

Feedback

Caren M. Stalburg, MD MA
Clinical Assistant Professor
Obstetrics and Gynecology and Medical Education



Unless otherwise noted, this material is made available under the terms of the
Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike-3.0 License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

Intended Learning Outcomes

- Understand the purpose of formal feedback in health professions education
- Describe effective techniques for providing useful feedback

Suboptimal Feedback

- This would not be a good example of constructive feedback, even if it is of the type many of us give and/or receive?!
- Watch Paul Parducci's "Nightmare Boss" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKRRkPrM01s>

Why we all love feedback....

1. We have no idea how to give it
2. We have no time to provide it
3. It “feels” bad
4. It seems critical, not supportive
5. No one likes it

SO, what to do???

What's the purpose of feedback???

- Summative = Evaluation
 - Grading
- Formative
 - Improve performance
 - Correct errors
 - Stimulate growth and development

Principles for useful feedback

- Clarify good performances
- Facilitate the development of reflection/self-assessment
- Deliver high quality information to learners about their learning
- Encourage teacher and peer dialogue around learning
- Encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
- Provide opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
- Provide information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, *Studies in Higher Education*, 2006

Think of it as a dialogue

- Understand your learner's needs
 - Have them identify areas where they need guidance
 - What are their expectations for the encounter
 - “I need to work on getting the head out”
- Provide multiple perspectives
 - Include the patient
 - Peer-feedback
- Foster the learner's own self-reflection/assessment

When and where??

- Written or Verbal
 - Individualized
 - Team-based ‘debriefs’
- Time
- Place
- Privacy
- Interpersonal dynamics
 - Defensiveness
 - Anger
 - Frustration

Best practices for feedback

- **Understandable:** descriptive language
- **Selective:** learner can do something about it
- **Specific:** use examples from learner's work
- **Timely:** so as to inform next submission/
performance
- **Contextualized:** reference ILOs or assessment
criteria

Best practices for feedback

- **Nonjudgmental:** descriptive language
- **Balanced:** point out both positives and negatives
- **Forward Looking:** suggestions for future assignments
- **Transferable:** focus on processes, skills, and self-regulatory abilities

Descriptive Language

- **Descriptive language reflects events**
 - “you had too much tension on the knot”
 - “you used yes/no questions rather than open-ended ones”
- **Not “interpretive”**
 - Interpretive language assigns values
 - “you *seemed* a little *confused*”
- **Examples of unhelpful comments**
 - “you are doing really well”
 - “you need to improve your knowledge base”
 - “at times you come across as being disorganized; probably just because you’re rushed”

An example of well-provided feedback

- Coaching video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmzFjidd4sk>

- ❖ What did the coach do well?
- ❖ How did he deliver the information?
- ❖ Was he general or specific?
- ❖ Supportive or critical?

Coaching with constructive criticism

- Provided immediate feedback to the group
- Included both positives and negatives
- Used “I” language as well as “we”
- Gave corrective suggestions and the reason
 - “eyes up”
- Asked the Quarterback for his assessment first

Works well

- Establish climate of trust and support
- Invite learner's assessment first
- Timely and Private
- Supportive
- Specific
- First hand knowledge
- Focus on objective (observable) behavior
- Descriptive, non-judgmental language
- Include positives and negatives
- LIMIT TO 2-3 POINTS
- End with an action plan

Faculty development

- Giving feedback is a learned skill
- Can be taught and practiced
- Encourage both positive and negative feedback
- Strategies to teach can include role plays, watching videos, sharing best practices, practice it!