

Feedback Preparation and Delivery

Feedback is the preferred means of communication for formative and summative evaluation. Feedback must be transparent and painstakingly prepared.

1. Find a quiet, private spot for a one-on-one discussion. A public area has too many distractions, and someone may overhear you. The lack of privacy may intimidate the student or shake her self-esteem.
2. Meet with the student as soon as possible after the incident because memory may fail if you wait. If there is some other emergency or the situation hits too close to home, it is better to hold off until the next day.
3. Choose the right time, i.e. when the student is receptive to comments, not when he must prep for a treatment. If the supervisor has to take immediate action, tact is of the utmost importance. During a treatment, for example, say quietly, *“Wait; stop, Do it like this. . . .”*
4. Stay in the present, e.g. *“I, now or today.”*
5. Make your comments specific. Avoid generalizations, e.g. *“You always . . .”* or *“You never. . . .”*
6. Limit the amount of information. Avoid a list of helpful advice. This creates confusion, and the student may lose sight of the key message.
7. Use various means of expression, e.g. gestures, tone of voice, careful choice of words. For example, without saying a word, use your hands to demonstrate the intervention or guide the student.
8. Ask open-ended questions. This encourages the student’s participation. Ask questions such as *“What do you think about it?”* or *“How do you think it went?”*
9. Encourage feedback, don’t demand it. Encourage students to come see you about their progress and problems areas or uncertainties.
10. Avoid a flattering or accusatory tone of voice. This would put the student on the wrong track, and it skirts the issue. Avoid words that are vague or subject to interpretation, e.g. *always, never* or *you must*.
11. Don’t create a winner-loser relationship. Providing feedback is not a matter of being right. It involves relating behaviour or performance to learning objectives. Stick to the facts and target objectives.