



**the change agency.org**  
SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ACTION

## Resource | Giving and receiving feedback

### People develop skills through:

- Learning relevant concepts
- Getting good quality feedback on performance
- Reflecting constructively on feedback
- Deciding to do something different in future to improve performance

### People will be inhibited from learning from feedback if they:

Feel unsafe

Feel the need to defend themselves

Are unable to see how to apply the feedback to improve performance

### What's gone well?

If you start with something positive you gain their interest – they are less likely to be defensive.

### What could be improved? Look forward not back.

Concentrate on what there is to learn from the situation, how to avoid unwanted situations arising again. "Should have's" induce feelings of guilt and sap energy, and inhibit learning from feedback.

### What specifically could we do differently in future?

Produce an action plan, identify next steps. Agree in detail who will do what differently in future.

### Phrases that show acceptance:

- "I like the way you handled that."
- "I like the way you tackle a problem."
- "I am glad you are pleased with it."
- "Since you are not satisfied, what do you think you can do so that you will be pleased?"
- "It looks as if you enjoyed that."
- "How do you feel about it?"

### Phrases that show confidence:

- "Because of what I know about you, I am sure you will do fine."
- "You'll make it!"
- "I have confidence in your judgement."
- "That's a tough one and I am sure you will work it out."

### Phrases that focus on contributions, assets and appreciation:

- "Thank you that helped a lot."
- "It was thoughtful of you to..."
- "Thanks, I really appreciate..., it makes my job that much easier."
- "I need your help on..."
- "I really enjoyed today. Thank you."

## Phrases that recognise effort and improvement:

- “You have skill in... Would you consider showing others how to...”
- “It looks as if you really worked hard on that.”
- “From your results, you must have spent a lot of time thinking that through.”
- “I see that you are moving right along with your project.”
- “You may not have reached the goal you set for yourself, but look how far you have come.” (Be specific as you identify how)

## Receiving feedback

- Practice reflective listening
- Do not get defensive - make a mental note of disagreements
- Paraphrase what you hear to check your perception and your assumptions
- Ask questions for clarification and for examples where you are unsure
- Show appreciation (thank you) and respect for the person who has been kind enough to offer feedback
- Carefully evaluate the accuracy and potential value of what you have heard
- Gather additional objective information from other people’s reactions 🗨️ Do not overreact to feedback, but modify your behaviours as suggested and watch the results

## Sources

- Rebecca Carmichael & Lee Oliver Giving & Receiving Feedback  
[http://74.125.153.132/search?q=cache:0\\_Rm-enwEqkJ:www.lewisandlewis.com.au/Web%2520Files/Documents/feedback%2520presentation.ppt+giving+and+receiving+feedback&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=au&client=firefox-a](http://74.125.153.132/search?q=cache:0_Rm-enwEqkJ:www.lewisandlewis.com.au/Web%2520Files/Documents/feedback%2520presentation.ppt+giving+and+receiving+feedback&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=au&client=firefox-a)
- Pendleton D., Schofield T., Tate P. & Havelock P. (2004) The New Consultation. Oxford University Press, Oxford University.

### **This resource is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike**

**License.** You are free to copy, distribute, transmit and adapt this work under these conditions:

Attribution to the Change Agency and <http://www.thechangeagency.org>, and the original author/publisher (listed under ‘Source’); only using this work for non-commercial purposes; share alike (if you alter, transform, or build upon this work, distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one).