

## Making Feedback Work

### Definitions of Feedback

- The return of information about the result of a process or activity; an evaluative response: the teacher *asked the students for feedback on the new curriculum*.
- The communication of responses and reactions to proposals and changes or to the findings of performance appraisals with the aim of enabling improvements to be made.
- Comments in the form of opinions about and reactions to something, intended to provide useful information for future decisions and development
- The act or practice of returning reactions to or information about a processor product, in order to evaluate or modify that process or product.

### Purpose of Feedback

- Examine attitudes, skills, and knowledge
- Provide an opportunity to improve performance
- Initiate and improve communication

### Basic Principles of Giving Feedback

- Ask permission or identify that you are giving feedback. Examples:
  - “I’d like to give you some feedback on that follow-up patient visit. Is that OK?”
  - “I’d like to provide some feedback on what I observed during my visit today.”
- Give feedback in a “feedback sandwich”
  - Start with a positive observation (“it was good that you...”)
  - Constructive critical observation or suggestion about how to improve
  - Second positive observation, summary statement
- Describe what you observed and be specific. State facts, not opinions, interpretations, or judgments.
- Use the first person: “I think”, “I saw”, “I noticed”
- Don’t be judgmental or use labels. Avoid words like “lazy”, “careless”, or “forgetful”.
- Don’t exaggerate. Avoid terms such as “you always” or “you never”.

- When making suggestions for improvement, use statements like “you may want to consider...”.
- Feedback should address what a person did, not your interpretation of his or her motivation or reason for it. Example that includes interpretation:
  - “You skipped several sections of the counseling script. I know you want to finish because it’s almost lunch time, but...”