

Receiving Constructive Feedback

The key to Constructive Feedback is maintaining a spirit of mutual respect and learning.

Constructive feedback is information about the impact of our behavior or actions and is beneficial because it helps us to progress and develop. It can however sometimes cause discomfort.

The following techniques will help you respond positively when you receive feedback.

1. Focus on the content, not the person

- Assume the person giving the feedback has good intent and is concerned about the work.
- Find the nugget of wisdom in the feedback. To do this, ask yourself: *Is this person telling me to work on my skills? To improve the quality of the work I do? To help with efforts to increase productivity or service?* Then ask, *What actions can I take in any of these areas?*

2. Listen calmly and attentively.

- Get the complete picture so you can understand the context.
- Tune in fully. Your willingness to listen will help keep a positive tone.
- Try to keep any immediate negative reactions you may have in check.

3. Clarify the feedback.

- Ask questions to gather the information you need and to be certain you fully understand.

4. Acknowledge the other person's concerns.

- Show you value the other person's point of view.
- Point to common goals and objectives.
- Express your willingness to engage in mutual problem solving.

5. Avoid defending or over explaining.

- Correct any inaccuracies you hear, but try to avoid arguments.
- If necessary, take time out before responding in order to sort out what you want to say.

6. Welcome Suggestions.

- Focus on the future.
- Find out the most important thing you can do differently to better meet needs or standards.

7. Evaluate the feedback.

- Decide on what changes you can make and how to implement them.
- Let people know when you implement changes that stem from the feedback they gave you.