

7 TIPS:

**FOR GIVING
CONSTRUCTIVE
FEEDBACK**

BY ZARIR MERWANJI

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Looking to improve your team's performance? Here are some tips you can follow whenever you're offering constructive feedback

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Strong relationships, and the trust that comes with them, are the keys to guiding your team to perform at its highest capacity.

Create opportunities for your team members to discover their true capabilities, and seek out ways to gradually raise the bar so that their talents and skills can grow.

MAKE A GAME PLAN

In a notebook or on your smartphone, map out the next five years for your team or company.

List out the goals you hope to achieve—whether they're monetary or driven by impact—and consider how the expectations you have for your team or future team might shift as you grow.

1.

FOCUS ON THE ISSUE

“Be critical of someone’s actions without being critical of them as a person.” As you’re walking a team member through an issue, keep the conversation focused on their areas of improvement and opportunity rather than consistently ragging on the ways they misstepped.

2.

BE SPECIFIC

Give specific feedback focused on one challenge rather than addressing multiple incidents at once. Don’t be vague—if you’re hoping a team member can improve in a particular area, have an example prepared of a time when a project or meeting didn’t go the way you might have hoped.

3.

AVOID THE SANDWICH METHOD

A feedback sandwich is when you sneak in a negative statement between two positive ones in order to soften the blow. Contrary to popular belief, this is an ineffective technique. It will often cause the recipient to focus solely on their accolades, and your constructive criticism can get lost.

4.

BE SINCERE & COMPASSIONATE

Whether you're giving positive comments or negative criticism, effective feedback must be earnest. Pay attention to your tone of voice and body language, and strive for wording that indicates compassion and empathy. "The number-one thing you can do with a player or an associate is say to them, 'I understand what you're going through'."

5.

ALLOW A RESPONSE

Good feedback operates best as a two-way street. Your team member will feel comforted by knowing you're also open to feedback, so ask them what they think about the issue you've brought up.

6.

RECOMMEND A SOLUTION

Once your team member has had a chance to respond, offer up specific examples of the next steps they can take to solve the issue.

7.

PROVIDE A SUMMARY

To end the feedback session, give your team member a brief summary of the discussion in order to make sure they properly received the message. You can also encourage them to check in with you at any time to follow up on anything that may have been unclear.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zarir Merwanji is a serial entrepreneur, a sales and leadership keynote speaker and serves as a Leadership Training Manager at the corporate headquarters in Atlanta for the worlds largest home improvement retailer, The Home Depot.

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