How to feedback and reflect when working in groups

An important part of the learning process when working with other people, is to be open to, aware of, and efficient at using feedback. Feedback can help us to improve our performance if we take some time to reflect on what occurred. These tips provide some starting thoughts.

1. Understand that feedback and evaluation are important!

Effective feedback allows us to review, reflect and improve our performance. Feedback can be encouraging and help people feel appreciated and valued. We should all welcome feedback as we would struggle to develop effectively without it!

2. Be open to feedback and evaluation.

Try and remember that feedback will help you improve. It is important to focus on the task and not take any criticism personally. Sometimes feedback may not be well delivered. However, it may still contain useful information. Try to focus on what you have learnt and would do differently next time. Acknowledge to those giving feedback that you have listened and will reflect on what has been said.

3. Know what is appropriate feedback.

Feedback should be descriptive and focussed on the task/project. It should not be judgemental. An example of poor feedback would be 'Your presentation was boring'. Better feedback would be: 'Your part of the presentation could have been better if you had used a few more examples'. Good feedback is effective feedback!

## 4. Deliver your feedback at the right time and place.

It is important when you are giving/receiving feedback that you have time to discuss what is being said and that everyone is prepared for the discussion. Many projects in work environments will have a 'debrief' after a main event for this very reason. Consider having a 'debrief' for your own project where you focus on feedback.

5. Know what you want to know.

It is useful when you are receiving feedback that you are clear about what you need to know. Sometimes the feedback you receive may not address the points you are interested in. Be prepared to ask for more feedback or clarification about what has been said. Consider writing down some questions beforehand so you are ready.

6. Know what you want to say.

If you are giving someone feedback, write down your main points before you start. It is easy to forget these once a discussion has begun!
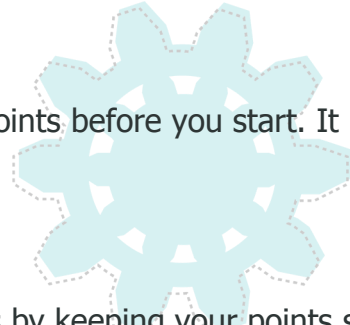
7. Be clear and concise.

Feedback is important for everyone. Make it easier to process by keeping your points short and precise. Preparing your thoughts beforehand can help with this. If you are receiving feedback, try to turn it into bullet points of improvements.
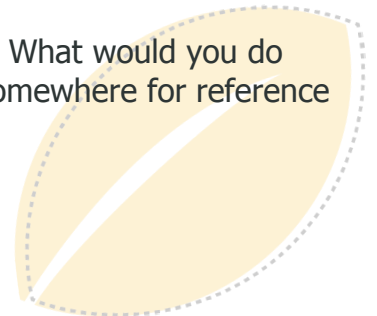
8. Be ready to explain why.

It is not enough to say what you think. You should explain why you think what you do. For example: 'Your research was good, there was a lot of information and we got lots of ideas from it'.

9. Offer ideas for improvement.

If you are being critical, it is helpful to suggest how something might have been improved. For example: 'I thought your presentation was a little short. You could have included some diagrams and I would have liked to hear a bit more about the challenges you faced'.

10. Reflect on your feedback.

What have you learnt? What went well, what could have been improved? What would you do differently next time? Make sure you note some of this down and file it somewhere for reference before your next project.

http://learnhigher.ac.uk/resources/files/Group%20work/feedback.pdf

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