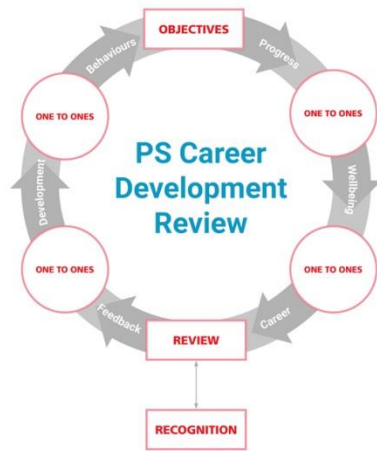


# How to give and receive feedback

Guidance for professional  
services staff and managers





### How to give and receive feedback

Providing ongoing feedback is key to ensuring that the one-to-one process is effective.

### Reflect on the purpose of your feedback

The most important step is to make sure that your potential feedback is coming from the right place.

“When we have difficult feedback to give, we enter the discussion uneasily, and this pushes us to the side of fear and judgment, where we believe we know what is wrong with the other person and how we can fix him,” writes Frederic Laloux in his book [Reinventing Organizations](#). “If we are mindful, we can come to such discussions from a place of care. When we do, we can enter into beautiful moments of inquiry, where we have no easy answers but can help the colleague assess himself more truthfully.”

### Focus on the behaviour, not the person

After entering the conversation with the best intentions, make sure that you separate the behaviour or actions from the person. Focus your feedback on the situation you want to address – on what the individual does or says, rather than on the individual themselves. This separates the situation from the individual’s own identity, which allows them to focus on what you’re saying without feeling personally confronted.

There are four key types of feedback:

- Positive Conditional – positive feedback based on something the individual has done

- Positive Unconditional – positive feedback for no reason
- Negative Conditional – change feedback based on something the individual has done
- Negative Unconditional – change feedback with no reason

In the work environment you should only ever give conditional feedback (either positive or negative) - NEVER give unconditional feedback.

### Reinforcing (positive) Feedback:

To give effective positive conditional feedback, make sure that you include the following:

- What the member of staff has done
- Why it was effective (outcome or consequences)
- How can they use it in the future

For example:

<i>What</i>	It was good that you asked that question
<i>Why</i>	It helped everybody to see things from a strategic point of view, and get out of the operational detail
<i>How</i>	It would be great if you ask those kinds of questions in future team meetings

### Feedback for improvement:

Similarly, to give effective feedback for improvement to someone (negative conditional feedback) you can follow a step process:

- What they have done
- What impact it has had
- What needs to be achieved
- Ask them what they could do differently next time

For example:

<i>What</i>	I noticed that you kept interrupting people during the meeting
<i>Why</i>	After a while, several people just went quiet and we didn’t get the benefit of their thinking or their ideas
<i>What</i>	We need everyone’s ideas and input on this, so

	that everyone buys into the final plan
<i>What</i>	What could you do differently to make sure that happens?

### Asking for feedback

Here are some example questions that managers can use when asking for feedback from a team member:

- How can I better support you to do your job?
- What could I do differently that would help you do your job?
- What am I doing that helps you do your job?
- Am I giving you enough feedback?
- Am I providing enough guidance and information when delegating work?
- Do you feel supported to achieve work-life balance?
- Do you feel you have been given opportunities to use and develop your knowledge and skills – how could we do this better?
- Have I supported you enough over the last ...?
- Am I doing anything that hinders your capacity to do your job?
- How could I have supported you better on this task?
- Have I given you enough information and guidance?
- Is there anything more I can/could have done when you were working on this?
- What would you like me to do differently next time?
- Have you been able to develop your skills while doing this work – how could we have better supported you to develop your skills?

### Receiving feedback

When receiving feedback, it's very important to actively listen to what is being said. Avoid interrupting the other person while they are speaking and wait until they have finished before you reply.

Remember to thank the person for sharing their thoughts, even if you don't agree with them immediately. Let the person know that you will think about what they've said and will think through what you can do with the feedback. You may also like to say something at this point about what you intend to do in the future.

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