

7 Keys to Effective Feedback

“Feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal.”

- *Grant Wiggins*

Effective feedback meets the following criteria:



- Goal-referenced
- Tangible and transparent
- Actionable
- User-friendly
- Timely
- Ongoing
- Consistent

Feedback for Learning: Seven Keys to Effective Feedback

The following is based on the work of Grant Wiggins, 2012

What is feedback?

Feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal. Feedback is not advice, nor is it a judgement of the performance.

Example (General):

Feedback after an observation is based on the efforts and effects toward reaching a goal. The information does not include value judgements or recommendations on how to improve. Information conveyed about the effects of actions related to a goal is feedback.

◆ **Goal Referenced:**

Effective feedback requires that a person has a goal.

Example (from education/general):

The educator needs to be specific about the goal of a task or lesson.

◆ **Tangible and Transparent:**

Feedback not only involves a clear goal, it is also provides tangible results related to the goal.

Example (from childhood):

A child learns to walk, hold a spoon and understand certain words for food as they continue to perfect the task.

◆ **Actionable:**

Concrete, specific, and useful. Effective observers know to give actionable feedback about what went right is as important as feedback about what didn't work.

Example (from the classroom):

"I counted inattentive behavior in 12/25 students. The behaviors included texting under desks, passing notes, and making eye contact with other students."
"Many students were bored in class." This is a judgement not an observation.

◆ **User-Friendly:**

Feedback that is too technical or too much information will overwhelm many and most especially novice teachers.

Example (teacher):

Giving feedback about one thing, will likely yield immediate and noticeable improvement.

◆ **Timely:**

Good feedback is "timely" rather than "immediate".

Example (teacher):

Take the time to prepare your feedback. An immature criticism or unhelpful praise could do more to create confusion and destroy trust. What is a "good job note" purpose? Confirm or work to set a timely meeting to discuss your feedback.

◆ **Ongoing:**

The more feedback received in real time, the better an individual's ultimate performance will be.

Example (gaming):

This is how all highly successful computer games work, Angry Birds, Tetris or Guitar Hero – feedback is both timely and ongoing.

◆ **Consistent:**

Feedback is stable, accurate and trustworthy.

Example (student):

Scoring from highly descriptive rubrics supported by anchor product/performance such as anchor papers for writing or rubrics for standard based grading that clearly differentiate requirements by level.