How to Offer Constructive Feedback & Recognition

center for work & family life
Objectives

- Why Constructive Feedback is Valuable to Our Team
- Essential Characteristics for Giving Feedback
- Steps for Giving Feedback Effectively
- How to Handle Received Feedback
- Recognize barriers that prevent positive feedback
- Create and sustain a pattern of recognition
Thought…

“I have never in my life learned anything from any man who agreed with me”

--Dudley Field Malone
Why Constructive Feedback is Valuable to Our Team

- Core Values
  - Integrity
  - Teamwork
  - Excellence
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Destructive Silence
Understand the Value of Conducting Constructive Feedback Discussions

When managers fail to conduct effective feedback discussions, it often results in...

Address the Root Cause of Feedback Discussion Ineffectiveness

Managers fail to conduct constructive feedback discussions, because they avoid conflicts instead of managing them.

Conflict Avoidance Cycle

1. We think of conflict as bad.

2. We get nervous about a conflict we are experiencing.

3. We avoid the conflict as long as possible.

4. The conflict escalates and must be confronted.

5. We handle the conflict poorly.

Learn How to Hold Constructive Feedback Discussions

Three key manager actions impact manager-led development.*

Impact of Action on Manager-Led Development Effectiveness

- Conduct an Open Discussion: 26%
- Conduct an Evidence-Based Discussion: 26%
- Conduct a Forward-Looking Discussion: 29%

Learn How to Hold Constructive Feedback Discussions

- How do I conduct an open discussion?
- How do I conduct an evidence-based discussion?
- How do I conduct a forward-looking discussion?
Learn How to Hold Constructive Feedback Discussions

How do I conduct an open discussion?

- Foster an open and positive discussion
- Make employees feel comfortable
- Discuss performance weaknesses with your employees
- Allow employees to give their perspectives
Learn How to Hold Constructive Feedback Discussions

How do I conduct an evidence-based discussion?

- Focus on facts
- Explain patterns in performance
- Give clear examples of strengths
- Explain how strengths positively impact performance
- Explain consequences of weaknesses
Learn How to Hold Constructive Feedback Discussions

How do I conduct a forward-looking discussion?

- Provide tangible steps to address weaknesses
- Motivate employees to avoid future mistakes
- Show how strengths can improve weaknesses
- Set concrete steps to resolve consequences of mistakes
Personal Characteristics for Giving Constructive Feedback

Becoming a trusted source

- The “3 B-s”
  - Benign
  - Beneficial
  - Benevolent

- Privacy, dignity and discretion
Thought…

“The right to criticize must be earned, even if the advice is constructive in nature. Before you are entitled to tinker with another person’s self-esteem, you are obligated first to demonstrate your respect for him/her as a person. When a relationship of confidence has been carefully constructed, you will have earned the right to discuss a potentially threatening topic. Your motives will have been thereby clarified.”

--Dr. James Dobson
Barriers That Prevent Positive Feedback

- I don’t have time
- I don’t know how to do it
- I don’t want to be perceived as “weak” by praising others
- Praising feels awkward
- Nobody gives me positive feedback; I have no role model
- I have too many employees/ coworkers to do it effectively with all of them
- My employees will expect a raise if I praise them

- It’s their job to complete assignments, why should I praise them for meeting their job requirements?
- Our employees already know they are doing a good job
- I feel silly giving positive feedback
- This employee/coworker is motivated and doesn’t need positive feedback
- I don’t care whether the employee progresses or grows
The Art of Constructive Feedback

- Realize that relationships matter
- Review assumptions
- Relax and center yourself before the meeting
- Share your intention to contribute to the other’s success
The Art of Constructive Feedback

- Clarify expectations
- Ask questions (and listen to the responses)
- Speak respectfully
- See the positive as well as the negative
Essentials of Constructive Feedback

- Describe rather than evaluate
- Be specific rather than general
- Focus on the behavior rather than on the person
- Feedback must reflect the needs of both the receiver and the giver of feedback
- Direct your feedback toward behavior the recipient can do something about
- The best constructive feedback is solicited rather than imposed
- Timing is important
Essentials of Constructive Feedback

- Share information instead of giving advice
- The amount of information should be appropriate to what the receiver can use
- Focus on what is said and done, or how it is said or done, not on your assumption of why it was said or done
- Check to determine the degree of agreement from others
- Follow up feedback by paying attention to the consequences of the feedback
- Constructive feedback leads to authenticity
Do’s and Don’ts of Giving Feedback

DO…

- Be Timely
- Be Specific
- Be Open and Offer Suggestions
- Create the right environment
- Check for understanding and buy-in
Do’s and Don’ts of Giving Feedback

DON’T…

- Don’t make it personal
- Don’t give feedback only when there’s a problem
- Don’t address multiple issues in one discussion
Thought...

“Humility is... accepting the possibility that someone else knows something about me that I don’t know myself”

--Anonymous
Types of Employee Recognition

- Personal acknowledgement
- Public acknowledgement
- Free types of rewards
- Mostly free types of rewards
- Low cost rewards
Types of Employee Recognition

Personal acknowledgement

- Spoken
  - Nice job
  - Thank you
  - I like what you’ve done here
  - Arrange for Dean or Chair to call

- Written
  - Personal note or card
Types of Employee Recognition

Public acknowledgement

- Give credit for contributions to a project
- Develop a “behind the scenes” award
  - ABCD Award – Achievement Behind Closed Doors
Types of Employee Recognition

Mostly-free types of rewards

- Half-day off
- Cook a meal for them (not catered or store-bought, but by your own hand)
Types of Employee Recognition

Low cost rewards

- Cover their desk with balloons
- Find out their hobby and buy some materials or gift card to relevant store
- Buy lunch for employee and 2-3 coworkers of his/her choice
- Attendance at a conference
- Tickets to USC football, Dodgers, Hollywood Bowl
Employee recognition – rewarding your best people.

- Identify the people who are critical to helping you grow your business
- Determine what incentives are most important to your key people
- List all of the reward programs that currently exist in your company
- Match the reward to the person
- Match the reward to the achievement.
- Be timely and specific
Basic Motivating Principles

- Motivating employee's starts with motivating yourself
- Always work to align goals of the organization with goals of employees
- Motivation of your employees means understanding what motivates each of them
- Recognize that supporting employee motivation is a process, not a task
- Walk the talk
- Criticize behavior, not people
Book recommendation

- 1001 Ways to Reward Employees: Money Isn’t Everything

- By Bob Nelson
What motivates employees?

- Autonomy
- Mastery
- Purpose
Activity: Break-Out Groups
Feedback Challenge

*What one new trait of Constructive Feedback will you adopt...*

- Immediately?
- In one month?
- This year?
Speaking of feedback…

*How did we do?*

**Contact info**
- Center for Work & Family Life
- 213-821-0800
- cwfl@usc.edu