

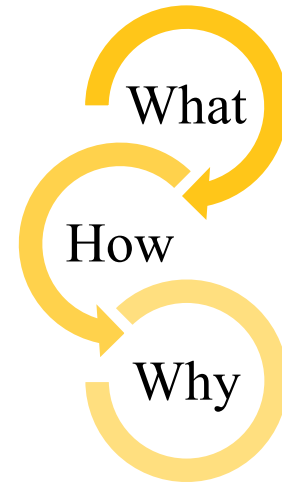


The What, How and Why of Giving Feedback

Giving regular, direct feedback is a cornerstone of performance and talent management. It is a simple action we can take to support the growth and development of our employees while also helping our team as a whole perform at a higher level.

One of the most important things we can do as leaders is set up an environment where direct feedback is regularly shared and welcomed. This means helping our team members know that they are in an environment of trust, their contribution is valued and feedback is a dialogue rather than a monologue.

It can be hard to know where to start to build this kind of environment. The fact is, sometimes not knowing where to begin can be one of the reasons why managers may delay feedback or stumble while delivering feedback. A simple way to plan, deliver and increase specificity of feedback is to remember the prompts **What**, **How**, and **Why**.



Planning Feedback

What - As you are thinking about the feedback you want to give to your team member, begin by considering what results you are going to expect as a result of the feedback? What would you like to be different? How will you know that a change has been made? How do you plan on following up if there are no changes in behavior or results at work? Understanding the results you expect by giving the feedback and being prepared to explain those results to the person you are giving feedback to can clarify what you will share during the feedback session as well as make clear your expectations to your team member.

What kind of results are you expecting because you gave feedback to your team member?

How - How do you plan on delivering the feedback? There are times when a quick email or phone call can be great, while at other times it is important to sit down and talk about the performance you want to address. The best way to consider how you plan on delivering feedback is to think about the urgency you need to correct an issue. A more urgent issue might necessitate a quick phone call with a follow-up conversation, while a less urgent issue might be able to wait until your next 1:1 conversation. As a general rule, it's better to praise in public and criticize in private.



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How do you plan on delivering the feedback? What's the urgency of the issue?

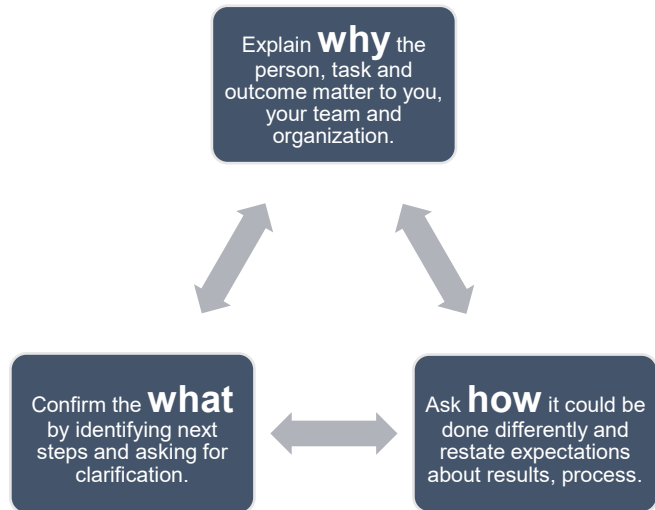
Why - Why are you giving your team member the feedback in the first place? Everyone makes mistakes or misses the mark sometimes. Why are you giving feedback on this particular issue? Your team member likely would like to know, and this is an opportunity to provide context. If you take time to identify why this issue is important to you and communicate why you would like the team member to make the change, it can help the team member understand your perspective. Think about impact on others, delivering quality customer service, solving problems proactively, etc.

Why are you providing this feedback?

Delivering Feedback

Why - At the beginning of your conversation, you have an opportunity to connect with your team member by highlighting their value to your team as well as the importance of their contribution. This might also be where you share why the change in performance or behavior is important to you, your team and organization.

How - Sometimes, it is ok to invite dialogue with your team member about how they think they might have accomplished the task differently or what got in the way. You can also ask what they don't know about the situation that could inform how they approached the issue at hand. These questions don't change the outcome, but fairly allow your team member to share their side of the issue. As you are having this conversation, remember to end this part of the discussion by restating your expectations clearly.





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What - Confirm your understanding of any next steps – it might be your team member coming back to you with a new plan of action, a follow up conversation in a week or a set time to check in about progress on this change. Confirming your understanding makes clear your expectations. This is also a great time to check for understanding. There are times where we can leave a feedback session believing we are clear but realize later our message was misheard. It is best to address this before it becomes a problem by checking for clarification.

Providing Clear, Direct Feedback Worksheet

What went wrong?

Be specific! Explain what isn't working and give an example.

How would you like to accomplish it in the future?

Is this an opportunity to problem solve together, or do you have a specific expectation to be met?

Why is it important to correct?

What was the impact of this behavior or mistake? Explain the context as best as possible.