

PROVIDING FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS

Opportunities will arise throughout career development experiences (CDE) for participants and hosts to provide feedback. This feedback may happen informally throughout the CDE, or as a standing item of weekly check-ins between participants and hosts. A professional skills assessment should be a formalized time for participants and hosts to discuss feedback provided on the assessment.

Feedback is typically reflective of past experiences that are shared in the present to inform the future. Real-time feedback may also occur, but most likely these conversations will happen after a behavior or act occurs that someone is seeking to provide input on. Feedback conversations should:

- Have an assets- and needs-based approach that value the talent of participants.
- Provide needs-based support that encourages learning and development.
- Involve reflection and input from participants on the feedback.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOSTS PROVIDING FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS

- **Frame feedback as constructive and positive.** Verbally establish the intention of providing critique. Remind your participants that feedback is meant to help them gain awareness of their actions, work towards improvement, and grow. Make sure participants understand that you are invested in their overall success and improvement.
- **Be specific.** Clearly state what behavior you have observed in your participants that you believe they can improve upon from an unbiased perspective. Be sure to focus on behavior rather than qualities of the participants themselves.
- **Allow the participant to provide input.** Check in about how they feel about their actions and performance and allow them the space to speak to their own experience. Use the participants' input to help guide how you will approach the next steps.
- **Relate participant behavior to the bigger picture.** Help participants understand how behaviors or skills have long-term influence in their future academic and professional roles.
- **Focus on improvement.** Do not spend too much time focusing on the challenges participants may be facing without focusing on how to respond to those challenges and improve themselves as participants. Mention opportunities for growth based on the participants' challenges and create a suggested course of action for their improvement.
- **Follow up.** Keep your mentee committed to improving by providing accountability and checking in on their progress. If helpful, consider metrics for tracking participants' growth. Consider leaving the participants with reflection prompts that you can discuss together at the next meeting. For example:
 - In your own words, explain a challenge you are facing as a participant. Explore what factors may be influencing this challenge.
 - Why might addressing this challenge be beneficial for you? In what ways can improvement in this area benefit you in the long term?
 - How do you plan to face this challenge? What specific steps can you take?
 - Write out your SMART goal as it relates to the challenge you are facing.

SHARE WITH YOUR PARTICIPANTS

Navigating Challenges Worksheet



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Why Mentorship Matters

