

## **President's Update - May 14, 2015**

One of the most challenging tasks in communicating with others is how to effectively give negative and positive feedback. When giving feedback, feelings of embarrassment, not wanting to be confrontational and the vulnerability required to share your feelings can all be uncomfortable and roadblocks to this specific type of communication.

However, giving feedback is an excellent way to motivate others to begin, continue or stop behaviors. But what is feedback? Feedback is information someone receives in response to the actions or behaviors they have taken or have shown others. When the information is specific, without interpretation or evaluation, there is a better chance that the recipient will understand what is being told to them and it is easier for the sender to feel comfortable. Giving effective feedback to others is an important skill for any leader to become proficient in. Feedback can be used to set organizational expectations, help in the development of others, increase motivation and prevent problems from reoccurring.

Here is a model of feedback that you may find useful. The model is called SBI which stands for Situation, Behavior and Impact.

Before you can employ the SBI model you need to lay some groundwork. Expectations need to be shared with the person you are addressing. Some people might not understand the proper protocol set by your organization or you as a manager to accomplish certain tasks. Therefore it is important that you set expectations up front. This should be done through the training of new hires and ongoing training as new initiatives are embarked upon.

Always ask "Can I give you some feedback?" The person you want to speak with might be busy or not emotionally ready to hear what you have to say.

So now you are ready to give the feedback!

Situation: Remind the person of the situation (For example: When you were helping Mrs. Smith at the Circulation Desk; when you emptied the bookdrop before we opened; when you

answered that child's question about the civil war).

Behavior: Describe the behavior (For example: You completed the reference interview by asking if the patron needed any more help; you roved the floor two times in an hour; I did not receive a reply by the deadline we agreed on).

Impact: Describe the impact on yourself and/or the organization (For example: You ensured that the patron received what he wanted and inspired confidence that we are a great place to get answers; when you don't meet deadlines the project gets stuck and we can't move forward towards our goals; when you are late for work we can't serve patrons in the way that our mission statement calls for).

That's it. It's not difficult once you practice and do it consistently. What I've found is that delivering SBI is a good conversation starter to solve problems and talk about the good that people are doing. Here's a [presentation](#) I did for the Library of Michigan that has some more details. The Center for Creative Leadership also has an [&nbsp;excerpt](#) of their pamphlet [&nbsp;Feedback That Works: How to Build and Deliver Your Message](#) that also may be useful.

Make it an outstanding day!

Asante.

[\*\*Back to news\*\*](#)