



"To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others."

~ Tony Robbins

Session Objectives:

1. Avoid 3 common feedback pitfalls that create defensiveness and resistance
2. Understand how mindset affects giving and receiving of feedback
3. Learn the key elements of assertive communication

What is your greatest feedback challenge?

3 Most Common Pitfalls

1. Unclear _____
2. Ineffective _____ &/or _____
3. _____ communication

FEEDBACK: MINDSET & PRACTICES

Criticism Versus Feedback

"Constructive criticism" is NOT a helpful way to think about providing feedback. Criticism is, by definition, *judgmental and condescending*. There is no way to make criticism "constructive."

Feedback, rather, is providing information (insights, observations, examples) used to *improve performance*. It comes from a place of clear intentions and strong values.

As you consider providing feedback, coach yourself first! Think about what is bothering, troubling and or concerning you and be clear on your intentions. This starts with a mindset of assertiveness.





Being Assertive

Assertiveness is a **social skill that relies heavily on effective communication while simultaneously respecting the thoughts and wishes of others.**



Consider something you'd like to say to someone you work with, but you are unsure of how to say it:



Common Blocks and Challenges

1. We don't know what we _____
2. We're unsure of our emotions
3. We may feel our _____ don't matter
4. We want to be liked at all costs; worried about _____
5. We become flustered, not _____ effectively
6. Or have experienced excessive _____ in the past
7. We're scared of saying the wrong thing
8. We fear _____
9. Or are afraid of what people will think

~ Richard Banks, Author

Assertive Rights

Being assertive goes beyond our language. It means understanding our rights as human beings. It means feeling empowered to think, feel, speak, and act in ways that are authentic and transparent, while being respectful to others.

Review the following statements about your rights. Consider how comfortable you are asserting them and place a checkmark in the appropriate column, using the following scale:

1 = Very Uncomfortable 2 = Uncomfortable 3 = Comfortable 4 = Very Comfortable

I have the right to:		1	2	3	4
1.	Respect and dignity				
2.	Change my mind without justification				
3.	Judge my own thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors				



Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 1



4.	Make my own decisions and deal with the ramifications of them				
5.	Be illogical or irrational				
6.	Say "no" (reject requests) to others without justification or guilt				
7.	Feel all my emotions and express them appropriately				
8.	Say, "I don't know"				
9.	Say, "I don't care"				
10.	Disagree with others; I am entitled to my own opinions				
11.	Ask questions when I don't understand regardless of the audience or situation				
12.	Feel proud of my accomplishments, achievements, and successes				
13.	Ask for what I want, knowing others can say "no"				
14.	Feel good about myself, my actions and my life				
15.	Not offer excuses or explanations for my actions				
16.	Feel happy and be happy				
17.	Set my own priorities				
18.	Take the time I need before I act, respond, or make a decision				
19.	Be independent of others' approval				
20.	Be alone				

OPTIONAL: Change Your Non-Assertive Belief

1. Identify a non-assertive belief that creates negative consequences, particularly when providing feedback to someone:
2. Where does this belief come from?
3. What negative consequences does this belief cause to you (or others)?
4. What is a new belief that will allow you to be more assertive?





ASSESSMENT: Explore Your Communication Style

Based on the Compendium of Questionnaires and Inventories, Sarah Cook; HRD Press, Inc.

Instructions: Use the scale below to rate each statement. Circle the number that best represents your behavior at work. There are no right or wrong answers.

4 = Most always 3 = Often 2 = Seldom 1 = Hardly ever

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. When I am not happy about a situation, I drop hints to other people about my feelings. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. If I realize the person to whom I am speaking is not listening, I stop talking. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. When someone does not agree with what I'm saying, I raise my voice to make my point. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. I don't always feel it is my place to share my opinion or perspective when I disagree. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. I feel embarrassed when someone compliments me. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. I express my opinion to others in an honest & direct way when it is appropriate to do so. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. I share my feelings to help others understand my perspective. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. I like to be in control of the situation. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. If I don't agree with a task that I have been given, I procrastinate in doing it. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Even if I haven't told them directly, people can tell from my cues that I am upset or angry. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. I am not afraid to be rude to other people. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |



Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 1



- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 12. I am confident in negotiating with a request that I cannot meet. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. I use humor or sarcasm to make a point. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. I prefer to comply with the majority decision, even if it's not convenient for me. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. I believe I have the right to say "no" to other people's requests. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. If someone else is wrong, I tell them so. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Scoring

Transfer the score you have given to each statement on the appropriate line below. Then total each column.

