

Providing Feedback with SBI

Providing feedback – whether in a professional or personal context – can provoke anxiety. Presenting a person with the frank, unvarnished truth of how we feel about something they have said or done is difficult. It may feel like it goes against our strong desire for harmony and the building of relationship.

So, it's no wonder that we have often been taught to 'sandwich' our 'negative' feedback between two slices of 'positive' feedback. But this only strengthens the narrative that receiving feedback is undesirable, when feedback can be a gift, if we use it to learn and grow.

The SBI framework* provides a safe and supportive scaffold, for the provision and receipt of feedback, both 'appreciative' and 'developmental'.

Appreciative Feedback

Sometimes called 'affirming' feedback, this is where we share our appreciation of a person's behaviour (words or actions). When we build a habit/culture of regularly providing appreciative feedback, the provision of developmental feedback does not feel like such a daunting leap.

Developmental Feedback

Sometimes called 'constructive' feedback, this is where we address a behaviour which we assess as unhelpful (within personal or professional setting). Our intention in providing developmental feedback is to support the other person to reflect upon their behaviour, towards making a positive change.

S	Situation	Identify the specific situation or context
B	Behaviour	Describe clearly and accurately the behaviour you observed
I	Impact	Explain the impact you experienced or observed

After providing developmental feedback, it may be helpful to provide space for the other person to share the intentions behind their behaviour, so long as this does not become an exercise in denying or minimising its impacts. This can then lead to a conversation about alternative behaviours.

I	Intention	Explore the intentions behind the behaviour in question
AB	Alternative Behaviour	Consider alternative behaviours
PI	Potential Impact	Consider potential impacts of the alternative behaviour

*Adapted from the SBI Framework from the *Centre for Creative Leadership*