Good Group Handout

by Craig Freshley

# Feedback & Performance Evaluation

## Basics

- Give critical feedback on someone's performance only when the person is expecting it; either receiving feedback is one of the expectations of the role that they are in or they have specifically asked for it. Positive feedback is generally welcome at any time.
- Performance should only be evaluated against something, and the "something" should be understood and agreed to by the person being evaluated. It's not fair to evaluate people against standards that they don't know exist. It's not fair to assume that others should perform to standards that exist in our own heads but not explicitly shared and agreed to by others.

## Feedback

To evaluate and help improve someone's performance, have a conversation with them structured with the following questions[1]:

A. What was your plan? What did you intend to do?
B. What do you think worked well? What parts were particularly high quality?
C. When you do this again, what might you do differently?
D. How can I help you in the future? In what ways can others help you?

## Criticism

When performance standards are not being achieved by someone and criticism is necessary, try these steps:

1. Consider if it's a one-time thing or a pattern of behavior, and if it's a one-time thing perhaps it doesn't need to be addressed at all.
2. Discuss with the person what you saw. Don't ignore it when you see practice out of sync with agreed-upon standards or with organizational policy. Such a conversation may bring to light that they "simply didn't know better," or that they interpret the rule differently, or that a larger issue needs to be addressed. If that doesn't work,
3. Point out the consequences of the violation. "When you do _____, it affects others in the following ways: _____." If that doesn't work,
4. Impose a penalty; a hurt or burden just enough to tilt the scales of incentive toward compliance. If that doesn't work,
5. Consider severing the relationship and do so if you conclude it is best for the larger cause or larger group to which you each belong.

[1] R. Bruce Williams, More Than 50 Ways to Build Team Consensus

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