2. _____	1. _____	3. _____	6. _____
4. _____	9. _____	8. _____	7. _____
5. _____	10. _____	11. _____	12. _____
14. _____	13. _____	16. _____	15. _____
Totals: _____	_____	_____	_____
Passive	Passive Aggressive	Aggressive	Assertive

Communication Styles Overview

	Passive	Passive Aggressive	Aggressive	Assertive
Defined	Involves avoiding conflict, expressing oneself indirectly, and often putting others' needs ahead of one's own.	Involves expressing negative feelings indirectly, often through sarcasm, backhanded compliments, or nonverbal cues.	Is characterized by expressing one's needs and opinions at the expense of others, often in a confrontational and dominating manner.	Involves expressing one's thoughts, feelings, and needs openly and honestly while respecting the rights and opinions of others.



Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 1



Character-istics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty expressing thoughts and feelings. • Avoidance of confrontation. • Tendency to agree with others to avoid conflict. • May lead to unmet personal needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect expression of anger or frustration. • Difficulty confronting issues directly. • Sarcasm and subtle criticism. • Unwillingness to express needs openly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insistence on one's own viewpoint. • Lack of consideration for others' feelings. • Tendency to blame and criticize. • Interrupting and dominating conversations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and direct expression of ideas. • Confidence in expressing one's needs and opinions. • Active listening to others. • Respectful and considerate of others' perspectives.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It's not a big deal; we can do it your way." • "I guess I'm okay with whatever everyone else wants." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Oh, great job on the project. I didn't know perfection was possible." • "I guess I'll just do everything myself since no one else seems to care." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "My way is the only right way to handle this situation." • "You never understand what I'm saying; it's like talking to a wall." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I feel uncomfortable with the way this project is progressing, and I'd like to discuss possible improvements." • "I appreciate your input, but I have a different viewpoint that I'd like to share."

Use Assertive Communication

= Equal rights, direct, respectful, aligned words/tone/body language

- Use _____
 - I want...
 - I think...
 - I need...
 - I expect...
- Use _____ as opposed to subjective one
- Make _____ and avoid vague directives
- Express your _____ honestly, without being dramatic, avoid exaggerated statements
 - I feel _____ because _____





ACTIVITY: Change the Language

Prior to giving feedback, we want to ensure we are clear on what we want, need, expect or feel. This allows us to provide our perspective in a direct, respectful and helpful manner. This also encourages dialogue—which is valuable for behavior change.

1. My boss is a micromanager.
2. You're just so unreliable in completing projects and meeting deadlines.
3. Fred is a problem, and no one is addressing it.
4. I guess I'll just finish the project myself, no one on my team is stepping up.
5. My manager just ignores my requests for more resources, citing "budget" constraints.
6. You can't talk to our customers that way.
7. I want to collaborate with other leaders, but everyone around here just works in their own little silo.

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

~ Nelson Mandela



RESOURCE: Should I speak up?

Consider a situation in which you wanted to speak up and provide feedback, but didn't. Then answer the following questions.

- What do you care about...values, principles, facts, perspectives that you wanted to share (i.e., what was the gap between what you wanted and what occurred)?
 - My Want?
 - A Need?
 - An Expectation?
- How did you feel at that moment?
- What are the consequences to you or to others if you don't speak up?



- How could you communicate the message from an "I" point of view? With facts?

