



A practical guide: Giving Effective Feedback

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Feedback is one of the most powerful tools available to managers. When delivered thoughtfully, it builds trust, boosts performance and strengthens team dynamics. Generation Z, in particular, values frequent, high-quality feedback—but all too often, it is overlooked, avoided or inadvertently mishandled.

This guide offers a practical, person-centred approach to delivering feedback effectively, especially when the conversation feels challenging.

1. Set Clear Expectations

Do not assume others instinctively know what is expected. Be explicit. Co-create tangible goals, clarify details, make adjustments when needed—and above all, instil confidence in the individual's ability to succeed.

2. Consider the Relationship

Constructive feedback lands best within an open, trusting relationship. Take a moment to reflect: What dynamics might influence how your message is received? By acknowledging these nuances, you can adapt your approach to foster genuine engagement.

3. Be Authentic and Encouraging

Let your natural communication style guide you but stay mindful of tone. Feedback should feel like support. Use everyday skills—empathy, active listening, clear summarising and directness. Do not wait for a formal review. Whether celebrating success or raising concerns, timely feedback makes all the difference.

4. Structure Problematic Feedback with Care

While positive feedback often flows easily—a simple “thank you” or “well done” can be enough—never underestimate the impact of an authentic, positive message to the individual or the team. Thoughtful positive feedback will reinforce what's working well and can spark energy in both the individual and team for the next challenge.

More problematic conversations benefit from a structured approach – one that allows views to be expressed while guiding the dialogue towards constructive outcomes. This framework guides the manager through all aspects of the conversation – allowing time for the individual's input:

Preparation

- ✓ Define your desired outcome
- ✓ Gather examples
- ✓ Prepare open questions

Control

- ✓ Choose the right moment
- ✓ Find a private, neutral setting

Contract

- ✓ Set the scene with a clear purpose, the agenda and timing – agree with the individual

Be Specific

- “What you did/said was...”
- “The impact on me/the team was...”
- “I felt...”
- “I think your intention may have been... (does that resonate?)”
- “If this happens again, I’d ask that...”
- “This will lead to...”

Summarise Feedback

- ✓ Confirm shared understanding

Agree Next Steps

- ✓ Clarify actions
- ✓ Offer support

Close with Clarity

- ✓ Recap the conversation
- ✓ Check understanding

5. Final Thought

Thoughtfully delivered feedback does more than refine performance—it uplifts. When done well, it builds confidence, sparks honest dialogue, and improves the quality of work. Keep it timely. Keep it authentic. Keep it fair.