



Giving and Receiving Effective Feedback: Tips & Common Pitfalls

Feedback conversations can be **challenging**. Here are some tips to guide you through a feedback conversation, as well as some common pitfalls to avoid.

Criticism vs. Feedback

(Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 1 – Intentional Leaders, LLC)

Avoid using the terms **criticism** and **feedback** interchangeably to **avoid confusion** and **misunderstanding**.

- ❑ **Criticism:** Is (by definition) **judgmental** and **condescending**. There is no way to make criticism “constructive.”
- ❑ **Feedback:** Is **providing information** (insights, observations, examples) used to **improve performance**. This comes from a place of clear intentions and strong values.



Most Common Pitfalls of Feedback

(What are Some Common Feedback Pitfalls and How Can You Avoid Them? – LinkedIn)

Providing **actionable feedback** is difficult – even with good intentions and support.

This might not come naturally and if we don’t practice, we can develop feedback practices that can have a negative impact. Here are some **common feedback pitfalls**:



Action	Impact(s)
Being vague or general	This does not tell the recipient what they did well, what they need to improve, or how they can do it.
Inconsistent or contradictory	This might leave the recipient puzzled, defensive, and unsure what to do .
One-way communication	This can make the recipient feel disrespected, bored, or overwhelmed. It can also prevent the feedback from being understood, accepted, or applied , as the recipient may not agree , may have a different perspective , or may need more clarification .
Untimely or infrequent	Untimely – waiting too long to give feedback. Infrequent – giving feedback only once a year or giving feedback only when something goes wrong. These can make the recipient feel ignored, unappreciated, or surprised .
Not using trauma-informed supervision strategies	Lack of psychological safety and no element of choice felt by recipient.

Use Assertive Communication

(How to Use Assertive Communication – Verywell Mind)

Assertive communication involves:

- Stating your feelings and needs
- Being clear and direct
- Being respectful of others

This helps ensure that your feedback is **communicated clearly**, while also not **belittling or dismissing other people's thoughts, feelings, or opinions**.



Want to Learn More About Feedback?

This is the **second resource out of three** that can help you on your feedback growth journey. Continue scrolling to learn about receiving feedback.