Tips for giving and receiving feedback

Feedback refers to communication with colleagues about their performance or behaviour.

Feedback can be

Positive or constructive
It’s always possible to convey feedback with the intention of helping someone.

Formal or informal
Feedback can range from formal performance reviews to casual, informal comments after a meeting, for example.

Multi-directional
Communication should be given across all levels of staff in an organization - upwards, downwards and laterally.

What are the benefits of ongoing feedback?

Strong motivation
Motivation levels and morale tend to increase when staff get continual feedback.

Improved performance
Staff may put in extra effort when they feel recognized.

Problem-solving and learning increases
When communication is strong on a team, challenges that people face can be acknowledged and dealt with more quickly. A culture of learning and growth can thrive.

Giving Feedback

• Focus on the performance, not the performer
• Give equal weight to strengths and challenge
• Be specific: describe exactly what the person did
• Be polite, respectful, calm
• Use “I” statements instead of “you” statements
• Suggest alternative behaviours
• End on a positive note

Receiving Feedback

• Listen closely
Try to hear the feedback as constructive and helpful. Think of it as being delivered in the best interest of your development.

• Analyze the validity of the feedback
Ask yourself: Can you learn from the comments? Have heard similar feedback before? Does the person understand your work and know you well?

• Remember you have options in responding.
You can ask questions and gather more information or you can simply acknowledge the comments and give them some thought.