

FEEDBACK FIGHTS

Fact Sheet

To tap into people's curiosity and avoid the fight response there are some common mistakes you need to avoid when delivering your feedback:

START BY LISTENING

Open a feedback discussion by letting the other person know that you'd like to talk with them about something, and then invite them to share their point of view.

This might sound like:

"Jane, I'd like to talk about the Project with you. What do you think has been going well, and not so well?"

Listening first will make the conversation much less adversarial, and will generally make the person better able to listen to you when you respond. The employee might even bring up the very issue you wanted to address - then it becomes more of a supportive coaching conversation.

DON'T BE TOO VAGUE

Use specific examples, and connect behaviours to impact. If you're dealing with a disruptive employee don't say:

"I don't like your attitude".

Because that's a recipe for an argument - instead visualise what it is you don't like about the person's attitude - think of it like a mental recording of what happens.

You might see them being disruptive in a meeting, or leaving early without permission. The things you visualise form the basis of your feedback. So the feedback might go something like:

"I've noticed you finished work early several times this week without permission".

OR

"In yesterday's meeting I thought you were very aggressive when responding to questions".

It is not easy for the employee to hear - but it's more specific than:

"You've got a bad attitude".

Remember - feedback shouldn't avoid real problems. If there is an issue, don't be afraid to state it.



TAKEAWAY

No one likes being told they aren't ready yet or good enough, and getting feedback to that effect sometimes makes us feel hurt and defensive.

Feedback is a terrible thing to waste. So be brave and tap into people's curiosity – they will thank you for it eventually.