

GIVING THE GIFT OF FEEDBACK

Step One: Work on You First

1. Explore **WHAT** you want to discuss:

- **Brainstorm a list of what seems to be troubling you about the situation.** Explore your evaluations and judgments about missed commitments, disappointed expectations, and bad behavior. Figure out what you want to focus giving feedback on and the outcome that you are hoping for.

2. **Ask yourself: What do I really want? What do I hope to accomplish or change by giving this feedback?**

Step Two: Initiate Contact

1. **Ask for permission to give feedback.**

- For example: “I’d like to share some of my thoughts on (fill in the blank). When would be good time for us to meet?”
- Typically, if it happens in public, you deal with it in public and if it happens in private, you deal with it in private. However, read the situation and discern what would be the best course of action.

2. **Start with respect and care.**

- If our tone of voice, facial expression, or words shows disrespect, the person will not feel safe.
- If they feel our purpose is at odds with theirs, they might conclude that something bad is about to happen.

3. **Share your story and maintain mutual respect.**

- Build common ground before mentioning the problem.
- Let them know that your intentions are pure and that your goal is to solve a problem to make things better for the relationship.
- Start the conversation by describing the gap between what was *expected* and what you *observed*. Be sure to give behavioral, objective feedback.
- Use contrasting to restore respect and explain what you do and do not mean.
 - First: Imagine what they *might* conclude.
 - Second: Explain that this is NOT what you mean.
 - Third: Explain what you DO mean.

4. **End with a Question**

- **Don’t underestimate the importance of a sincere question.** When you end with a question, you maintain the safety you created and let the other person know that you want a dialogue, not a monologue.
- **Asking a question at the end signals that you are looking for solutions—not to punish.** For example: “I thought we agreed that you would send out those emails last week and that you would CC me as well. I looked through my emails for last week and did not see anything. Did I misunderstand you?”

Step Three: Move to Action

1. Once you explore motivation and ability: Pop the question – check in to see if they are willing to make the necessary changes.
2. Agree on a plan, commit to it in writing, and follow up.

LANGUAGE TIPS FOR GIVING FEEDBACK

It can be difficult to make the transition to giving behaviorally based feedback but the tips and examples on this worksheet might help you get an idea of how to approach the situations you face.

The chart below outlines some ways to take our negative speech and re-frame it in a positive light. In the end the same thing is said, but a very different intent is conveyed that helps the other party be more accepting of your feedback.

When you want to say...	Try this instead...
You are wrong...	It is my understanding that...
I don't like...	I prefer...
You can't...	You can...
You don't understand...	Let me clarify...
I have no idea...	Would you explain...
I(You) never...	Today...
You are supposed to...	We agreed that...
I can't...	I can...
It's really annoying when...	I appreciate it when...

These basic phrases can come in handy when trying to positively phrase your feedback, like in the examples below:

You are wrong.../It is my understanding that...

You are wrong. This was your assignment.

It is my understanding that you committed to doing this assignment.

I don't like.../I prefer...

I don't like it when you come to our meetings late.

I prefer it when you come to our meetings on time.

You can't.../You can...

You can't turn in your portion of the assignment late.

You can let us know if you are having difficulty submitting your part of the assignment on time.

You don't understand.../Let me clarify...

You don't understand what we are doing.

Let me clarify the group's objectives.

I have no idea.../Would you explain...

I have no idea how to incorporate your research into the presentation.

Would you explain how your research is relevant to the presentation?

I(You) never.../Today...

You never say hi to me on campus and it is really rude.

Today you didn't say hi to me on campus and it hurt my feelings.

You are supposed to.../We agreed that...

You are supposed to come to all our group meetings.

We agreed that we are all responsible for attending the group meetings.

I can't.../I can...

I can't understand the point you are trying to make when you yell at me.

I would be able to understand your point if you lower your voice.

It's really annoying when.../I appreciate it when...

It's really annoying when you leave dishes in the sink after dinner.

I appreciate it when you wash the dishes after dinner.

While it is unlikely that you will use these exact examples, hopefully they have provided you with a better understanding of how these phrases help you present feedback more positively. When giving feedback, how you say it is often more important than what you say, which is why it is important to think about the words you use very carefully.

<p>1. Your co-VP agreed to meet up and work on an important project together. When the day came, they cancelled last minute. You'd let it slide, but this isn't the first time they have cancelled and left you to finish the entire assignment on your own. You decide to address your co-VP.</p>	<p>1. Your co-VP agreed to meet up and work on an important project together. When the day came, they cancelled last minute. You'd let it slide, but this isn't the first time they have cancelled and left you to finish the entire assignment on your own. You decide to address your co-VP.</p>
<p>2. You overhear your teammate talking badly about you. This person said really rude things, and then later you notice that during practice, this person will refuse to work with you. After time, this behavior negatively affects the team, and more people are starting to ignore you. You decide to address your teammate.</p>	<p>2. You overhear your teammate talking badly about you. This person said really rude things, and then later you notice that during practice, this person will refuse to work with you. After time, this behavior negatively affects the team, and more people are starting to ignore you. You decide to address your teammate.</p>
<p>3. Your group is working on a project together. It is supposed to be a team effort, but it seems that everyone is working on their parts separately. The deadline is approaching and nothing is coming together. There is no cohesive product, and no one is returning any of your group messages. You decide to address your concerns at the next group meeting.</p>	<p>3. Your group is working on a project together. It is supposed to be a team effort, but it seems that everyone is working on their parts separately. The deadline is approaching and nothing is coming together. There is no cohesive product, and no one is returning any of your group messages. You decide to address your concerns at the next group meeting.</p>