

Giving feedback – remember it is about improving the situation



Bite size tip number 1 !

- **Make it a positive process** and experience. Before giving feedback, remind yourself why you are doing it. The purpose is to improve the situation or performance. You won't accomplish that by being harsh, critical or offensive.
- **Be timely**, the closer to the event you address the issue, the better. If you tell John a week later, his inner voice, will be saying, 'wow she is really not happy as he has kept this for a week'.
- The exception is if the situation is highly emotional. Here, wait until everyone has **calmed down before you engage in feedback**. Don't get worked up and risk saying something you will regret later.

Time Management – Bite size tips number 2 !

Being great at managing your time is the best way to start the year.

If you can get things done efficiently and prioritize your work – you feel so much more accomplished and much less stressed.

- **“Take a breath”** and work out what you want to focus on for the year – then make your focuses part of your daily plan.
- **Set 5 annual focuses** – i.e., the areas you want to focus on for the year (they can change/evolve); your daily tasks should fit into your focuses, for example:

Focus No 1 – learn everyday

1. Get new tips from ngen inspiring speakers
2. Improve Excel skills

Focus No 2 – Contribute to team

1. Create a client database

Focus No 3 – Add value

1. Competitive report – find a new insight
2. Right a summary of new mobile trends

Focus No 4 – Have fun

1. Organise a social team event
2. Go to the gym

Focus No 5 – Profile

1. Write an ngen blog
2. Provide support for presentations

Administration tasks

1. Expenses
2. timesheet

- You'll feel **more successful** as the year goes on. If you take a breath and plan each day, week, year, it will be more rewarding than racing through the year, being busy, but not necessarily getting what you wanted to get done.
- **Schedule in the big jobs in your diary** - (the ones we procrastinate on). Research shows if you know **when and where** – then it will get done. E.g., Fri week one – part 1 complete, Fri week two – part 2 complete, Fri week three project ready for review, Fri week four edit and ready to present. You'll be much less stressed!
- Read this book, 18 minutes by Peter Bregman, it has great tips for improving your Time Management.



Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communications and information exchange.

Bite size tip number 3 !

- By using the right questions in a particular situation, you can improve a whole range of communications skills
- You can gather better information and learn more
- You can build stronger relationships, manage people more effectively and help others to learn too.
- Give the person you're questioning enough time to respond. They may need to thinking time before they answer, so don't just interpret a pause as a "No comment" and plow on.
- Skilful questioning needs to be matched by careful listening so that you understand what people really mean with their answers.



Questions are a powerful way of:

- **Learning:** Ask open and closed questions, and use probing questioning.
- **Relationship building:** People generally respond positively if you ask about what they do or enquire about their opinions. If you do this in an affirmative way "Tell me what you like best about working here", you will help to build and maintain an open dialogue.
- **Managing and coaching:** Here, rhetorical and leading questions are useful too. They can help get people to reflect and to commit to courses of action that you've suggested: "Wouldn't it be great to gain some further qualifications?"
- **Avoiding misunderstandings:** Use probing questions to seek clarification, particularly when the consequences are significant. And to make sure you avoid jumping to conclusions.

Open questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"
- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

Closed questions are good for:

- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"
- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"

Probing Questions

Use questions that include the word "exactly" to probe further: "What exactly do you mean by fast-track?", "Who, exactly, wanted this report?"

Probing questions are good for:

- Gaining clarification to ensure you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly; and
- Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something.

Leading Questions

Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. Note that leading questions tend to be closed.

Leading questions are good for:

- Getting the answer you want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice.
- Closing a sale: "If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree a price?"

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are even more powerful if you use a string of them. "Isn't that a great display? Doesn't it use space really well? Wouldn't you love to have a display like that for our products?"

Rhetorical questions are good for:

- Engaging the listener