

StraightTALKING



Knowing how to give feedback is one of the most important managerial skills.

Do you know how to give feedback so that the other person:

- Wants to hear it?
- Can understand it and act on it?
- Doesn't get defensive, and
- Respects your opinion?

Unclear feedback fosters a sense of helplessness and hopelessness in the salon, because it offers no clues about how to improve and therapists become totally unmotivated.

Poorly thought through feedback diminishes your credibility as a supervisor and inaccurate feedback is guaranteed to lead to resentment.

Giving feedback can be given in two ways: through constructive feedback or through praise and criticism. Praise and criticism are both personal judgements about a performance effort, with praise being a favourable judgment and criticism, an unfavourable judgement. The guidelines for giving constructive feedback fall into four categories: content, manner, timing and frequency.

Perfect performance?

Liz McKeon guides you through the power of constructive feedback

Content

Content is what you say in the constructive feedback:

1. In your first sentence, identify the topic or issue that the feedback will be about.
2. Provide specifics of what occurred.

Manner

Manner is how you say the constructive feedback - how you say something often carries more weight than what you have to say.

- Be direct in delivering your message.
- Be sincere and avoid giving mixed messages.
- Give clarity on what occurred.
- In positive feedback, express appreciation, in negative feedback, express concern.
- The nature of feedback is verbal and informal, and this can only be achieved by talking live to the employee, either face to face or by phone.
- State observations, not interpretations.

Timing

Feedback is meant to be given as close as possible to when the performance incident occurs so that the events are fresh in everyone's minds. When feedback is given well after the fact, the value of the constructive feedback is lessened.

Frequency

Frequency answers the question, 'how often should your therapists receive constructive feedback on their performance?'

This last guideline is the most important because it makes all the other guidelines work. Don't acknowledge how your staff are performing only once or twice a year. Use constructive feedback regularly to acknowledge real performance. Try to catch and respond to therapists doing the job right just as much as you catch and respond to them doing something not quite right.

The power of constructive feedback

Constructive feedback increases self-awareness, offers options and can motivate. Remember it does not mean only giving positive feedback - feedback about poor performance, given skilfully, can be equally useful and important as an aid to developing a great team. So, don't just be a good boss, become a great boss.

Giving feedback is one of the most important and difficult moments of truth that determine your effectiveness as a manager.

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