

workhuman*

9 Tips for Giving Feedback (Without the Stress)





Are you offering your employees the tools they need to effectively give and receive the gift of feedback in your organization?

A key component driving employee development is frequent feedback, enabling continuous learning and growth. But giving feedback can be a stressful process. Here are some helpful tips for cutting down the stress and anxiety for everyone involved.



ONE

Establish trust.

Every employee needs to feel respected and have a sense of self-worth to be motivated and committed. When an employee feels valued and trusted, they are more willing to learn from the feedback rather than immediately reject it. Before you give feedback, make sure you have a positive relationship with your fellow employee. In general, you need to have three to five positive moments with a peer before you can give them constructive feedback. These moments form a basis of trust.

TWO

Come from a place of kindness.

Give feedback from a place of caring for your colleague's learning and growth. Make sure you know why you are giving feedback.

Wrong reasons to give feedback

- ✘ To defend your own behavior
- ✘ To condemn
- ✘ To appease another person
- ✘ To make yourself feel good or in control

Right reasons to give feedback

- ✔ Concern for the other person
- ✔ Sense of responsibility
- ✔ Guide/mentor
- ✔ Support

THREE

Leave anger at the door.

Many times, we give feedback out of sheer frustration or anger. If you feel yourself having these negative emotions, step back and reflect before you give the feedback. Make sure the feedback is based on data and insight rather than negative emotions. Remember, feedback is about being someone's advocate to help them learn and grow.





FOUR

Listen to their reaction.

Listening is one of the most powerful ways to build trust and improve communication. You need to not only listen to what someone is saying, but also pay attention to their body language, tone, and emotions. Adjust based on the other person's response. You want feedback to be a two-way conversation.

FIVE

Be specific.

Clarify the actions and behaviors that you are providing feedback on and the impact. The more the individual can relate to the specific event, the more likely they are to learn from the feedback. Do not give feedback about a specific event months after it happens; give it as close to when the incident occurred as possible.





SIX

Focus on the behavior, not the person.

Focusing feedback on just the situation rather than the individual separates the problem from the person, and the receiver is less likely to feel personally confronted.



SEVEN

Inject your own story.

Feedback becomes powerful when you can relate it back to your own learning and growth. When you communicate that you were once in a similar position, you inject a sense of emotional connection into the conversation. It also starts to build a mentor-mentee relationship where the feedback starts to become advice.

EIGHT

Use 'I' statements.

Give feedback from your perspective. Do not try to give feedback on behalf of others. If you have not observed or noticed the behavior, it becomes difficult to explain what is and is not working. When you begin, "I've heard that you," you have lost the opportunity for the feedback to be heard, because the other person is thinking about who you heard that from.





NINE

Limit your focus.

A feedback session should focus on no more than two issues. Any more than that and you risk the person feeling attacked and demoralized. Focus on behaviors and actions that can be changed.

Most of us are familiar with how good it feels to receive meaningful feedback – the kind of feedback that really helps us grow or acknowledges the growth we've already achieved. As the giver of the feedback, remember those times when you received fabulous feedback. Reflecting on your own experiences will ensure your feedback comes from a place of kindness and positive intent.

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Take a tour of Workhuman Cloud® to learn more about tools to drive the feedback conversation.

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