

Metro North Health CULTURE & ENGAGEMENT



Effective feedback principles

Time: Approximately 30 - 45 minutes.

Materials needed: Coloured pens or markers, two flipcharts or virtual whiteboard, timer.

- *Optional:* Props or fidget items to create a relaxed environment.

Participants: Team or department.

Values in Action: Integrity, High Performance, Teamwork, Respect.

Outcomes: Builds a shared understanding of effective feedback and boosts skills in giving and receiving feedback with clarity, empathy, and accountability.

Purpose

This activity helps teams reflect on what makes feedback effective, practice giving it, and commit to shared principles. Whether you're online or face-to-face, this session makes feedback more approachable and practical, reinforcing trust, collaboration, and learning.

How to run this activity

Step 1: Introduction and purpose (10 mins)

Begin by explaining:

“Feedback is how we grow — as individuals and as a team. Today, we'll explore what effective feedback looks like, reflect on past experiences, and define how we want to give and receive feedback moving forward.”

Pair discussion (5–10 minutes):

Ask participants to pair up and discuss:

- A time they received helpful feedback
- A time feedback felt unhelpful or harmful

For virtual sessions, use breakout rooms

Facilitator tip: Create a psychologically safe space. Let people know that sharing honestly (without naming names) helps build collective insight.

Step 2: Group share and brainstorming (15 minutes)

Draw two columns on a flipchart:

What makes feedback ineffective	What makes feedback effective
<i>Example: "Vague"</i>	<i>Example: Specific</i>

Ask teams to share examples from their pair discussions and capture themes (vague vs. specific, judgemental vs constructive, timely vs delayed etc.)

Example contributions:

- **Ineffective:** *"You never listen."*
- **Effective:** *"I noticed in today's meeting that you paused to ask others for input, it really helped the discussion."*

Facilitator tip: Model good feedback throughout the session by using the principles discussed.

Step 3: Define feedback principles (15 minutes)

Group insights into a list of agreed-upon **"Team Feedback Principles."**

Suggested principles (to offer if not raised):

- Use *"I"* statements.
- Focus on behaviours, not the person.
- Be clear, timely, and specific.
- Ask permission before giving feedback.
- Offer feedback with empathy.
- Aim for improvement, not criticism.

Write each principle on the flipchart and check for agreement from the group.

Step 4: Commit to action (10 minutes)

Ask: *"How can we make these principles part of our everyday culture?"*

Ideas to prompt action:

- Weekly feedback check-ins
- Set up buddy pairs for feedback practice
- Encourage asking for feedback after meetings
- Appoint a "feedback champion" to keep the momentum going

Ask for volunteers to take responsibility for follow-up actions.

Step 5: Closing and reflection (5 minutes)

Invite final reflections:

- *“What was one insight that surprised you?”*
- *“What feedback habit will you commit to changing?”*

Wrap up by reaffirming:

“Feedback doesn’t need to be scary or awkward — when done right, it helps us grow, connect, and perform at our best.”

Key takeaways

- **Trust and learning thrive** when feedback is respectful and clear
- **Giving and receiving feedback is a skill** — and practice builds confidence
- **A shared feedback culture** leads to stronger communication, collaboration, and performance