

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK



INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

HALF-DAY COURSE

HRDQ[®]

GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

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Instructional design and learning philosophy

We are committed to providing the best core-skills content possible for Instructor-Led Training (ILT). The following principles are applied in the development of programs:

Sound Instructional Design

All course content is developed using a variety of research techniques. These include:

- Brainstorming sessions with target audience
- Library research
- Online research
- Customer research (focus groups, surveys, etc.)
- Subject Matter Experts (SME)
- Interviews with trainers

Expert instructional designers create imaginative and innovative solutions for your training needs through the development of powerful instructional elements. These include:

- Learning objectives — effective tools for managing, monitoring and evaluating training
- Meaningfulness — connects the topic to the students' past, present, and future
- Appropriate organization of essential ideas — helps students focus on what they need to know in order to learn
- Modeling techniques — demonstrate to students how to act and solve problems
- Active application — the cornerstone to learning — helps students immediately apply what they have learned to a real-life situation
- Consistency — creates consistent instructions and design to help students learn and retain new information
- Accelerated learning techniques — create interactive, hands-on involvement to accommodate different learning styles

Application of Adult Learning Styles

Adults learn best by incorporating their personal experiences with training and by applying what they learn to real-life situations. Our experienced instructional designers incorporate a variety of accelerated learning techniques, role-plays, simulations, discussions, and lectures within each course. This ensures that the learning will appeal to all learning styles and will be retained.

Course timing

Chapter One: Giving Feedback



Reading



Written Exercise



Facilitation





Group Activity

Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	What is feedback?	20
	Why is feedback important?	20
	Assessing yourself	5
	Starting with the easy part	5
	Giving constructive feedback	10
	What's the "TRIC"?	15
	Incorporating your body language into your message	10
	Handling recurring problems	15
	Giving feedback practice	30

Course timing (cont.)


Chapter One: Giving Feedback


Type of Activity	Segment	Time
	Providing written feedback	10


	Giving feedback: A personal action plan	10
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Chapter Two: Receiving Feedback

	Introduction	20
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	Receiving feedback	20
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	Avoiding emotional interpretations	15
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	Receiving feedback: A personal action plan	15
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	Practice receiving feedback	30
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Reading



Written Exercise



Facilitation



Group Activity

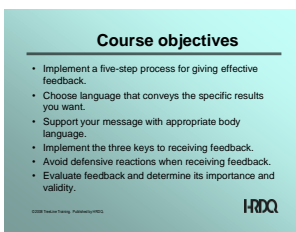
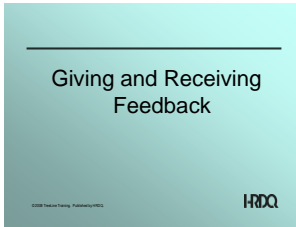
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Cover logistics and course objectives.



Course objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your knowledge and ability to:

- ◇ Implement a five-step process for giving effective feedback
- ◇ Choose language that conveys the specific results you want
- ◇ Support your message with appropriate body language
- ◇ Implement the three keys to receiving feedback
- ◇ Avoid defensive reactions when receiving feedback
- ◇ Evaluate feedback and determine its importance and validity

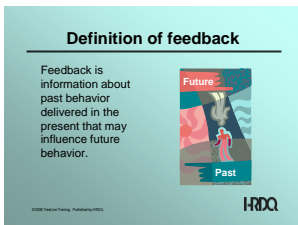
Chapter One



GIVING FEEDBACK

This page is meant to be a humorous introduction to the topic of feedback. Read through the definitions listed on this page. Most are quite technical, but they get at the origin of the term “feedback,” which is a relationship between two systems, A and B, where A’s behavior changes based on input from B. The thermostat is a classic example of this type of feedback. However, when people are involved, there is no “autopilot” reaction to the input. In other words, people don’t necessarily do anything, or do the correct thing, with the feedback they’ve been given.

Allow several minutes for participants to write their own definitions of feedback and then have them share in small groups. As a group, decide on a common definition of feedback in a business setting. Note: There are many possible answers; however, the definition should relate to a give-and-take of information with the purpose of improving performance. Here’s one: “Feedback is information about past behavior delivered in the present that may influence future behavior.”



What is feedback?

Read these definitions of feedback (from the *American Heritage Dictionary*) and then write your own in the space provided.

- ◇ The process in which part of the output of a system is returned to its input in order to regulate its further output.
- ◇ The usually annoying sound produced by a microphone or guitar amplifying its own sound.
- ◇ In systems and models, the flow of information about the present condition of variables to the originator or source for the purposes of monitoring the achievement of objectives.
- ◇ The return of information about the result of a process or activity; an evaluate response.
- ◇ The process by which a system, often biological or ecological, is modulated, controlled or changed by the product, output or response it produces.
- ◇ The inevitable result when your baby doesn’t appreciate the strained carrots.

