



# Building Trust by Providing Effective Feedback

To be an effective leader, you should build open and trusting relationships with your employees. Your employees have to trust you and believe you are genuinely invested in their personal success, not just what they can do for you. Likewise, you have to trust your employees to listen and to value your input.

One way to help build this type of relationship is through giving effective, constructive feedback. **Effective feedback has 4 steps:**

1. Give specific information about what is wrong (or right)
2. State corrective (or reinforcing) feedback
3. Present action plan to solve problem and move forward
4. Provide positive expectation regarding the employee's work in the future

## Tips for Building Trust through Feedback:

1. **Control the exchange.** Choose a neutral, private setting. Allot enough time in your schedule for the discussion. Be mindful of your own tone and body language. You want to put forth a calm, supportive manner, rather than an anxious or aggressive one.
2. **Address the behavior, not the person.** When giving feedback, focus on a specific behavior that you want to change. Do not attack the person by addressing his/her character traits or personality.
3. **Be relevant.** Focus on current behavior or situation, rather than dwelling on the past.
4. **Be specific.** Provide the facts about the behavior including when, where, what, etc. Avoid generalizations, opinions, and judgments.
5. **Be timely.** Give feedback as soon as you can when the behavior occurs. The longer you wait to address it, the longer you are condoning that behavior. Also, perceptions and memories change with time, and the longer you wait, the harder it will be to come to an agreement.
6. **Be honest.** Giving constructive feedback can be uncomfortable, but it is necessary. You do yourself and your employees a disservice if you do not evaluate their performance honestly.
7. **Listen to your employee.** Feedback should be a two-way communication. Don't shut down your employee's response. Encourage your employee to give his/her viewpoint, and use active listening techniques to respond appropriately.