

# HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK: TECHNIQUES

Most of the various techniques for giving feedback follow a three-step process:

1. Give a description of the situation or context—this is an important piece of information as it frames the discussion.
2. State the observation—this is the action the person took.
3. Impart the change or result—this is the outcome (for better or for worse). The outcome would affect the person giving the feedback, the team, the customer(s), and/or the organization.

Here is where the feedback process ends. For feedback to be effective, one or more of the following would occur next: coaching, expectation setting, action planning, and reflecting. Below are examples of each.

## COACHING

Coaching from managers, peers, and/or professional coach practitioners involves asking questions to assess whether the receiver understood the message and to find solutions.

- *“What is your reaction to this information?”*
- *“How does this information help or hinder your goal attainment?”*
- *“What would you like to do next?”*

If you are unsure of the person’s goals or intentions, discovery questions can come before the feedback. For example:

- *“How do you want to show up in meetings?”*

## SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Setting expectations is telling the receiver of the feedback what you want to see moving forward. It could simply be a continuation of what has occurred or an alternative method for handling the situation.

- *“Based on what I observed, I recommend that you do X.”*
- *“When I was in your situation, I did Y and it helped me.”*
- *“As your manager, I would like to see Z going forward.”*

## ACTION PLANNING

Action planning is a dialogue between the feedback giver(s) and receiver to find solutions based on the feedback.

- *“During our call with Tracey yesterday, I noticed you spent most of the time working on your laptop and didn’t contribute much to the conversation. As a result, we did not cover your part of the agenda, and we need to schedule another call.”*
- Question: *“Did you need your laptop during these meetings?”*
- Response: *“No. But if I leave it behind, I won’t be able to answer my peers’ questions.”*
- Follow-up Question: *“What if you were to set “office hours” for any non-urgent questions?”*
- Response: *“That could work. I’ll talk to the team tomorrow and try it out for the next week.”*

## REFLECTING

Reflecting is giving the feedback receiver time to individually consider the feedback and find solutions.

- *“After considering that meeting, I think I should leave my laptop at my desk the next time we call Tracey so that I’m not distracted.”*