Your definition:

Paradox: When feedback works well, you tend not to notice it (e.g., the thermostat constantly regulating the air temperature). However, when it’s not working well, you do notice it (the air temperature becomes too hot or too cold).

Why is feedback important?

- ◇ Helps us understand our strengths and weaknesses
- ◇ Distinguishes between our perception of ourselves and others' perceptions of us
- ◇ Influences another person's behavior
- ◇ Improves performance in the workplace by increasing confidence and competence

Activity:

Recall a situation in which you gave feedback that influenced someone's future behavior.

Recall another situation in which you gave feedback that did not influence the person's behavior.

What were the differences in those two situations?

Would you like to give feedback that sticks? Do you ever hesitate to give feedback because you're not sure what to say? Do you get defensive when someone gives you feedback? This training will give you answers to these questions as well as ideas about:

- Making you and your team more productive while sharing ideas
- Being more confident in your ability to recognize your team's needs and communicate solutions
- Minimizing conflicts and misunderstandings that can disrupt work flow

Activity: Allow several minutes for participants to complete the information in the workbook. Debrief by focusing in particular on the last item—the differences should highlight the right ways/wrong ways to give feedback.

Many people have preconceived ideas about giving feedback to others. Sometimes these ideas can hinder your ability to effectively give feedback in a positive way. Do you know your own feedback hurdles?

Assessing yourself

Instructions: Check the boxes below if you have experienced these views.

- “I’m not perfect, so why should I be telling people how to do their jobs?”
- “I don’t have time to sit down with everyone that does something wrong. It is my job, as a manager, to pick up the slack around here.”
- “Everything will work itself out over time. I have better things to do than to be giving feedback for every little thing.”
- “Nobody likes to receive feedback. I think that I will just ignore the problem and let somebody else handle it.”
- “This problem has been going on long before I got here. I think that it is part of the culture and I am not going to address it by myself.”
- “People around here are so defensive about feedback. It is just easier to go with the flow.”
- “I would never give feedback to my superiors because it may hurt me in my evaluation.”
- “Everybody goes through orientation. If they can’t do the job correctly, maybe they shouldn’t be here.”

If you checked any of the boxes above, you probably have identified a hurdle that you need to be aware of before you can give effective feedback to others. Recognizing these hurdles before you begin allows you to be more aware of how your attitudes can influence any feedback situation.

Starting with the easy part

Positive feedback is important!


- ◇ Do it often.
- ◇ Be specific.
- ◇ Make it public.
- ◇ Consider the receiver.
- ◇ Do it evenly.
- ◇ Be sincere.



For many people, giving feedback means correcting someone's behavior and implementing change. It is too often forgotten that positive feedback can act as the backbone of a thriving organization. If you balance positive and negative feedback, others will be more receptive and responsive to your advice.

Delivering positive feedback

- Do it often.
- Be specific.
- Make it public.
- Consider the receiver.
- Do it evenly.
- Be sincere.



Do it often. Positive feedback is too important to let slide.

Be specific. Don't just say "good job." Instead say "That new procedure you developed for routing service calls has really improved our customer satisfaction. Thanks for coming up with it."

Make it public. While negative feedback should be given privately, positive feedback is usually best offered publicly.

Consider the receiver. It is important to consider the feelings of the person receiving the recognition. For a very shy person, thanking him in front of his work group is probably most appropriate. For another person, you might post a sign in the department area or in some way decorate the employee's workspace.


Do it evenly. Be certain you are paying attention to every employee and don't play favorites.

Be sincere. Don't praise someone for coming in on time. Don't congratulate someone for just doing his/her job. People will see right through you. Really mean it when you give positive feedback.

Giving feedback is important for the growth and success of any business. Organizations that promote open communication and structured feedback often enjoy higher productivity and superior morale.

Giving constructive feedback

- Set expectations.
- Assume positive intent.
- Make an observation.
- Describe the preferred behavior.
- Talk about the future.



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Set expectations: Too often managers simply show new employees around the building and tell them to ask questions when needed. If you never share your expectations clearly, the others will have no foundation from which to work. They may never realize that they are doing something wrong.


Assume positive intent: Most people don't make mistakes on purpose. If they are doing something wrong, it is usually not intentional.

Make an observation: Avoid using anything but first-hand knowledge when giving feedback—the information may not be accurate and you may be putting yourself in the “hot seat.”

Discuss only observable behaviors: For example: Discuss the tone of voice the employee used and not a negative attitude.

Use details: When feedback is general, it is more likely to come across as a blanket criticism rather than behavior that can be corrected.

