Effective Feedback: Giving Better Than What You Got
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What is Feedback?
1. “Information a system uses to make adjustments in reaching a goal” [Ende]
2. Intended to improve performance – in medicine, to sharpen clinical skills
   ● Provides a link between instruction and assessment
   ● Response to an event or occurrence, whether event is good or bad
3. Feedback ≠ Evaluation
   ● Feedback presents information, not judgment; it is formative in intent
   ● Evaluation is summative; a grade – to what extent a person did or did not meet a set of established goals
4. Without feedback, incorrect or ineffective behaviors unwittingly continue

Principles of Effective Feedback
1. Well timed and expected
   ● Set aside time for feedback and inform the learner well before it will occur
   ● Avoid situations that add additional stress for giver or receiver
     - When one is angry about issue to be improved
     - When one does not have all the facts about issues
     - Post-call as sleep deprivation or preoccupation diminishes effectiveness
2. Based on first-hand data or specific performances
   ● Use “I-messages” to convey ownership of information
   ● Any important aspect of learner’s overall job is worthy of inclusion as feedback
   ● If a subjective opinion about their performance, be sure to offer it as such
3. Focuses on the behavior, not the individual
   ● Offer an informed, objective appraisal of performance
   ● Identify clinical skills or actions the learner can work on and improve
4. Positive when deserved; negative to help learner improve
   ● Should encourage a learner to do better by offering unrecognized opportunities
   ● Do not confuse positive feedback with complimenting. Reinforce those behaviors you wish to solidify – “Catch ’em being good!”
   ● Negative feedback should not be perceived as critical of the individual or destructive to their self worth
Delivering the message

1. Be proactive – observe with feedback in mind; know the performance criteria

2. Begin session with learner's assessment of their own performance
   ● Use “Reflective Listening” to help learner reach her/his own conclusion

3. Offer feedback using the principles outlined

4. Provide time for mutual problem solving
   ● Be sure of the learner’s recognition of the problem
   ● Ask learner to offer solutions. Be prepared with your own possible solutions
   ● Negotiate a plan for resolution

5. Summarize the important issues and ensure mutual understanding exists
   ● Make a commitment to follow-up on feedback and proposed solution

The Two-Minute Drill --- Skipped the first part? Read this:
Bylund, C. Director, ACGME Outcome Project, New York-Presbyterian

1. Remember 6 characteristics of effective feedback:
   • Focus on specifics
   • Non-judgmental
   • Timely
   • Objective
   • Limited
   • Expected

2. Ask – Tell – Ask
   • Ask learners how they think they did/are doing
   • Tell learners what you observed
   • Ask learners how you can help them improve

Selected References

⇒ Ende J. Feedback in Medical Education. JAMA 250:6, 777-81, 12 Aug 83