

Effective feedback strategies

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How to give effective employee feedback

Plan ahead

- Before you have a meeting with your employee, plan ahead what you are going to say.
- This way, you are more likely to get your message across clearly.
- Here are a few things you can think about when preparing for a meeting:
 - What do I want to get out of this meeting?
 - What are the key points that need to be discussed?
 - What do I want to see going forward?
 - How can I support my employee in their journey?

Share what you know – what impact does this have?

- Talk to your employees about the performance that you have observed from them, and the impact this has had. Did it affect the team, or relationships with a client?
- Be clear and factual.
- Make sure that you provide specific examples instead of making generalisations.

Communicate expectations going forward

- What are your expectations? What behaviours and practices would you like to see going forward?

- You now have the opportunity to go into further detail about why you are having this feedback session, and how this can help your employee improve their performance.
- Be clear with your expectations, and make sure that everyone is on the same page.
- Are expectations being met? If not, what can be done to make sure that they are?

Have an open dialogue

- After you have talked through your observations and expectations, give your employee a chance to discuss how they feel about this.
- Are they surprised by the feedback that they have received? Or do they have extenuating circumstances that have affected their performance that you weren't aware of?
- Providing this opportunity for an open dialogue creates a sense of trust and understanding.
- It is also more likely that employees will feel comfortable asking for help when they need it!

Discuss next steps

- When you are ending the conversation, look forward instead of dwelling on what has already happened.
- Be encouraging, as well as realistic about the actions that you want to see going forwards.
- Finally, be positive!

Delivering a well received method

Provide clear, specific information

- For employees to know what they need to do to improve, they need to be given clear and specific feedback.
- This way, there won't be any confusion relating to the message that you are trying to get across.
- Employees will then know what they need to do to improve, and what not to do.
- For example, instead of saying "you need to improve your written report", you could say "your language and writing style in your report is clear, however you need to break it down in an easy-to-understand way for the client. For example, you could add subheadings to break up the report into bite sized chunks".
- This way, not only do employees know what they need to do to improve, they also are aware of what they have done well that they should continue.

Focus on things that can be changed

- When giving feedback, this should be based on their performance and their behaviour, not on their character or personality.
- Making negative comments about an individual's personal characteristics can be upsetting, as well as making them become defensive.
- Provoking emotional responses like this is never helpful, and can lead to a breakdown in communication.
- For example, instead of saying "you are careless", you could say "your actions in this instance were careless". In doing so, you are attaching this information to a specific incident instead of their entire personality.

Be objective and stick to the facts

- Make sure that you provide objective feedback, and don't let emotions or your assumptions about a particular employee inform the conversation.
- Instead of assuming why an employee's performance may be a certain way, have an open dialogue with them in which they can explain their side.
- For example, if an employee is late to a meeting, don't assume that it is because they are disorganised and have poor time management skills.

Instead, tell the employee that you noticed that they were late, and the impact that this had and why it shouldn't happen again.

Stop using the 'sandwich technique' to deliver feedback – it doesn't work as well as you think!

- The 'sandwich technique' is used often when delivering feedback. It involves offering a piece of praise, followed by a criticism, and then ending with another piece of praise.
- However, this strategy rarely works, and employees are aware of its use and can see through the messaging.
- Instead of using the sandwich technique, just be open and honest with your feedback and offer a chance for discussion – your employees will appreciate the honesty and straightforward approach!