Wrong way/right way



Ineffective: “You’re always late.”

Effective: “I noticed that customers needed to wait several minutes for you to get in.”

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Giving constructive feedback

Follow the method outlined below to begin the road to giving more effective feedback.

Set expectations

- ◇ Be detailed.
- ◇ Be realistic.
- ◇ Share the “why.”
- ◇ Share measurement criteria.
- ◇ Write it down.

Assume positive intent

- ◇ Most people are trying to do their best work.
- ◇ Make the assumption that the employee thought what he/she was doing was best for the customer, team, or unit.

Make an observation

- ◇ Pay attention and watch your employees perform.
- ◇ Note both the positive and negative performance behaviors.
- ◇ Use first-hand knowledge to give feedback; avoid formulating feedback based on hearsay or rumors.
- ◇ Discuss only observable behaviors and avoid a discussion about the employee’s motives or personality.
- ◇ Use as many details as possible.

Ineffective:
“You’re always late.”

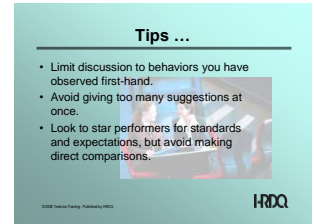
Effective: “I noticed that customers needed to wait several minutes for you to get in.”

Describe the preferred behavior

- ◇ Concentrate on only one or two behaviors at a time.
- ◇ Ask the employee for his/her ideas on what to change.
- ◇ Look to star performers for examples.

Talk about the future

- ◇ Restate expectations and clarify benefits or consequences associated with changing the behavior.
- ◇ Check for understanding.
- ◇ Create a plan for moving forward.



Describe the preferred behavior. Avoid giving too many suggestions at once and choose one or two behaviors to work on. Ask the employee for his/her input on what the desired behavior should look like. Look to star performers for standards or expectations.

Talk about the future:

Check for understanding. When you have finished giving feedback, check to make sure that the other person understands what you have said and what he/she needs to do differently.

Create a plan for moving forward. By doing this together you will be letting the person know that you are interested in his/her success and future with the team. If the employee is far from the desired performance, set up incremental steps to reach the desired performance level.

When the time comes to give feedback, you may find yourself tongue-tied or falling over one of the hurdles that you identified earlier. The model on this page illustrates a “script” guideline that is helpful when giving corrective performance feedback.

What's the “TRIC”?

- Tell** “When you stop and chat with me, I have trouble getting right back into my work.”
- Recognize** Please wait until break time to chat about nonwork issues.
- Identify** Thanks for understanding. I enjoy talking with you when it doesn't take away from my productivity.”
- Confirm**

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Practice: If participants can't think of a situation, suggest they give feedback to someone who is stopping and chatting at their desk too often and/or too long.

What's the “TRIC”?

TRIC model	Example
Tell the specific behavior that you would like to have changed.	<i>“When you interrupt me during a meeting ...”</i>
Recognize what you are feeling about the situation or behavior.	<i>“I get frustrated because it breaks my train of thought ...”</i>
Identify the replacement behavior that you would like to see.	<i>“What I would like to see happen is that you wait to add your comments until after I have finished speaking.”</i>
Confirm understanding and end on a positive note.	<i>“I think you have great ideas to contribute and I believe the quality of our meetings will improve as a result of not trying to talk over each other.”</i>

Practice

Think of a situation in which you need to give feedback. Practice what you would say with a partner, using the TRIC model to “script” your discussion. Use the space below to jot down key words or thoughts. Switch roles so everyone has an opportunity to practice.

Incorporating your body language into your message

Make your words and body language congruent.

Common expressions and gestures that may cause inconsistency in your message

- ◇ Leaning your head to the side
- ◇ Smiling inappropriately
- ◇ Having poor eye contact
- ◇ Speaking too softly or loudly
- ◇ Using unsuitable humor or lack of humor
- ◇ Adding disclaimers, modifiers and qualifiers, such as:
 - “This may sound stupid . . .”
 - “You may not agree . . .”
 - “This isn’t a big thing, but . . .”

People will believe the nonverbal message you send more than the words you say. Make your words and body language congruent so that you don't send mixed messages.

Reinforcing your message

- Make your words and body language congruent.
- Be aware of:
 - Eye contact
 - Voice tone and volume
 - Smiling
 - Humor
 - Verbal expressions



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Activity: Choose a statement such as “nice job.” Repeat the statement using a different tone of voice and body language each time. Ask participants what message you are sending each time (based strictly on tone of voice and body language since the words are the same).
Suggestions: Sincere, cynical, jealous, yes-man, etc.

