HR

Home   Software   Services   Blog   HR FAQs   About Us   1300 717 721

1300 717 721   Login   Search...   🔍

The Importance of Feedback in the Workplace

The Importance of Feedback in the Workplace

May 4, 2018   In Employee Relations   By HR Central   ⏻   Employees,Feedback,Workplace Relations

Feedback that is constructive is vital to employees' ongoing development. Feedback clarifies expectations, helps people learn from their mistakes and builds confidence. Positive feedback is easy – it's not hard to find the right words to tell someone they've done a good job, or congratulate them on meeting a sales target. When things are going well it can be easy to become complacent about giving praise but stopping and smelling

the roses is important to build employee confidence and encourage a culture in which employees nurture and support one another.

However, giving negative feedback is not so easy. It's human nature to put off difficult conversations or to try and soften the blow however the problem with doing this is that the issue is not addressed, the problem compounds and eventually you find yourself dealing with a much bigger problem.

Like all things, practice makes perfect when it comes to providing feedback. Feedback should be spontaneous and regular. For more serious issues a formal meeting is appropriate or a discussion as part of performance review, but building feedback into your day to day encounters with employees is a great way to develop rapport, and encourage an environment in which people feel comfortable to give and receive feedback.

Constructive feedback is one of the best things managers can provide to their employees. When delivered properly it can, reinforce positive behavior, correct any negative performance and ensure a strong culture remains in your team.

Some managers, however, are reluctant to provide constructive feedback, thinking that it may turn negative or be perceived as a harsh criticism by the employee.

HR Central regular Contributor Sarah Tidy revisits previous HR Central Blogs on how to provide constructive feedback – without the anxiety to both giver and givee!

How to provide constructive feedback without the anxiety!

Act immediately

Feedback is best given shortly after you've observed the behavior or event. Don't wait weeks or even months to pull someone up after a bad incident or observed behaviour. Depending on the severity, perhaps it can wait until your weekly meeting to broach the subject. However, if the incident was more severe, address it as soon as possible. Make sure you are properly prepared beforehand so you can provide solid, actionable feedback. The same goes for positive reinforcement – praise your employee's work in a timely manner. Productive feedback means giving it frequently.

Pick the right time and place to provide the feedback

Picking the right time and place is essential in providing feedback to your employee. How serious is the matter? Do you need to schedule a formal meeting to discuss the issue or can you have an informal chat in the tearoom? Wherever you decide to talk, make sure it's private so you can have an open and honest conversation without worrying about others

pivate so you can have an open and honest conversation without worrying about others overhearing you.

Be specific and use examples

No one likes receiving vague feedback. For example telling an employee he has lousy people skills is neither constructive nor effective. Make sure you prepare some specific examples of the behavior or incident you observed. Explain the effects it has had on you and/or the team. By providing clear suggestions as to how the employee could do things differently will help foster a positive relationship with the employee for the future.

Avoid negative language

Avoid using negative phrases that discourage and exclude, such as "You shouldn't …," and "I don't think…" when speaking. This kind of language puts people on the defensive. This may cause the employee to shut down, ignoring and disregarding your feedback. Always try to be encouraging and use phrases that start with "Maybe you could try…", or "Have you considered doing…?"

Use positive language

When we receive feedback using positive language, it stimulates our brain and leaves us open to taking on new ways of learning. Try to give at least as much positive feedback as you do negative. Providing only negative feedback can turn on the threat response in people's minds and defensiveness may set in. You don't need to avoid negative feedback altogether- many times you have to address negative behaviour when giving feedback- just make sure you follow it up with a suggested solution or outcome. It has to be clear from the start that you're providing this feedback to help the other person – not to hurt or embarrass them.

The Importance of Feedback in the Workplace
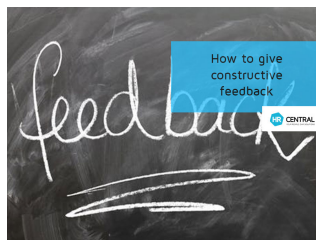
Feedback that is constructive is vital to employees' ongoing development. Feedback clarifies expectations, helps people learn from their mistakes and builds confidence. Positive feedback is easy – it's not hard to find the right words to tell someone they've done a good job, or congratulate them on meeting a sales target. When things are going … Continue reading

W HR Central