

How to Give and Receive Feedback

Introduction

Feedback is a cornerstone of effective mentoring, playing a crucial role in fostering growth and development for both the mentor and mentee. Constructive feedback allows both parties to recognise their strengths and identify areas for improvement, motivating them to continue their journey of growth.

It is important to understand that feedback works best when:

- There is trust between the giver and the receiver of feedback
- It focuses on improving the person's performance rather than personality
- It covers acknowledgment of strengths as well as of learning need

How to give constructive feedback

Highlight strengths:

Begin by acknowledging what your mentoring partner does well. Identify the best aspects of their approach or contributions, for example, creating a safe and encouraging space, or for being proactive and organised - it will be unique to your mentee or mentor.

Acknowledge efforts:

Recognise the efforts your mentoring partner has made towards achieving personal, professional, or business goals. For instance, you might express appreciation for how their support has helped you gain clarity on your internal barriers, or take actionable steps toward your objectives.

Be specific:

When providing feedback, focus on specific situations rather than making general statements. This ensures the feedback is constructive and actionable. For example, instead of saying, "You're late in submitting your business report," you could say, "The business report was submitted later than expected, which affected the review process."



Give opportunity for development

Give your mentoring partner opportunity to take ownership of the potential for improvement and empower them to find a solution by asking them what they think. E.g. “How can this be improved next time?” or, “How would you like to work on this?”.

Keep it simple:

Focus on a few key areas for improvement rather than overwhelming your mentoring partner with a long list of issues. This approach helps them concentrate on making meaningful changes without feeling discouraged.

How to receive feedback effectively

Listen attentively:

When receiving feedback, listen carefully without interrupting. Allow your mentoring partner to fully express their thoughts before responding. This demonstrates respect and allows you to process the feedback thoroughly.

Adopt a growth mindset:


We are always learning and developing our skills and qualities. By having a growth mindset, you recognise feedback as an opportunity to learn and grow, moving you towards your goals.

Seek clarification:

If any part of the feedback is unclear or seems vague, don't hesitate to ask for more details. Open and clarifying questions can help you understand the feedback better and prevent misunderstandings.

Consider different perspectives:

Be open to viewing situations from your mentoring partner's perspective and trying new approaches. However, if you believe the feedback is not relevant to your situation, discuss it with your mentoring partner to find a mutually agreeable solution.





Avoid defensiveness:

Remember that feedback is intended to help you grow. Instead of reacting defensively, consider how the feedback can assist you in achieving your personal and business goals.

Express gratitude:

Regardless of whether you agree with the feedback, always thank your mentoring partner for their input. Acknowledging their effort fosters a positive and constructive mentoring environment.

Conclusion

Feedback is a powerful tool in any mentoring relationship, enabling both mentors and mentees to grow, learn, and achieve their goals more effectively.

Embracing feedback as a continuous process for both parties not only enhances individual development but also strengthens the overall mentoring experience as a valuable and rewarding journey.