Receive Feedback Gracefully

13 Ways We Deflect

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Play _____ | 8. Attack |
| 2. Take _____ | 9. _____ |
| 3. Minimize | 10. Deflect |
| 4. _____ | 11. Invalidate |
| 5. Avoid | 12. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 13. Exaggerate |
| 7. Counter | |

Circle the ones that may affect you.

Our "Threat" Response: SCARF

The following are areas that cause a "threat" response in our brain. (Research by David Rock)

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| S _____ | R _____ |
| C _____ | F _____ |
| A _____ | |

Examine Your Mindset

Mindset #1



Identify an area in which you are right:





A Cautionary Tale

- Know that when individuals assess their own mindset, they have a tendency to _____ that they are open, and _____ the times they are _____.
- When individuals assess the mindset of others, they have a tendency to _____ the times they are _____ and _____ the times they are _____.

3 Types of Closed Mindedness

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Open Mindset Reality Check:

Reinforce your openness

- Ask others for their _____ of your openness
- Notice when you are feeling _____, examine the facts
- Consider your mental _____
- Examine your _____ habits

Mindset #2: Have you ever...?

- Thought...“This is who I am, I can’t really change?”
- Said, “I’m not good at [fill-in-the-blank] so why spend time on it?”
- Lost interest in a task if it didn’t come naturally to you?
- Felt embarrassed to admit to a mistake?
- Stuck with something familiar when faced with a choice to learn a new approach?
- Felt like you need to “look good” to others?
- Given excuses or placed blame rather than accepting ownership (e.g., not enough time/resources &/or help)?
- Felt like you needed to prove your intelligence, talent or superiority?





Shifting to Growth Application

What is one area in which you have a fixed mindset about yourself, your skills, knowledge or abilities?

Where did that belief come from?

What 3 micro actions could strengthen your abilities in this area?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What can you tell yourself that is a more growth-oriented mindset?

Strategies for Growth

- Notice others with a growth mindset
- Seek out little wins
- Focus on micro habits, small changes & practices
- Engage in positive self talk: "I'm learning...." "I'm becoming..." "I'm not there yet."
- Redefine genius associated with hard work
- Disassociate criticism from failure
- See challenges like weight training
- Become realistic about learning something new

Check several you'd like to remember.





What to do Instead: Be Graceful and Composed





Notice your _____



Seek to _____; ask



Express _____

Tips to Breathe (aka take a Pause)

- Breathing brings oxygen to your brain. It allows you time to bring your thoughts and emotions to the surface.
- When you're experiencing strong emotions, being calm, collaborative and focused on problem solving is extremely challenging.
- Pauses can be seconds, minutes, or a day; if you need time to process--take ownership over the timeframe; set a time to follow up.
- Breathing and pausing allows you to respond rather than react. This is a choice that must be made deliberately.

Notice Your Thoughts

- ⇒ Be an observer of your thoughts and reactions when others provide feedback.
- ⇒ Negative emotions are caused by your thoughts.
- ⇒ Remember the SCARF model and examine what might be triggering a threat response.
- ⇒ Be open about your fears (if possible) and/or understand yourself what you are making the feedback "mean" about you.
- ⇒ Recognize if or when you go into "self-criticism mode" (aka beating yourself up over mistakes and/or actions).

Seek to Understand

- Remain calm.



- Try to separate the content from the messenger and/or the way the message was delivered. *Find the nugget of truth or learning.*
- Avoid reacting defensively and/or attempting to rationalize your actions.
- Ask questions to understand.
- Press for details or examples (in a non-defensive manner).



Express Gratitude

Feedback is a gift and those that can give and receive it have the strongest and most trusting relationships with others. Be graceful and grateful for the opportunity to learn.

Or when you don't know what to say...

Here are some phrases to say when you're caught off guard:

- "Thank you for sharing your point of view. Let me process this for a bit."
- "That's an interesting perspective. Tell me more."
- "I appreciate you sharing your thoughts with me."
- "I didn't realize that. Thank you for letting me know."



My **Action Plan** to strengthen my ability to give and receive feedback is:

- 1.
- 2.

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