



The art of giving feedback



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## Introduction words

Feedback is about telling the other party what consequences their behavior has for us or for others, and what our expectations are. It is not about evaluation or criticism, but about building a common ground for mutual development. These beneficial effects of being able to

give one another precise feedback are of exceptional value, especially in professional relationships. In addition, they have a positive impact on the atmosphere in the team and determine high efficiency in the field of cooperation.

## Why would you provide any feedback at all?

Let's illustrate why feedback is so important. There is a seemingly romantic story circulating on the Internet. The husband and wife are 30 years together. Throughout this time, she'd cut a piece of fresh bread from her husband every morning, sharing with him what was the most delicious. Sounds wonderful, doesn't it? But there is a further part of this story - on the 30th wedding anniversary, the wife thought: „I have been a good mate for years, maybe today, at least once, I will leave the heel for myself” and gave her husband a buttered slice from

the center of the bread. Imagine her surprise when the overjoyed exclaimed, “You gave me a wonderful gift today, my love! For 30 years I have eaten heels so that you could eat the tastier part of the bread!”. How much more pleasant their mornings during these 30 years could have been, if they had given feedback on their actions and their own needs - each of them would have enjoyed what they liked the most.



TEAM BA&BPO

## It's worth talking. But how do you say it...?

The most common communication problem we face in professional contacts is the need to provide negative feedback. How to do it so that the recipient correctly

understands the intentions of the feedback and that he is not sorry?

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At the beginning, you should consider the purpose of the feedback provided. What do I want to convey? Why is it important and how will it benefit the other party? There are several reasons for negative feedback.

First, there is a desire to improve the results of your work - if you want a colleague to develop through it or to fix shortcomings, you can't keep the comments to

yourself. Secondly, the willingness to improve relations in the team - communicating what is important to you in your cooperation will increase its value and quality. Other reasons may be the improvement of operations, the development of independence, the development of the ability to delegate tasks and delegate responsibility, i.e. generally speaking the development of subordinates' competences.

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To minimize the risk of potentially hurting the other person, define your intentions and make them transparent at the beginning of the conversation. We should never engage in a conversation while our emotions are

exploding. The second important element is the preparation and technique of the interview. The course of the discussion determines its effect. Fill out the form below to gain access to the full version of the article.



# S.P.A.N.C.A. in practice

One of the most effective techniques of conducting a conversation that assumes feedback is the so-called S.P.A.N.C.A.

## S how to specify

The message must be clear and understandable. It should relate to specific behaviors, situations or events. Not to be judged by the person, by the general public or by the imagination. The more precisely we formulate

our information, the better. Instead of „Because you're always late,” say, „Last week, you missed 3 times the 15 minutes or more for our team meetings.”

## P for the positives

The technique we write about refers to a situation where we provide feedback summarizing an activity, period or project. It is not a strictly disciplined technique, hence the assumption that there is always something we can appreciate. We start feedback from identifying specific behaviors or actions that we feel are positive and we strengthen them. Again, instead of saying „This report

is great!”, It's better to say „Your report contained comprehensive data, presented it in a form that was understandable to the recipient, and the graphics perfectly suited the types of charts and helped me immediately understand where we stand!”.

## And instead of „but”

After presenting the positives, put a full stop and start a new sentence all over again. You can also use the conjunction „and”, alternatively the word „simultaneously”. It is important to avoid the conjunction „but”. Why? Be-

cause it „erases” what we said earlier and our recipient's brain will forget what was positive and will understand our message mostly negatively.

# N for negatives

This is the moment to provide feedback on behaviors that, in our opinion, are not right or actions that need improvement. It is important to focus on the 1-3 most important aspects - you cannot work on more at the same time. The focus should be on quality, not quantity.

As before, concrete and facts are important. So we don't say „You put this presentation down”, but „During the presentation you turned your back to the customers to read the slides.”

# C for the consequences

Is desk clutter acceptable? Are perfect graphics just as important in every presentation? Is it possible to be late or is to be reprimanded immediately? There are no clear answers to many of these questions. The consequences of a given state of affairs are of key importance. If a person sitting completely alone has a clutter on their desk, it is their creative chaos and doesn't bother anyone, it shouldn't be a problem. It is different when the clutter on the desk includes apple cores, which already start to emit an inappropriate smell and make life difficult for coworkers. That is why it is so important to show and realize the consequences of the negative behaviors we are

referring to, for example, „Being late for team meetings three times in the last week made us frustrated with a lack of information, strained our relationships, and also delayed the project” or „During the presentation you turned your back on customers to read the slides, which gave the impression that you were not prepared for the meeting and made it much more difficult to establish a direct relationship”. If we show the consequences, understanding what is wrong in a given behavior will become clear and can also increase the motivation to change it.

# A as an alternative

This is the moment to think together and look for solutions. In the case of a mess, maybe it would be a good idea to have an additional, closed container, in the case of a presentation, maybe to lead it together or print notes to hold in your hand, and if you are late, maybe it is enough to agree that we inform you in advance

about delays? There are many ideas for improvement, it is important to know what causes certain behaviors and what their consequences are. When we agree on solutions together and commit to implementing them, the probability of change increases.

# Giving feedback

**Giving feedback has many benefits. To sum up:**

- Makes the recipient know how others react to his behavior. Consider whether you have ever learned anything about yourself from someone that you were completely unaware of. For example, your interlocutor told you that you looked threatening and you were only thoughtful.
- Increases knowledge of what to do and how to do it, what are the expectations on the other side. It allows you to see if the chosen direction is correct or if it needs to be changed. Thanks to regular conversation, we do not waste time and opportunities that we can use during work.
- It makes the recipient feel noticed and aware of something that seemed obvious or unworthy of attention. Thanks to this, the motivation to act is strengthened.
- Improves relationships because we share our insights, get to know each other and act more effectively.

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In addition, giving feedback is important even when we think the other party knows they are doing everything right. Lack of communication is not a positive behavior. We may think that if we do not raise objections, then everything is fine, but a colleague may perceive

the situation completely differently. Let us not rely on guesswork and assumptions but on facts. If someone is doing something right, he will know it when we communicate it to him.



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## What's next?

Providing feedback is just one area of communication, which in itself is a vast but fascinating topic. Some of its techniques and tools, useful on a daily basis, will be described in the next episode of the #strefalider cycle. Our team helps clients improve the competences of

their employees, develop organizational culture and build efficient and effective teams on a daily basis. If you want to find out how we can diagnose problems in your organization and prevent them, please contact our experts:



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