

Giving Feedback

Giving feedback is a direct observation about a behavior, task, or skill, provided as a basis for improvement. The essential context for giving feedback is the state you're in when providing it.

Feedback will be best received (and therefore most effective) when given from a Direct and Calm state Above the Line. When feedback is delivered from Below the Line, it will likely land as Criticism or Caretaking.

Direct and Calm

- Used to instruct, assist or reinforce behavior
- Assumes the person may not know something or may have a blind spot in a particular area
- There is not an attachment to being right and there is no interest in arguing
- The feedback is about specific behavior that could actually be changed

THE LINE

Criticism

- Used to hurt, control or manipulate
- Delivery has some kind of "charge" connected with it and comes across as harsh, sarcastic or undermining
- There is little to no awareness of timing or whether or not the person is available to hear you

Caretaking

- Used to take care of the other person's feelings
- Comes across as watered down or apologetic and lacks candor
- This tends to be more of a "hero" move rather than effective leadership

Along with delivering feedback from a Direct and Calm mindset, we suggest choosing the purpose of your feedback.

Purpose 1: Observational	Purpose 2: Agreement-Oriented	Purpose 3: Directive
Your intended outcome is to provide information without seeking an agreement. You're unattached to others' reactions.	Your intended outcome is to get buy-in or secure an agreement.	Your intended outcome is a clear behavior change in another person. There's no negotiation.



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Tips for Giving Feedback

Below you'll find additional suggestions for giving feedback.

- Pay attention to timing and setting.
- Start by asking: "Are you open to some feedback?"
- Focus your feedback on a task, skill, or behavior that can be changed or reinforced.
- Share your observations factually, by focusing on the measurable behaviors that can be observed. (A helpful hint for determining facts is to think about what a video camera would have recorded.)
- Consider preparing your feedback in advance. (You can use our Preparing to Give Feedback worksheet.)
- Appreciate the person for listening to your feedback.
- Appreciation is feedback, too! Be generous with this form of feedback.
- If you recognize you are Below the Line, postpone the feedback, if possible.



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