



MENTORCONNECT

Effective Communication

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK



ABOUT MENTORCONNECT

[The MentorConnect program](#) brings together skilled immigrants and established professionals in occupation-specific mentoring relationships. Skilled immigrants entering the program have the education, experience, and language skills to succeed in the Canadian labour market. However, they may not understand the Canadian context of their profession, workplace culture, or know how to translate their skill sets. Often what they need are the local insights and access to professional networks that a one-on-one connection with a local mentor can offer.

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Effective feedback is a cornerstone of successful mentorship programs, enabling you to grow and develop their skills through constructive guidance. Two popular models for delivering feedback are the "Plus EBI" and "SBI" models. These frameworks provide structured approaches to giving feedback that balance positive reinforcement with actionable suggestions for improvement. This document explains the Plus EBI model as one of the most effective feedback methods, highlighting the key components, purposes, and examples to illustrate the practical application.

WHAT IS PLUS EBI FEEDBACK?¹

The "Plus, EBI" feedback model is an enhanced approach to giving feedback, designed to offer more comprehensive and constructive input to individuals.

+ - PLUS

- **Description:**

This is where the person giving feedback (giver) acknowledges the positive aspects of the receiver's performance or behavior. It is an opportunity to highlight what went well, what was effective, or what the receiver did right.

- **Purpose:**

Recognizing and reinforcing positive aspects of the receiver's performance can boost motivation and confidence, making them more receptive to constructive feedback.

Example:

"I really appreciate your thorough research on the project; it provided valuable insights and contributed significantly to our team's understanding of the market."

EB - Even Better

- **Description:**

This part of the feedback model focuses on areas where there is room for improvement. It should be specific and actionable, providing clear guidance on how the receiver can enhance their performance or behavior.

- **Purpose:**

Identifying areas for improvement helps the receiver understand what they need to work on and how they can grow in their roles.

Example:

"To make your presentations even better, consider using more visuals and real-world examples. This will make complex concepts more accessible to our audience."

¹ Adapted from tamsenwebber.com.

I - If

- **Description:**

This aspect addresses the potential consequences or benefits of making the suggested improvements. It encourages the receiver to think about the impact of their actions and the potential outcomes.

- **Purpose:**

By exploring the potential outcomes, the receiver can better understand why the suggested changes are beneficial and may be more motivated to implement them.

Example:

"If you incorporate more visuals and examples in your presentations, it's likely to result in higher engagement from the audience and a clearer understanding of the material."

The "Plus EBI" feedback model combines positive reinforcement (Plus) with constructive feedback (Even Better) and helps the receiver see the potential benefits (If) of making improvements. This approach is particularly effective for fostering growth and development because it balances praise with guidance for improvement and offers a clear perspective on the impact of one's actions.

QUOTE:

'Without the benefit of someone providing feedback, this model can give mentors and mentees a framework to give themselves feedback'.

**Provide Feedback PLUS EBI - Practice**

Practise identifying and listing the strong demonstration of good communication skills, or other positive behaviours during an interaction. Then specify what behaviours or thought process if applied, would make the interaction even better.

Confidence Builder**PLUS:**

- List 1-3 things that went well.

- List 1-3 things that you did well

Competence Builder**EVEN BETTER IF:**

- List 1-3 behaviours/thought process that if applied would make the interaction/situation even better.

**Remember to:**

- Use clear and concise language.
- Be specific and provide relevant details.
- Avoid making assumptions or judgments.

- Focus on observable behaviors and their impact on the situation or context.

Both the "Plus, EBI" and "SBI" feedback models offer structured and effective methods for providing feedback. The "Plus, EBI" model balances positive reinforcement with constructive suggestions and potential benefits, making it highly motivational. The "SBI" model provides clear, context-specific feedback that focuses on observable behaviors and their impacts, ensuring the feedback is relevant and actionable. Using these models can enhance the quality of feedback in mentorship programs, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and open communication.

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Difficult conversations or uncomfortable situations can arise during the mentoring journey with your mentor or mentee. Handling these conversations with skill and sensitivity is crucial to maintaining a positive and productive mentorship experience. This guide will help you navigate challenging discussions, manage objections, receive critical feedback, and handle sensitive topics effectively.



