

“TEAM MANAGEMENT SKILL”

Lecture7.

**GIVE EFFECTIVELY INSTRUCTIONS AND FEEDBACK IN
ACCORDANCE WITH A GIVEN CONTEXT.**

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2.3. Give instructions and feedback

2.3.1 Key terms

Instruction

You often see the imperative form in instruction manuals or when someone tells you how to do something. There are often “sequencing” words to show the steps in the process. For example, “firstly”, “secondly” and “finally”.

Example: simple instructions to replace a light bulb:

Firstly, turn off the electricity.

Secondly, remove the light bulb.

Then, screw in the new light bulb.

Finally, turn the electricity on and switch on the light.

Feedback

Feedback is defined as a return of information about a result or the returned portion of a process. Employee feedback is any information exchanged by employees (formally or informally) regarding their performance, skills, or ability to work within a team. Both supervisors and peers may deliver feedback, and when done tactfully, the process can create a stronger, more harmonious workplace.

2.3.2. Giving instructions

a) Syntactic forms of instructions

Imperatives

Whenever a demand is expressed, it's an imperative sentence. It could also be instructions, requests, a wish or demands. Basically, anything you want to make happen can be expressed in what we call, imperative sentence. there's always a command in the imperative sentence.

Ex: . Please get out of the room! (Expressing a command)

. stop moving in class

✚ Interrogatives

Interrogative sentences as the name suggests, expresses interrogation or questions and naturally end in the question mark “?” Remember that these sentences have which, when, where, how and what in them.

Ex: When do you get off work?

✚ Declaratives

Declarative sentence simply declares a statement or an opinion. A declarative sentence has a neutral tone, meaning it ends with a period mark “.”(full-stop). Declarative sentences can describe facts, express opinions, make arguments, or otherwise give information.

Ex: Exercise is healthy.

Rukundo's favorite exercise is biking.

b) Tips on giving clear instructions

- ✚ ***Find out who your audience is:*** Knowing a bit about your audience will help you think about how best to give your instructions.
- ✚ ***Find out what people already know:*** They may have some starting knowledge already. Its better to get to know what your audience have in mind already, though you are going to provide instruction but they may have some prior knowledge
- ✚ ***Set the scene:*** Tell your audience what you are going to be talking about before you start giving the actual instructions. Explain why it is important to know what you are going to be describing.
- ✚ ***Use simple language:*** You may understand technical terms that you use every day in your job, but your audience may not. If you do have to use technical language, explain what it means.
- ✚ ***Speak slowly and clearly:*** Check that everyone can hear you. Use an interesting tone of voice. Vary your tone from time to time. Find out if anyone has a hearing or vision problem that would get in the way of their understanding.
- ✚ ***Follow a logical sequence:*** Give your instructions in the right order. ‘First....., then....., and lastly,’ People can only do one step at a time. A logical sequence will facilitate the right follow of the instruction provided.

2.3.3. Giving feedback

2.3.3.1. Types of feedback

a) Informal

This will be the most common type of feedback that occurs in the workplace. It can happen at any time, between anyone, and can be as effective and useful as unproductive and hurtful. This kind of feedback is usually very spontaneous and is often unprompted. Informal feedback can help to build a supportive working environment when it is shared in the right way.

This kind of feedback can vary greatly from a simple 'good job on that report' to something more substantive like showing someone a new way to do something. It is usually in verbal form.

b) Formal

This type of feedback is the most obvious and can take the form of something like an annual performance review. Formal feedback is typically arranged and can be pre-planned. These sessions give both the employer and the employee to openly discuss problem areas, things that are going well, open questions, and much more.

A formal feedback session at work may look at statistics and demonstrate actionable insights. The employee should know what the topics of conversation are going to be so that they can prepare. It is usually in written form.

For example: Each year a manager holds an annual performance review. This review aims to talk about the previous 12 months and plan for the next 12 months.

c) Formative

The goal of formative assessment is to monitor learners to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by supervisor or trainer to improve their system and by learners to improve their learning. Therefore, formative feedback is best given early in the process, and prior to summative assessments. Formative feedback helps learners to improve and prevent them from making the same mistakes again. In some cases, feedback is required before learners can progress, or feel capable of progressing to the next stage of the assessment. This may also take a form of informal feedback at the workplace.

d) Summative

The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate learners at the end of an instructional unit, by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Therefore, summative feedback consists of detailed comments that are related to specific aspects of their work, clearly explains how the evaluation was derived from the criteria provided and additional constructive comments on how the work could be improved. This may look as formal feedback as explained before.

2.3.3.2. Feedback models

a) The feedback Sandwich

The feedback sandwich starts and concludes with positive feedback, and what can be considered as the more critical feedback is “sandwiched” between the positive aspects. This feedback tool consists of three components:

- Begin with positive feedback.
- Then, introduce constructive or negative feedback; and
- Close with specific feedback that builds up the person’s trust and comfort.

The feedback sandwich aims to minimise any detrimental effect the negative feedback may have on the individual and ensures that the person is not discouraged

b) Chronological fashion feedback

Chronological fashion feedback focuses on reflecting observations chronologically, reiterating the events that occurred during the session back to the learner. For instance, an observer can go through a learning session and give feedback from beginning to the end.

