



5 Tips on how employers should give feedback

By Corrinne Armour

People need feedback to develop and grow. Withholding feedback is like asking someone to complete a crossword without providing all the clues. It's simply not possible. Employers who do not provide feedback to their people, stifle growth, limit potential and ultimately impact performance.

On the job, real time

People learn best on the job. The 70-20-10 theory of organisational

learning suggests that only 10% of learning happens in a formal training program. Feedback that is delivered real time reinforces learning while it's still relevant and reinforcement embeds learning. Multiple learning events create touch points over time, which further enhances learning effectiveness.

Connect feedback to employee development needs

and business objectives

Feedback that the employee cares about – that's linked to their needs – has inspired the most motivation and therefore learning impact. Link feedback to actual performance metrics so that it's easier to track progress when new behaviours are adopted. Feedback that connects to real business objectives and outcomes provides relevance and urgency, and helps people to connect their increased

performance directly with business success.

Probe for intention and not behaviour

It takes a lot to look beneath the behaviour and focus on the intention driving the dysfunctional behaviour. Let's face it; it's much easier to respond to what's in front of us! It's also less effective in building relationships and overcoming poor performance. Look beyond behaviours, and engage in development conversations targeting the intentions that drive the observable behaviours.

Know they want the feedback you are uncomfortable to give

It turns out that people actually want the bad news that their employers don't want to give them. A recent research project found that people wanted corrective feedback,

more than praise, if it were provided in a constructive manner. 72% said their performance would improve if their manager provided corrective feedback. People can't see their own behaviours as clearly as others can. Without an outside perspective, they remain blind to their development opportunities and strengths.

Practice Practice Practice

The better you are at giving feedback, the faster and deeper your people will develop. And this takes practice. Ask for feedback yourself and learn from that. Build awareness of your own triggers. Giving critical or corrective feedback can invite negative reactions: denial, hurt, blame, and anger are possible responses. Most of us are not eager to upset others, which makes it easy to justify delayed responses or missed feedback opportunities. However,

avoiding the tough stuff can have major consequences. Employers must make the effort. They must confront their own comfort and confidence levels when faced with having hard conversations.



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