



Providing Effective Feedback

Principal / School Leader Quick Guide

HOW DO I PROVIDE EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK?

Providing effective feedback is critical. Although there are inherent challenges for an evaluator, the ability to provide low-inference feedback will prove to have one of the most significant impacts an evaluator can make in his/her school building. Evaluators must train themselves to share non-judgmental observations with teachers in order to increase professional growth.

Effective feedback most often begins with the self-analysis of what was successful and what can be improved. Starting the feedback conversation

with the questions, "What did you think was effective in the lesson?" and "What did you feel could have made the lesson better?" is a useful

technique for engaging teachers in thinking about how to improve their practice.

As educational leaders, we want classrooms where teachers and students share a mutual desire for growth and clear learning targets. We expect teachers to use formative assessments to recognize students' strengths and identify supports needed for taking the next steps. We seek classrooms where there is an environment of trust and persistent feedback consistent with each student's level of development. These same expectations can be transferred into feedback criteria for staff members with the same high quality results.

"...Be descriptive and specific, so that I'm aware of what the observer is seeing and thinking – and what I can do to improve."

Carol Ann Tomlinson, ASCD
(The Evaluation of My Dreams;
November 2012; Vol. 70, No. 3)

IMPORTANT POINTS IN GIVING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK:

- Reference a goal:
 - Strive to connect feedback to learning, personal goals, and school goals.
 - Each evaluatee should have personal achievement goals in addition to the school wide instructional goals you have in place.
 - Feedback you give evaluatees should help them know if they are on track to meet goals or need to change course.
- Communicate clearly and considerately.
 - Use non-judgmental language
 - I notice...
 - I wonder...
 - What if?
 - How might?
- Use tangible and transparent feedback.
 - Utilize very specific examples and citations from the observation. Video cameras or audio recordings can be useful.
- Give actionable information.
 - Be very specific and concrete
 - Ensure feedback is useful.
 - Give feedback about what went right and what didn't work so improvement steps can be taken.
 - Don't be highly technical; be user-friendly.
- Use feedback in a timely and ongoing manner.
 - The sooner the feedback, the better!
 - Be certain teachers have time and opportunities to use feedback. (Quality feedback is most important in formative observations before the performance is "over.")
- Discuss progress.
 - Provide a description of current performance as well as a brief piece of tangible advice regarding the long-term goal.
- Be consistent.
 - Teachers need a common understanding of expectations and quality.
 - Use exemplars and discuss rubric criteria.
 - Ensure consistency in observation feedback among teachers.
- Ask open-ended questions to prompt further thinking.
 - Utilize questioning strategies with evaluatees to increase self-awareness and make the conversation more meaningful.