

SPEAK LIKE A BOSS LIBRARY FEEDBACK PLANNER FOR LEADERS



Feedback is a response to an action or communication attempt. It helps your staff know what they are doing well, so they can continue doing these things. It also helps your people know what they need to change, so that they can improve, change and grow. The way you frame and deliver feedback has a huge impact on how your people will respond to it.

Experienced leaders understand the importance of making feedback concrete, specific and non-judgmental. Doing this enables staff to understand exactly what behaviour they need to change and how they should behave in future. It also minimises the risk that you will receive a defensive reaction to feedback. Here are some tips on how to frame and deliver feedback at work.

The WISH formula is a tool for raising issues without inflaming getting team members offside. It is structured in four parts.

Part one: when

The opening phrase of the WISH statement describes – in objective language – a problem. It's important to keep this part of your WISH statement specific and non-judgmental. One way to do this is to focus on describing things you can see or hear.

Part two: it causes

In the second section of the WISH statement, you need to describe the impact of the problem on you or other parties involved in the situation. You can use the following phrases to start this part of the WISH statement:

- It causes issues such as...
- It causes the team to look...
- It causes problems because...
- It causes clients/other team members problems because...
- It causes disruption to...

Part three: so...

This segment of the WISH statement describes the change you would like to see or hear in future. Once again, it is important to focus on describing observable behaviours.

- So, I'd like us to discuss...
- So, I'd like to talk through...

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- So, we need to decide...
- So, we need to solve the problem of.....

Part four: how can we do this?

The final part of the WISH statement invites collaboration. This is an important step, because it ensures commitment to any solutions you develop together. Remember that a negotiation is a dialogue – and this section of your WISH statement makes this clear.

WISH feedback planner

When Insert a FACTUAL description of behaviour. E.g. you arrive at 9.15 for a 9.00 meeting.

It causes Insert a description of the business consequence. E.g. it disrupts the conversation and means you miss important information for the week.

So in future Insert the end result you want to see. E.g. you need to be in the meeting ready to start on time.

How can you Insert a coaching question. E.g. organise your schedule to make that easier?

Examples of constructive feedback

1. I noticed you weren't in the morning meetings on Monday and Tuesday. That means you missed some important information about the ABC project. Let's go over what you missed now. Then, let's discuss ways you can fit in the meetings from now on.

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2. I notice that you passed three tech problems to me last week. I'm confident that if you'd thought about them a little more, you could have solved those problems yourself. What stopped you from doing that?
3. It's clear you're excited about contributing to project meetings. But sometimes, when you get very excited, you speak over other people. For example, I noticed that you spoke over David several times in today's meeting. Did you notice his reaction?
4. I'm curious about your progress so far with the XYZ project. If any issues have come up, it's best that you let me know as soon as possible. Let's meet this afternoon for a quick update.
5. Thanks for letting me know you can't complete all your assigned tasks this week. Let's take a look at your timesheet and see how you've allocated your time this week. That will help us work out where you can work more efficiently.
6. I notice you like to cross tasks off your To Do list very quickly. Sometimes, though, working quickly means details are overlooked. For example, this week XYZ was missed when you completed your reports. Next week, remember to use the checklist from the procedure manual before handing your reports in. And let me know if any changes to the procedure are needed.
7. I've noticed in the last two weeks you've not seemed yourself. Your last two reports contained several errors and you missed the client meeting on Tuesday. I'm concerned because this isn't like you at all. If something is happening outside of work, I realise that's personal. But is there anything you need support with at work?
8. I know it's frustrating when it seems your questions about the restructure aren't being answered. In future, though, please speak to me when you are worried about something. I won't always have answers, but I will be happy to share what I do know. When you talk to your colleagues without fact-checking, it worries everyone - and you still don't have answers to your questions.