

GIVING FEEDBACK

TESSA BYER, UNIVERSITY OMBUDS

ELEMENTS OF GOOD FEEDBACK

Includes relevant and important information

- ▶ Explains why you are requesting the change and provides information about consequences.
- ✗ NOT: *I don't like when you use pink post-it notes.*
- ✓ Better: *This report is going to the CEO, so I want to make sure there are no typos.*

Includes specific examples

- ▶ Offers specific examples demonstrating the feedback.
- ✗ NOT: *You are always late.*
- ✓ Better: *You have been late the past three days, and yesterday you missed the first 20 minutes of the staff meeting.*

Uses positive, neutral, and descriptive language

- ✗ NOT: *That presentation was awful. You really messed up.*
- ✓ Better: *Let's talk about some challenges you encountered during that presentation and how we can prevent them in the future.*

Timely

- ▶ Given soon after the behavior takes place.
- ✗ NOT: *You wrote an article last fall that was full of incorrect information.*
- ✓ Better: *The article you wrote last week had some inaccurate information, and I want to make sure you have access to the correct information.*

Relates to professional traits that are relevant to work

- ✗ NOT: *You are too friendly with your coworkers.*
- ✓ Better: *You spend too much time during the day talking with coworkers about non-work-related things.*

Includes only aspects that the employee can change

- ✗ NOT: *People would take you more seriously if you were taller.*
- ✓ Better: *You have a tendency to check your phone during meetings, and it makes it seem like you are not paying attention.*

Offered to be helpful, not harmful

Presented in private

Includes examples of desired behavior



TIPS ON GIVING GOOD FEEDBACK

- Examine your motives. Why are you providing this feedback?
- Don't wait for a year-end review before expressing areas for improvement! Give them a chance to improve now.
- Put yourself in their shoes and imagine how you would receive this feedback.
- Instead of telling them what they did wrong, start by asking them about why they made a particular choice or took a particular action. Be open to learning about their perspective.
- Reframe "negative feedback" into opportunities for improvement.
- Offer them a chance to ask questions.
- Don't be afraid to hear their emotions and defenses.
- Demonstrate a commitment to partnering with them to support their improvements.
- Ask them what they need in order to make the improvements you are requesting.