How to Manage Challenging Situations?

Effective communication, empathy, and courage are key to resolving challenging issues that could happen throughout mentorship. Here are some tips for you to handle these situations:

Prepare Yourself:

- **Gather your thoughts:** Collect your ideas and think through what you want to say.
- **Manage your emotions:** Stay calm and composed.
- **Stay calm:** Maintain a steady and relaxed demeanor.

Choose the Right Time and Place:

- **Timing is crucial:** Find an appropriate moment for the conversation.
- **Setting:** Find a private and comfortable setting where you will be uninterrupted.

Active Listening:

- **Pay attention:** Listen carefully to what your mentee is saying without planning your response while they are speaking.

Stay Non-Judgmental:

- **Avoid making assumptions or jumping to a conclusion.**

Use "I" Statements:

- **Express feelings:** For example, "I noticed that..." or "I felt..."

Be Specific:

- **Provide concrete examples** of the behavior or situation that is causing the discomfort.

Ask Open-Ended Questions:

- **Encourage Discussion:** You can ask probing questions that will allow more than one-word answers.

Explore Solutions Together:

- **Brainstorm:** Collaborate with your mentee to find possible solutions.

Focus on Common Goals:

- **Shared objectives:** Work towards common goals, you can resolve the issue more efficiently.

Stay Solution-Oriented:

- **Avoid assigning blame:** Focus on finding solutions rather than assigning blame.

Set Clear Expectations:

- **Clarify expectations** and boundaries within the mentoring relationship to prevent similar issues in the future.

Follow Up:

- **Check in** with your mentee to ensure you agree.

Seek Assistance if Needed:

- **Seek help** from program team members.



How to Manage Objections?

Managing objections effectively is crucial for maintaining a constructive dialogue. Here's how to handle them:

Understand the Problem:

- **Listen Actively:** Pay close attention to feedback and try to understand the other person's perspective without interrupting or getting defensive.

Acknowledge:

- **Show Gratitude:** Express appreciation for the feedback, showing that you value their opinion.

Question:

- **Clarify:** Ask questions to ensure you fully understand the feedback and address the right issues.

Confirm:

- **Restate:** Paraphrase the feedback in your own words to confirm your understanding.

Respond:

- **Stay Calm:** Respond to the feedback in a composed and thoughtful manner.

Check:

- **Follow-Up:** Ensure the conversation has been resolved sufficiently or that there is a clear action plan moving forward.



Perceiving Critical Feedback

Receiving feedback, especially when it's critical, can be challenging. Here's how to handle it effectively:

Stay Open-Minded:

- **Be Receptive:** Be open to hearing what someone has to say without becoming defensive.

Listen Actively:

- **Understand Fully:** Listen carefully and ensure you understand the feedback.

Ask for Clarification:

- **Seek Details:** If something is unclear, ask for specific examples or further explanation.

Reflect:

- **Consider Feedback:** Take time to reflect on the feedback before responding.

Thank Your Mentor:

- **Show Appreciation:** Express gratitude for the feedback, regardless of its nature.

Plan for Improvement:

- **Take Action:** Develop a plan to address feedback and improve.

Follow Up:

- **Check In:** Follow up to discuss your progress and any further steps.

**Navigating Sensitive Topics**

Sensitive topics can be particularly difficult to address. Use the following tips manage them:

Approach with Sensitivity:

- **Be Tactful:** Approach sensitive topics with care and respect.

Be Honest:

- **Maintain Transparency:** Be truthful and direct, but also considerate of your mentor's feelings.

Focus on Solutions:

- **Find Common Ground:** Work together to find solutions that benefit both parties.

Seek Support if Needed:

- **Get Help:** If the topic is too sensitive or complex, seek support from program team members or other trusted individuals.

By following these guidelines, you can navigate difficult conversations with confidence and effectiveness, ensuring that your mentoring relationship remains positive and productive. Effective communication, empathy, and a solution-oriented mindset are key to overcoming challenges and building a strong, supportive mentoring partnership.