Ex: *“The first thing you did really well when you entered the room was to introduce yourself to the patient. Then, you proceeded with physical examination without getting the patient’s consent for this and at that point, the patient looked distressed. It was after that when you explained what you would do and got their consent, and consequently, the patient was more relaxed during the rest of the physical examination.”*

c) Pendleton model

It is more learner centred, conversation based, and identifies an action plan or goals: “reflection for action”. The facilitator needs to check whether the learner wants and is ready for feedback. Then, the learner gives some background about what is being assessed and states what was done well. This aims to create a safe environment first by highlighting positives and consequently this prevents defensiveness. The facilitator then reinforces these positives, and the learner suggests what could be improved. The facilitator advises how this could be improved and a mutually agreed action plan is formed.

The main idea is to use open questions and give the learner the opportunity to think and reflect.

“What do you think went well?”

“What do you think could be done differently?”

“What could be further improved?”

“How can this be achieved?”

2.3.4. Giving effective feedback

Prioritize your ideas. Limit your feedback to the most important issues. Consider the feedback’s potential value to the receiver and how you would respond – could you act on the feedback? As well, too much feedback provided at a single time can be overwhelming to the recipient.

- Concentrate on the behaviour, not the person. One strategy is to open by stating the behaviour in question, then describing how you feel about it, and ending with what you want. This model enables you to avoid sounding accusatory by using “I” and focusing on behaviours, instead of assumed interpretations. Example: “I haven’t seen you in class in for a week. I’m worried that you are missing important information. Can we meet soon to discuss it?” Instead of: “You obviously don’t care about this course!”
- Balance the content. Use the “sandwich approach.” Begin by providing comments on specific strengths. This provides reinforcement and identifies the things the recipient should keep doing. Then identify specific areas of improvement and ways to make changes. Conclude with a positive comment. This model helps to bolster confidence and keep the weak areas in perspective. Example: “Your presentation was great. You made good eye

contact, and were well prepared. You were a little hard to hear at the back of the room, but with some practice you can overcome this. Keep up the good work!” Instead of: “You didn’t speak loudly enough. However, the presentation went well.”

- Be specific. Avoid general comments that may be of limited use to the receiver. Try to include examples to illustrate your statement. As well, offering alternatives rather than just giving advice allows the receiver to decide what to do with your feedback.
- Be realistic. Feedback should focus on what can be changed. It is useless and frustrating for recipients to get comments on something over which they have no control. Also, remember to avoid using the words “always” and “never.” People’s behaviour is rarely that consistent.
- Own the feedback. When offering evaluative comments, use the pronoun “I” rather than “they” or “one,” which would imply that your opinion is universally agreed on. Remember that feedback is merely your opinion.
- Be timely. Seek an appropriate time to communicate your feedback. Being prompt is key since feedback loses its impact if delayed too long. Delayed feedback can also cause feelings of guilt and resentment in the recipient if the opportunity for improvement has passed. As well, if your feedback is primarily negative, take time to prepare what you will say or write.
- Offer continuing support. Feedback should be a continuous process, not a one-time event. After offering feedback, make a conscious effort to follow up. Let recipients know you are available if they have questions, and, if appropriate, ask for another opportunity to provide more feedback in the future.

2.3.5. Tips on giving effective feedback

- ✚ Plan in advance.
- ✚ Give it promptly, right after the event
- ✚ Think about what you want to achieve
- ✚ Drive discussion accordingly
- ✚ Start gently and be specific
- ✚ Encourage self-reflection
- ✚ Be aware of nonverbal clues

2.3.6. Receiving feedback effectively

- Listen to the feedback given. This means not interrupting. Hear the person out, and listen to what they are really saying, not what you assume they will say. You can absorb more information if you are concentrating on listening and understanding rather than being defensive and focusing on your response.
- Be aware of your responses. Your body language and tone of voice often speak louder than words. Try to avoid putting up barriers. If you look distracted and bored, that sends a negative message as well. Attentiveness, on the other hand, indicates that you value what someone has to say and puts both of you at ease.
- Be open. This means being receptive to new ideas and different opinions. Often, there is more than one way of doing something and others may have a completely different viewpoint on a given topic. You may learn something worthwhile.
- Understand the message. Make sure you understand what is being said to you, especially before responding to the feedback. Ask questions for clarification if necessary. Listen actively by repeating key points so that you know you have interpreted the feedback correctly. In a group environment, ask for others' feedback before responding. As well, when possible, be explicit as to what kind of feedback you are seeking beforehand so you are not taken by surprise.
- Reflect and decide what to do. Assess the value of the feedback, the consequences of using it or ignoring it, and then decide what to do because of it. Your response is your choice. If you disagree with the feedback, consider asking for a second opinion from someone else.
- Follow up. There are many ways to follow up on feedback. Sometimes, your follow-up will simply involve implementing the suggestions given to you. In other situations, you might want to set up another meeting to discuss the feedback or to re-submit the revised work.

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