

Working in a professional context involves numerous occasions when your work will be reviewed and commented on by colleagues and others. Such feedback can be useful in developing your judgement and mode of expression, but it can also undermine your confidence.

Reflect on your experience of giving and receiving feedback to identify what makes for effective communication, and review examples where feedback has led to improved outcomes (15%, 500 words or equivalent)

For feedback to be beneficial it needs to be communicated effectively and at the relevant time. This feedback can be divided into casual and formal feedback, where casual feedback concerns that particular piece of work and happens at the time, and formal feedback as part of an appraisal where performance for the past year is considered, or another such formal meeting. Buron and McDonald-Mann (2011, 12–13) state that feedback should follow the Specify, Behaviour, Impact (SBI) format to allow for feedback to be focuses and relevant.

Providing feedback at the wrong time, especially when an employee is new at that particular role, can end up with the employee and the manager having different expectations and can end with wasted time and therefore money. For example, a zooarchaeologist (JW) who started her first commercial role as a specialist with the company was not aware of the expectations the managers had for her and as such had not been formatting reports in the house-style nor was she using Zotero¹ for her references. The feedback received did conform to the SBI format but did not offer support for improvement or correction which would have prevented further mistakes down the line. Luckily, after receiving the feedback JW was proactive about improving and sought a meeting with her manager about how reports should be formatted and received one-on-one training about the house-style and Zotero. Feedback should be prompt when necessary to avoid additional mistakes; JW handled this situation appropriately by taking the feedback and acting upon it.

In terms of giving feedback, most of the feedback I have given has been casual and has been aimed at field archaeologists who have been seconded to post-ex. In this case I was responsible for showing them how to complete post-ex tasks such quantifying and preparing finds for specialists and archives. In this case I would talk them through what they needed to do, show them and then talk them through the steps while they do the task for the first time; during this time, I preferred subtle corrections if I could see they were doing or going to do something wrong, followed by a positive remark. If I hadn't noticed something being done incorrectly until later I would specify what had been done incorrectly and explain how it ought to be done and walk them through it again. Something I did not do, as described in (Buron and McDonald-Mann 2011, 12–15), was specify the impact this behaviour had on those who came next in the process, which I shall focus on the next time I need to provide feedback.

In conclusion, feedback is necessary in a workplace to let employees know their employers' expectations of them and allows for correction of mistakes that would need to be corrected later down the line saving the company time and money. But this feedback must be relevant

¹ A referencing software which had access to the company library and meant that all referencing across the company was in the same style

and those receiving the feedback must be made aware of the impact the mistakes has so they know how important it is not to make the mistake again, and most importantly, they must be given the opportunity and support to improve.

Total Word Count: 520

Bibliography:

Buron, R. J. and McDonald-Mann, D. (2011). *Giving Feedback to Subordinates*. Hoboken : John Wiley & Sons.