

# BEYOND CRITICISM

## How to give feedback

THIS RESOURCE WAS PREPARED FOR VIASPORT BRITISH COLUMBIA BY NOW WHAT FACILITATION, A TEAM OF FACILITATORS WHO HAVE EXTENSIVE EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE AND MEETING FACILITATION.

# BEYOND CRITICISM – HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK

Giving and receiving feedback can be an art. Feedback is also a crucial part of developing a team with a positive culture that works at its optimal level. Have you ever had someone ask you, “Can I give you some constructive criticism?” For many of us, this approach causes us to go on the defensive and closes us off to being able to hear and incorporate new information. By normalizing the feedback process and framing it as an opportunity for growth, you will create an environment that encourages risk-taking and creativity.

## HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK

**Feedback is most impactful when done on a regular basis and in a balanced way.**

1. Ask if you can provide feedback. “Do you have 10 minutes to talk about how that last meeting/practice/game went?”
2. Feedback should always be balanced. Start with “What I Appreciated” and follow with “What I see as Opportunities for Improvement.”
3. Stick with the facts. Name specifically what you saw or heard. Cut out any subjective words.
4. Add an impact statement. How did the action impact a positive or negative outcome? Examples: “I noticed when you made the extra pass, we were able to drop the defender.”
  - “You said you would arrive at the game early to help set up but you arrived 10 minutes late. I felt overwhelmed getting everything ready on my own.”
  - “Thank you for sending the board minutes right after the meeting. It helped me organize my to-do list for the week.”
  - “I didn’t hear back from you on Monday with your available dates and have had to postpone booking the meeting room.”
5. End with an open-ended question: “How do you see it? What are your thoughts?”

# HOW TO RECEIVE FEEDBACK

Great team members ask each other for feedback. This establishes your commitment to improvement.

- Be curious, not defensive.
- Ask for specific examples.
- Take time to reflect & follow-up if necessary.

**Tip:** Make feedback a regular part of every meeting, practice, and interaction. The more you do it, the more it is normalized and appreciated. We all like to grow and do better, and this process helps this to happen at an individual and team level.

## EXERCISE

**Think about a project or initiative that you have recently been involved in.**

Using the five feedback steps above, think about how you might give yourself feedback.

1. **What did you appreciate?**
2. **Where are there opportunities for improvement?**

Now do the same for a colleague, teammate.

1. **What did you appreciate?**
2. **Where are there opportunities for improvement?**
3. **What are the barriers that you face in providing feedback to yourself and others?**
4. **What impact does this have?**
5. **How will you incorporate a feedback process on your team?**