

## Effective Feedback: Giving Better Than What You Got

STReME series, April 1, 2009

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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  
[http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/cere/web/ACGME/doc/Giving\\_Feedback.pdf](http://library.cpmc.columbia.edu/cere/web/ACGME/doc/Giving_Feedback.pdf)

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

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