

Giving Feedback

Providing employees with effective feedback is a skill that is learned over time. Good feedback is clear, constructive, and focuses on helping the person “fall forward” and grow from mistakes. There are three types of feedback:

- ▶ **Positive:** Offers praise and encouragement
- ▶ **Neutral:** Provides facts and information
- ▶ **Remedial:** Corrects mistakes and provides performance improvement tips

Constructive feedback typically includes a mix of all three types. It also:

- ▶ Offers broad strokes and helpful tips
- ▶ Avoids nit-picking or micromanaging
- ▶ Points out specific things the person did well and targets areas for improvement
- ▶ Is provided on a timely basis
- ▶ If remedial, is focused on improving performance rather than punishing mistakes

Delivering remedial feedback is a necessary part of addressing performance concerns. These tips may help you deliver effective remedial feedback:

- 1. Stay calm.** If tensions are high or it's been a difficult day, it may be best to give the person a chance to regroup before providing feedback. This gives you time to gain some perspective as well. Sample language: “Let’s meet in the morning to talk about what happened.”

- 2. Consult with Human Resources.** Review relevant policies related to the person’s behavior. In addition, the LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can help you prepare for the meeting.

- 3. Listen as much as you speak.** Ask clarifying questions that will help you understand the person’s reasoning. Sample language: “Would you please explain your understanding of the assignment?”

- 4. Create an action plan.** Compile a list of steps that can be taken to avoid mistakes and improve performance. Sample language: “Here are some things we can do to avoid this situation in the future.”

- 5. Make a referral to LifeMatters.** If the person mentions that a personal issue is impacting their performance, remind them that LifeMatters is available to help. For violations of company policy or a pattern or poor performance, consider making a performance referral. (Consult with HR before taking any disciplinary action.) Sample language: “LifeMatters can help you address issues that may be impacting your ability to stay focused at work. I urge you to call.”

- 6. Follow up.** Check in periodically to review the person’s efforts and offer continued feedback. Acknowledge positive improvements and provide encouragement.

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can help you develop an effective style for delivering feedback. Call 24/7/365.

Source: Life Advantages

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