lack of confidence.**

Here are a few tips to help you own your success.



When receiving positive feedback:

Accept it with grace.

You may feel a tendency to dilute or deflect a compliment. But even if you didn't quite hit your target, don't pick apart your performance. Instead, see it as a step forward in your development and/or career.

Say "Thank you."

Don't overthink it. Say thank you and acknowledge to the other person (and yourself) that you worked hard and learned something valuable in the process.

When receiving positive feedback:

Ask for specifics

If your manager says you did a good job on a project, ask them what they liked about it. That way you can apply that feedback to future projects.

Seek out more opportunities to learn

If your manager is happy with the work on your latest project, now is the time to build on your skills and ask for a more challenging assignment or a stretch project.

When receiving positive feedback:

Keep a performance journal

Keeping a record of your successes isn't patting yourself on the back. It's a good way to learn and remember what led to your success so you can replicate it in the future.

Analyze your work

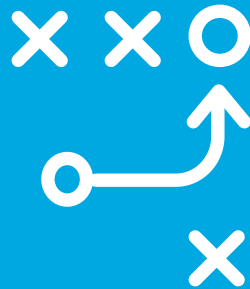
If a project went well, look closer at why it was so successful.

Consider the answers and discuss during your next 1:1 check-in with your manager.

How to receive constructive feedback

Receiving
positive feedback
is one thing.

Getting constructive
feedback – and taking it
as it was intended – is a
much bigger challenge.



Here are a few tips to help
you gain from others' insights.



When receiving constructive feedback:

Be aware of your triggers

We all have a tendency to reject feedback or become emotional. Try to see constructive feedback as a way to grow instead of viewing it as a personal attack.

Separate the feedback from the person delivering it.

Take the person completely out of the equation and focus on what they're saying. Consider how you would feel if someone else was giving you the same feedback.

When receiving constructive feedback:

Work to understand it before dismissing it as invalid.

Instead of trying to figure out if the feedback is justified, think about the impact it could have. Would making a change affect your workplace relationship? Is this feedback similar to previous feedback?

Listen. No, really. Listen to the feedback.

You need to focus on what the person giving you feedback is actually saying and not assume you know what they mean or start getting defensive or giving excuses or explanations.

When receiving constructive feedback:

Repeat back the feedback.

This will help you clarify details and ensure that there's no disconnect between what the person said and what you're hearing. Getting this straight now can save you a lot of frustration in the long run.

Request time to process the feedback if you need to.

If you feel defensive, thank the person for the feedback and ask for time to think about it. Once you feel you can approach the discussion objectively, follow up and finish the conversation.

Tips for receiving constructive feedback:



Provide deeper context and clarity. The person giving feedback may not have all the information.



Keep the conversation focused on what you might do differently from now on.



Avoid temptation to point out failures of the person giving you feedback. This conversation is about you.

feedback is a gift

Giving and receiving feedback can be challenging. But you can only get better at something by practicing it regularly. So make productive feedback conversations a part of your workplace culture.



Because honest feedback delivered with the intent to help someone grow is a valuable gift.

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