

Everyone practices the art of giving feedback every day. Although we often are unaware that we are giving feedback, many of our actions deliver signals to others about how we perceive them and their actions. In addition, our effectiveness at giving feedback is a powerful determinant of how others perceive and respond to us. An awareness of when you are delivering and receiving feedback effectively can be a powerful coaching tool.

Think of giving feedback the same way you think of giving a gift. That mental picture facilitates effective feedback. The following points are helpful in learning how to provide useful feedback.

- ♦ **Give feedback for the right reasons.** We give gifts that are of value to others. In the same way, feedback should be of value to the recipient. Occasionally, we make the mistake of giving feedback intended to harm the recipient or to show how perceptive or intelligent we are. Feedback should always be helpful.
 - ♦ **Give feedback at an appropriate time.** Just as Valentine's Day gifts are better given in February than in October, feedback should be given at the appropriate time. Is the receiver ready to hear the feedback? Is the receiver in an emotional state conducive to hearing the feedback? Can that person devote full attention to hearing the feedback? Feedback about a particular event should be given promptly after the event, unless the receiver is upset or too distracted to listen.
 - ♦ **Feedback must be voluntarily accepted.** Feedback is not a command; it is information for the consideration and benefit of the recipient. You cannot force feedback on anyone. Just as people can refuse gifts, they can refuse feedback. The receiver always has the option to listen or ignore whatever feedback you offer.
 - ♦ **Feedback begets feedback.** When you give a gift to someone, he or she may give a gift in return. The same is true for feedback. Returning feedback is a natural reaction for many people, so be prepared. Because this often is a two-way conversation, it is useful to practice the art of listening while giving feedback.
 - ♦ **Feedback is not the same as truth.** You select a gift from many choices. When you provide feedback, you are presenting one perspective out of many. Recognize that you are not providing indisputable truth to the recipient—you are describing *your* perception and reaction to an event. Because it is subjective, feedback is more effective if it is specific and descriptive, not general and evaluative.
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Examples of Sexual Harassment Behavior

The following behaviors, if they are unwelcome, can lead to the development of a hostile work environment and constitute sexual harassment.

Verbal

- ◆ Comments of a sexual nature or alluding to sex
- ◆ Comments about clothing, personal behavior, or a person's body
- ◆ Sexual or sex-based jokes
- ◆ Requesting sexual favors
- ◆ Repeatedly asking someone out
- ◆ Terms of endearment
- ◆ Sexual innuendoes
- ◆ Telling rumors about a person's personal or sexual life
- ◆ Threatening a person

Physical

- ◆ Impeding or blocking movement
- ◆ Inappropriate touching of a person or person's clothing
- ◆ Grabbing
- ◆ Leaning on a person
- ◆ Kissing, hugging, patting, stroking
- ◆ Assault and battery

Nonverbal

- ◆ Staring
- ◆ Looking up and down
- ◆ Derogatory gestures of a sexual nature
- ◆ Following a person
- ◆ Facial expressions of a sexual nature

Visual

Posters, cartoons, drawings, computer programs, or pictures of a sexual nature

Trainer's Action Plan for Professional Improvement

Instructions: Answer the following questions. In drafting your action plan, focus on creating a plan to which you are completely committed. Write your responses in the spaces provided below.

1. What two or three competency areas most need your attention right now?
(Remember the saying, "More than three goals are no goals.")
 2. What opportunities are available to you to develop in those competency areas?
 3. What support do you need to develop in your chosen areas of emphasis?
 4. What is your first step?
 5. What other moves do you need to make in order to grow in your competency areas?
 6. How will you track your progress in those areas?
 7. Who needs to know about your plan?
 8. How willing are you to do whatever it takes to implement your plan?
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Tool 11-2

New Supervisor's Action Plan for Self-Improvement

Instructions: Answer the following questions. In drafting your action plan, focus on creating a plan to which you are completely committed. Write your responses in the spaces provided below.

1. Which two or three competency areas do you most need to improve at this time?
 2. What do you stand to gain by bettering yourself in these areas?
 3. What have you tried before?
 4. What steps can you personally take to improve in those areas?
 5. What help and support do you need to improve in those competencies?
 6. As a supervisor in these areas of competency, how will you monitor your progress in self-improvement?
 7. Who needs to know about your action plan for improvement?
 8. How will you tell them?
 9. What are your first few steps?
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Tool 11-3

Action Plan for Self-Improvement in Coaching Skills

Instructions: Answer the following questions. In drafting your action plan, focus on creating a plan to which you are completely committed. Write your responses in the spaces below.

1. Which two or three coaching skills areas do you most need to improve at this time?
 2. What do you stand to gain by bettering yourself in those areas?
 3. What have you tried before?
 4. What steps can you personally take to improve in those areas?
 5. What help and support do you need to improve in those coaching skills?
 6. How will you monitor your progress in self-improvement?
 7. Who needs to know about that?
 8. How will you tell them?
 9. What are your first few steps?
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