

From Julie Wright's Role of Feedback in Student-Center Coaching, Denver 2016

(adapted by Dina Macdonald July 2016)

- Feedback & Advice ~ What is the difference?
- How do I provide feedback in a way that moves instruction but also respects teachers?
- What are the steps for using strengths-based feedback?
- Wrap-up & Reflection

Feedback is a word we use unthinkingly and inaccurately. We smile at a student, say "good job!" and call it feedback. We write "B-" at the top of a paper and consider it feedback. We share a score on the state test with a student and his parents and consider it feedback. But feedback is something different. It is useful information about performance. It is not praise, it is not evaluation, it is not a number on a standardized test. So, true feedback is critical—perhaps the key element—in effective learning. No goal worth meeting is ever met without good feedback and opportunities to use it. ~Grant Wiggins

Feedback ~ helpful information that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance, product, etc. (Simple Definition from Merriam-Webster)

1. **Think about a time when you learned something new mathematically and received feedback - it can be a positive or negative experience:**
 - What might be some challenges you faced in this new learning?
 - How did the feedback push you toward improvement/development?
 - What was it about the feedback that made the biggest impact?



10 Key Take-aways from Feedback Literature	What are the qualities of effective feedback based on your reflection/experience you shared?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individualize feedback for the receiver 2. Offer specific, focused feedback 3. Keep feedback objective and nonjudgmental 4. Maintain a positive, compassionate focus during feedback and other communications 5. Give feedback sensitively, and within the confines of safe contexts and relationships 6. Make feedback regular and ongoing 7. Be consistent 8. Offer feedback in a timely manner 9. Follow up on feedback 10. Provide feedback recipients with opportunities to respond, reflect, and contribute 	

Excerpt from *What Is Feedback, Anyway?* By Grant Wiggins

The term *feedback* is often used to describe all kinds of comments made after the fact, including advice, praise, and evaluation. But none of these are feedback, strictly speaking.

Basically, feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal. I hit a tennis ball with the goal of keeping it in the court, and I see where it lands- in or out. I tell a joke with the goal of making people laugh, and I observe the audience's reaction—they laugh loudly or barely snicker. I teach a lesson with the goal of engaging students, and I see that some students have their eyes riveted on me while others are nodding off.

Here are some other examples of feedback:

- A friend tells me, "You know, when you put it that way and speak in that softer tone of voice, it makes me feel better."
- A reader comments on my short story, "The first few paragraphs kept my full attention. The scene painted was vivid and interesting. But then the dialogue became hard to follow; as a reader, I was confused about who was talking, and the sequence of actions was puzzling, so I became less engaged."
- A baseball coach tells me, "Each time you swung and missed, you raised your head as you swung so you didn't really have your eye on the ball. On the one you hit hard, you kept your head down and saw the ball."

Note the difference between these three examples and the first three I cited—the tennis stroke, the joke, and the student responses to teaching. In the first group, I only had to take note of the tangible effect of my actions, keeping my goals in mind. No one volunteered feedback, but there was still plenty of feedback to get and use. The second group of examples all involved the deliberate, explicit giving of feedback by other people.

Whether the feedback was in the observable effects or from other people, in every case the information received was not advice, nor was the performance evaluated. No one told me as a performer what to do differently or how "good" or "bad" my results were. (You might think that the reader of my writing was judging my work, but look at the words used again: She simply played back the effect my writing had on her as a reader.) Nor did any of the three people tell me what to do (which is what many people erroneously think feedback is—advice). Guidance would be premature; I first need to receive feedback on what I did or didn't do that would warrant such advice.

In all six cases, information was conveyed about the effects of my actions as related to a goal. The information did not include value judgments or recommendations on how to improve.

Decades of education research support the idea that by teaching *less* and providing *more* feedback, we can produce greater learning (see Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Hattie, 2008; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Compare the typical lecture-driven course, which often produces less-than-optimal learning, with the peer instruction model developed by Eric Mazur (2009) at Harvard. He hardly lectures at all to his 200 introductory physics students; instead, he gives them problems to think about individually and then discuss in small groups. This system, he writes, "provides frequent and continuous feedback (to both the students and the instructor) about the level of understanding of the subject being discussed" (p. 51), producing gains in both conceptual understanding of the subject and problem-solving skills. Less "teaching," more feedback equals better results.

- Goal-Referenced
- Tangible & Transparent
- Actionable
- User-Friendly (specific & personalized)
- Timely
- On-going
- Consistent

Strengths-Based Feedback

Steps for Strengths-Based Feedback	Coaching Move	Language
1. Clarify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare student evidence with the learning targets. Discuss the instructional moves that supported student learning. Reflect on how the lesson went, and discuss any questions that the teacher or coach may have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are the students doing? What did we do to make that happen? What might be some things you are wondering about the lesson?
2. Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate examples of students who are meeting the learning targets. Name the instructional moves that made an impact on student learning. Identify what the students are doing well, and who may not be meeting the learning targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Here's some evidence of student growth... Here's what may have gotten us there... Who are some specific students who nailed it? Who are we worried about?
3. Uncover Possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a future lessons based on the learning targets. Discuss teaching moves that may support student learning. Determine how learning will be scaffolded for those who are struggling or advanced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can we do next? How might this support student learning? How might be we differentiate?

<p>Step 1: Clarify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I noticed the students doing ____, tell me more about that? How did you plan for ____? What data did you use to make that decision? What steps did you take to get there? Do you think ____ was because of ____? 	<p>Step 2: Value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students really responded to ____. Look at how the students engaged in ____. ____ was really effective. You really thought about ____. I know you've been working on _____. It's starting to take shape. 	<p>Step 3: Uncover Possibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What might be some ways we will transfer what we saw to other situations? What might be some other possibilities? What might be some ways? We can try ____ or _____. What do you think? What might it look like if we tried ____? How might students respond if we ____?
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Which quote resonates with your journey? Jot down some thoughts...

“In my experience, the heart of valuable feedback is taking the ‘strengths perspective’. Viewing performance from the strengths perspective offers us the opportunity to examine our struggles in light of our capacities, talents, competencies, possibilities, visions, values, and hopes.” ~ Brene Brown

In *Daring Greatly*, Brene Brown writes, “...there’s no question that feedback may be one of the most difficult arenas to negotiate in our lives. We should remember, though, that victory is not getting good feedback, avoiding giving difficult feedback, or avoiding the need for feedback. Instead, it’s taking off the armor, showing up, and engaging.”

What are the implications for your Lead skills as you support a team of especially going forward?