



COMMUNICATION

Achieving Constructive Feedback

Effective communication is at the heart of interpersonal relationships and success in the performance of daily activities. In the field of health and safety it enables the exchange of information on a task, provides training on the use of equipment, allows learning about the risks of injury, etc.

FAVOURABLE EFFECTS ON THE TEAM

DEMONSTRATING YOUR CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY OF ANOTHER OFTEN PRODUCES AN EFFECT THAT PROMOTES CONFIDENCE AND MUTUAL SUPPORT WITHIN THE WORK TEAM.

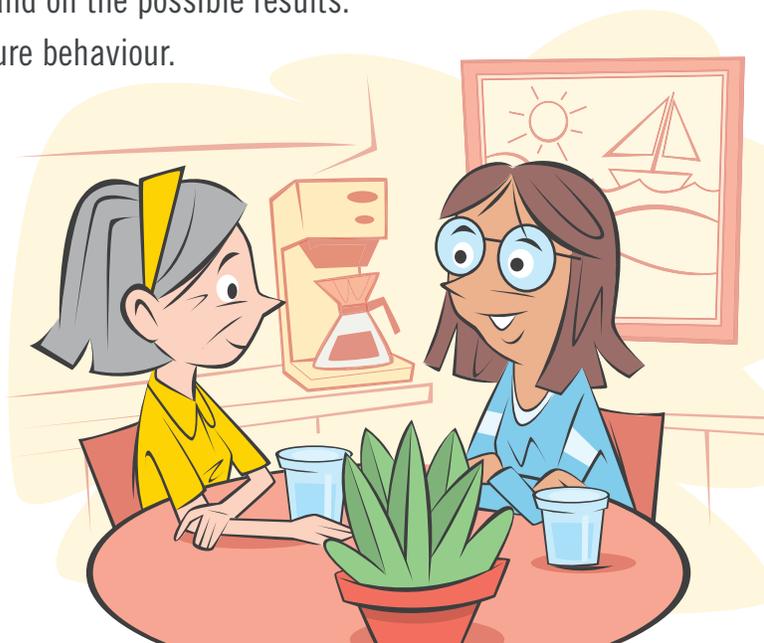
When addressing a colleague following observations on a task, while indicating your perceptions of the danger he risks, this communication can also act as an excellent prevention tool. Not only should you do this, you must do it skilfully!

Constructive Feedback

Also called “Constructive Criticism”, this consists of communicating advice on observed behaviour and on the possible results.

It is used to change future behaviour.

Constructive feedback is given objectively, using facts with the intent to improve rather than judge. To obtain the expected effect you must respect the six criteria for constructive feedback.



6 criteria of constructive feedback

1

Observation

To be properly accepted, constructive feedback should refer to what you have observed. It must be supported by facts.

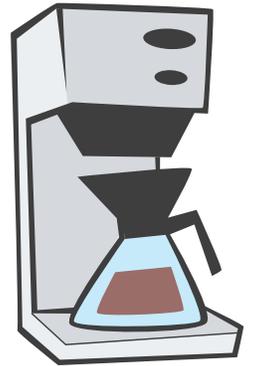
FOR EXAMPLE: “Isabelle, I noticed that when lifting Mrs. Gilbert, your knees were straight instead of flexed...” The opposite of this is a personal judgement that could be expressed as follows: “What you’re doing is wrong, you’re going to hurt yourself!”.

2

The Right Time

Your feedback should be given as soon as possible following the observation. The image you have in mind will be closer to reality. You will be able to explain things more easily and the other person will have a better recall of the situation and the context.

Also make sure your colleague is receptive to listening to what you have to communicate. This assumes that he is not busy performing tasks or concerned about something. He has to be physically and mentally present to receive your comments.



3

A Place Conducive to Listening

You need to choose a suitable place to provide feedback. The conversation should unfold in a calm manner and with discretion.

4

Intention Towards the Other Person

Before voicing an opinion, ask yourself, “What is my goal that I hope to achieve through this feedback?” If you are well intentioned and show concern for the person’s safety, the words you choose and your tone will reflect this.

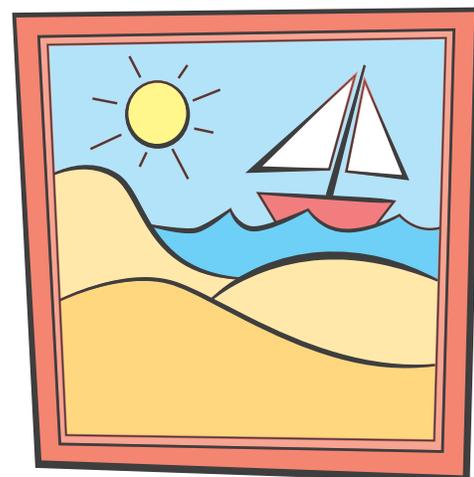
On the other hand, if your objective is mainly to find fault or show the other person their lack of understanding of safe lifting methods, for example, it will be picked up in your language.

5

The Right Words and the Right Tone

When it comes to your opinion and your advice, address the other person using “I” statements.

FOR EXAMPLE: “I’ve observed that... I fear for... I believe that...”
A welcoming, respectful tone of voice encourages listening and openness on the part of the other person.



6

Welcoming Body Language

Facial expression, gesture, look and posture all speak to your true intentions. A caring attitude leads to attentiveness and concern on the part of the other person. There should be a match between your verbal and non-verbal language.

FOR EXAMPLE: “Nancy, I noticed that following your care of Mrs. Victor, for several minutes you didn’t wash your hands. Let me assure you I’m not trying to find fault. I’ve also done it when trying to work quickly. But I really regretted it. We are taking unnecessary risks for ourselves and for our clients. What do you think about it?” If you give feedback without taking care to phrase it constructively, it might go like this: “Nancy, you didn’t take the time to wash your hands this morning after seeing a client, even though we’ve told you often!”

**GOOD
TO
KNOW!**

TO PREPARE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK, PLAN TO:

FORMULATE IN A RESPECTFUL WAY;

MAKE IT USEFUL WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF IMPROVING AN ACTIVITY OR A CONCRETE TASK;

SAY IT ACCURATELY BY REFERRING TO FACTS AND OBSERVATIONS THAT ARE CLEAR AND NON-JUDGMENTAL;

TRANSMIT IT WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME.

What Negatively Impacts Communication

Even when striving to apply the six criteria for constructive feedback, it is still possible to encounter a less than cooperative reaction from a colleague. This response can be explained by various factors.

- **Fatigue:** one's physical and psychological state can influence their perception of situations.
- **Period of change:** the person can be going through upsetting situations that can compromise their openness to discussion.
- **Ability to listen:** a person who is worried or concerned with feelings of being overwhelmed by numerous tasks will have difficulty giving you their attention.
- **Difficult relationship:** if your relationship with the person is strained, she might look upon your feedback as judgemental, even though this is not your intention.



The Other's Reaction

In spite of everything, the other person may be closed to constructive feedback. You can choose how to intervene and with what goal in mind. The other person's reaction is genuinely their own. However, should you refrain from intervening if you observe a risk of injury? No, not if you really believe in prevention and in the importance of caring of one towards others. Intervening on behalf of others is only an indication of these values.

TO KNOW MORE

Asstsas.qc.ca/saine-communication