Introduction: Let's say you've followed the guidelines and spoken to an employee about a specific situation, but you've seen no change or improvement. You even had a casual chat along the lines of, "How's it going? Do you need any help?" Still nothing? What do you do now?

When a leader is faced with a performance problem, he or she should determine the root cause, if possible.



Activity to illustrate: Ask for four volunteers to stand. Request that the first person say the *Pledge of Allegiance* in Spanish. Most people don't know how to do this. Ask the second volunteer to say the Pledge backward—most people can't do this. Ask the third volunteer to say the Pledge, but as he does, interrupt him constantly and ask him to move to another part of the room, to speak louder, etc. In essence, do not allow him to complete the task. Ask the fourth volunteer to go to the front reception area and greet an incoming customer by saying the Pledge. Most people are unwilling to do this. This activity demonstrates the four categories of performance issues. Draw particular attention to the solutions for each of these problems—what works for one situation won't work for another.

Activity: Working in small groups, read the case study and decide which category this situation falls into and what actions can be taken to improve the situation.

Possible solution: The root cause is probably that Gregory can't perform the job tasks. He has been trained, and there is no indication that Gregory is unwilling to perform the tasks or that he isn't allowed. Therefore, the best option may be to re-evaluate his skills and realign work responsibilities so that he is given tasks that better suit his skill set.

Handling recurring problems

If you've given feedback to an employee and you don't see any change, you may need to do some detective work to discover an underlying cause. Here are some possible causes and solutions.

Possible cause	Solution
◆ Doesn't know how to perform the tasks	◆ Train, educate, mentor, shadow
◆ Can't perform the job tasks	◆ Evaluate skills, strengths, and aptitudes and relocate to a more appropriate position
◆ Isn't allowed to perform tasks	◆ Restructure workspace, schedule, and people on the team to facilitate performance
◆ Isn't willing to perform the tasks	◆ Point out attitude problems, suggest course of action, and get employee commitment for follow through

Practice: Identify the cause of the following problem and brainstorm possible actions that you could take to help the employee.

1. Gregory makes an error on every project he manages. There is no pattern or consistent mistake being made, and he has been trained several times on the processes.

What's Gregory's problem?

What actions could you take?

Giving feedback practice

Now it's time to put all the pieces together. Think back to the feedback situation you described at the beginning of the program (the one that didn't go well). You will role-play that situation using the tips and guidelines we have discussed. Work in groups of three, with a second person acting as the person receiving the feedback and the third acting as an observer. The observer can use the space below to jot notes about what was observed to give feedback to the person doing the role-play. Note: The observer should follow the guidelines for giving feedback as well!

Round 1

Round 2

Round 3

Conduct this activity in three rounds so that each person has a chance to role-play his/her individual situation. Switch roles so that each person also has a chance to act as observer and deliver feedback using the guidelines provided. Debrief with the entire group.

Feedback that is contentious or sensitive should be delivered only in a face-to-face conversation, not in written form. However, written feedback can be a great way to deliver praise and positive feedback—it gives the employee a written record of his/her success or accomplishment. It can also be used to deliver feedback that is relatively straightforward and may benefit from written instructions or information.

In general, follow the same guidelines as you would for face-to-face feedback: Be specific, give examples, keep it positive and future focused, etc.

Practice: Alone or with a partner, rewrite the feedback to follow the guidelines listed in the workbook. Note: There are many possible answers. We've listed just one possible solution. "The workshops you organized were well attended and addressed the needs of the students. The average rating was 4.5/5.0 and attendance increased 25% over last year."

Providing written feedback

Remember that written feedback is a more permanent record than a conversation, and therefore, it requires your message to be especially clear and accurate.

Effective written feedback:

- ◇ Helps the employee's professional development
- ◇ Is detailed and qualitative
- ◇ Is broken down into steps and/or checkpoints
- ◇ Addresses obstacles and provides resources
- ◇ Includes follow-up activities

Practice: Rewrite the following feedback so that it more closely follows the guidelines above.

"You did a good job organizing the student workshops."

Giving feedback: A personal action plan

Think of a circumstance where you can apply your feedback skills while on the job. Complete the following personal action plan. Try to formulate the words that you would use by referring to the TRIC model.

1. Describe a circumstance in which you will need to provide feedback.

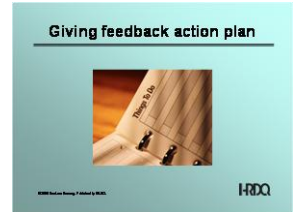
Circumstance _____

Person(s) involved _____

2. When and where would be the best time for you to provide this feedback?

3. What is the specific behavior that you would like to see changed?

What are the consequences of this behavior?



Most people are more comfortable with old problems than with new solutions.

—Anonymous