

General Feedback Guidelines for Preceptors

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| Be timely (as soon as possible after the event), clear and specific as possible. | <p>Timely feedback ensures the feedback is received in context, is relevant to current learning (if given too late, the student may have moved on to new content), and increases the chance that it will be used to guide further learning.</p> <p>You should take time to ensure understanding of the feedback and the degree of agreement. Keep to the facts, not impressions.</p> |
| Be inclusive. | <p>It is important that all interprofessional team members involved in the student's experience be solicited for feedback to avoid misjudging the event.</p> |
| Be positive. | <p>Give feedback in a manner that demonstrates a willingness to help the person. Own the feedback. Use 'I' statements.</p> |
| Be specific. | <p>Watch generalizations. You should try not to use statements such as "Notice all," "never," "always," etc. Be more specific in your evaluative statements.</p> <p>Focus on behaviour, the effects of the behaviour and the consequences of the behaviour rather than the person. Avoid blaming.</p> <p>Refer to behaviour that can be changed. Engage the student in the discussion as to how things can be resolved.</p> |
| Be careful with advice. | <p>People rarely struggle with an issue because of the lack of some specific piece of information; often, the best help is helping the person to come to a better understanding of their issue, how it developed, and how they can identify actions to address the issue more effectively.</p> |
| Be explicit. | <p>Ensure that your expectations for the student's performance are explicit. Share expectations with your student upfront before the clinical experience begins and, if appropriate, at the beginning of each clinical day. This way, the student can work to meet your expectations, and your feedback can specifically refer back to the expectations that were previously discussed with the student to put it into context. No surprises; end discussions with clear steps towards progress.</p> |
| Be strategic. | <p>Put feedback in context; leave the learner with a clear plan of action. We are all growing and developing. Where does the feedback fit into the long-term view? What is the one sentence summary the student will take away from this experience? It is important to give the amount of information the receiver can use. Identify improvements that the person is capable of implementing. Also, relate the feedback to student defined learning goals.</p> |



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| Be open. | Encourage your student not to wait for feedback but to ask for it. Also, don't wait for your student to give you feedback on your role as a preceptor; ask for it. Giving and receiving feedback fosters openness, marks progress and role models responsibility. When seeking feedback, use the same guidelines for giving feedback: make it timely, specific and clear. Examine your behaviour, the effect of the behaviour and the consequences. |
| Do it often. | Students need to hear feedback from you every clinical day on a number of different things. To ensure that providing feedback does not get repetitive (for you or your student), provide feedback on various aspects of interprofessional practice in a variety of ways (see Evaluation Strategies for suggestions). |

