How to provide constructive feedback

Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning: it aims at identifying strengths and weaknesses and providing clears steps for improvement. That is why it should be educative in nature. *What process can you use to improve your feedback and deliver it with confidence?*

1. **Keep it short but effective**

Your words matter, so try to keep your feedback short, meaningful and to the point. The use of passive voice is suggested as it is key to giving feedback that is helpful without being personal (e.g. "there are few examples offered" rather than "you offer few examples")

2. **Focus on the strengths**

You can start off by focusing on the strengths of the work in question – what you like about it – to lessen the sting of criticism and to stimulate the reward centres in the brain, leaving the recipient open to taking a new direction.

3. **Spot areas for improvement**

Avoid vague and general feedback and try to find the areas where the work could be better executed based on the guidelines of the activity.

4. **Be specific and provide practical suggestions**

Share your ideas about how these areas could be improved and explain why these ideas could lead to improved results. Your colleague will be better able to respond to direction when it is clear and concrete.

5. **Give thanks and end on a positive note**

Make sure to end the discussion on a positive note to show confidence in the abilities of your peers to improve their work. Follow it up with discussing how their strengths can be used to that end.

Example

This is a great ……. (*e.g. lesson plan*) with innovative ideas on how to …… (*activity topic*). I particularly like the way …... (*e.g. these teaching methods are combined*), and I think that the activity of …… (*description of an activity*) will be useful. I also find very interesting the way the …. (*description of a specific part of the submission*). However, I feel that ….. (*e.g. more collaborative activities*) could be planned and …… (*e.g. additional resources could be included*). For example, …… (*provide practical suggestions*). Another good idea could be the ……. (*provide practical suggestions*). Such an activity could provide the opportunity to …... (*explain the purpose of your suggestion*). Overall, very well thought-out and organised work. Thanks for sharing it!

Remember: The purpose of giving feedback is to help the person improve!