

The No Hard Feelings Guide to:

GIVING FEEDBACK

How can you give feedback that doesn't pack such a painful punch? Great feedback helps the receiver move past their knee-jerk, defensive reaction ("I've worked so hard, how could there be anything left to improve?") and onto determination and action ("I'm a work in progress, I'm glad I know what I need to do to get better"). Here are our three rules for giving feedback that makes the receiver feel good (or at least less bad):

1. Focus on specific behavior. Vague criticism is useless and makes it easy for the receiver to fall down the "I did a bad thing, therefore I am bad" rabbit hole. Consider these two statements:

Your email could have been better.

The second sentence in your email restated the first and should be deleted.

The first is ambiguous and demoralizing. The second points to a specific issue, which makes it harder to take personally, and gives the recipient a clear directive on how to improve.

2. Make it about bridging the gap. Don't simply criticize— suggest a different way of doing things and explain how it will benefit the person. Wharton professor Cade Massey recommends positioning feedback as bridging the gap: identify where you want the other person to be, give them clear advice on how to get there, and (most importantly) emphasize you believe they have the ability to bridge that gap. Try starting with this sentence: "I'm giving you these comments because I have very high expectations of you and I'm confident you can reach them."

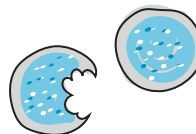
3. Remember: how you say it matters. The best way to avoid hurting the other person's feelings is to ask how and when they prefer to receive feedback. Don't treat others how you want to be treated, treat them how they want to be treated. "Whether your advice comes from a place of caring is not measured at your mouth but at the other person's ear," Kim Scott, author of Radical Candor, told us.

TYPES OF
FEEDBACK



OREO

TWO POSITIVE
THOUGHTS AROUND ONE
NEGATIVE THOUGHT



SUGAR

OVERLY SWEET
AND ULTIMATELY
UNFULFILLING



UNCOOKED

COMPLETELY
UNFILTERED

No Hard Feelings teaches you how to figure out which emotions to toss, which to keep, and which to express in order to be successful at work. Available everywhere books are sold on January 22.

www.lizandmollie.com