

## Employee Feedback (Part 1)



Employee feedback is an incredibly powerful tool. It has the ability to grow and develop the people of your organization, improve the levels of trust and communication, and strengthen bonds between employees and managers. But unfortunately, feedback is often ignored or omitted entirely in an effort to avoid discomfort.

Here are eight tips to help managers and leaders give employee feedback that's frequent, effective, and will help to get you the outcome you need.

### **1. Avoid giving unsolicited advice**

Only a third of people believe that the feedback they receive is helpful. That's because more often than not, it's unsolicited, which can create an immense amount of stress for the person receiving it.

If your direct report doesn't ask for feedback directly, make a point to ask them if, when and how they'd like to receive it.

By doing this, you can give the control to your employee and increase the likelihood that they will act on the feedback you share. Empower your people to control the feedback agenda by helping them feel confident and comfortable enough to ask for it

### **2. Be specific**

Employee feedback should be solutions oriented, crystal clear, and to the point. If your intention is to offer corrective feedback, general comments, like "Your work needs to be improved" or "I wasn't very impressed with those reports.

You have to do better than that” can leave your employee confused and in the dark as to what aspect of their work needs to be corrected.

Be specific on what you’d like your employee to do and offer guidance on how they can apply the feedback. For example, “I noticed you were late on your last two deadlines. I’d like to work with you on your time management to ensure you’re not committing to too much and completing each of your tasks in a timely manner.”

*Pro tip: Don’t get stuck on corrective feedback. Remember to also share positive feedback with your employees so they know the things they should continue doing.*

### **3. Come with a deep level of empathy**

Delivering feedback that exposes a wide gap in self-knowledge demands an extra measure of sensitivity. Like ripping off a scab, the sting of discovering such a profound gap often elicits strong emotions that can easily be confused as defensiveness. If you’re someone who bores the brunt of your colleague’s difficult behavior, be sure you can set those frustrations aside in favor of the empathy you’ll need for this conversation. Before you even approach your colleague, be prepared to give them the space they’ll need to feel shocked upon receiving your feedback. Remember not to interpret it as intensified resistance to your message,



### **4. Don’t wait for Traditional Review Period**

Employee feedback immediately following an event has the greatest impact on performance. Additionally, engagement peaks when employees receive feedback on a regular weekly basis. If issues are left unaddressed, they may multiply by a domino effect. So, by the time the quarterly performance review comes around, you’ll be confronted with a host of issues that could have been avoided if mentioned earlier.

Another flaw in saving feedback for the performance review process is that problems will be forgotten and the time for offering valuable feedback will have passed. Daily or weekly feedback will help you avoid the recency bias (which overemphasizes recent work and occurs too infrequently to align with the employee’s workflow) and can make tracking and analyzing a colleague’s work much easier for all parties involved.

See Article Part 2 for points 5 through 8. Remember that Pinnacle’s HR team is available for assistance at (210) 344-2088.