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Tips for Effective

PEER-TO-PEER FEEDBACK

on Teaching

In addition to the standard best practices for providing feedback, there are other strategies you need to employ when giving feedback to peers that focuses on sharing teaching strategies and discussing ways to overcome challenges.

TIP 1

SET THE STAGE & DEFINE ROLES

Asking for and receiving feedback on teaching can be daunting. Your peer should be considered the “host,” and they are in charge of determining what specific teaching skills are evaluated and overall goals. Essentially, they set the parameters—such as wanting feedback on the pace of their lecture, engagement levels, ability to read students, etc.

Consider yourself the invited “observer,” which implies you will be impartial and nonjudgmental. Also, refer to any documents you fill out as a “worksheet” or “guide” to emphasize the formative nature of the feedback process.

TIP 2

FOCUS ON SKILLS & OBSERVATIONS, NOT THE PERSON

Highlight teaching skills or methods the host used effectively; this helps show what was memorable or compelling.

» *It was impressive how you were able to move the discussion from a focus on ABC to XYZ.*

Discuss the specific skills you were asked to observe. Use this as an opportunity to reinforce best teaching practices, brainstorm other approaches, and propose changes.

» *You asked me to watch how you kept students engaged. How do you feel it went? Have you considered doing ...*

TIP 3

SPEAK CAREFULLY

Use the **first-person** pronoun (“I”) when you are proposing changes to their teaching approaches; this helps to create a connection.

» *When my class is particularly large, I’ve had students give each other peer reviews of their assignments.*

Use the **second-person** pronoun (“you”) when giving praise or motivation to the host.

» *You asked excellent questions to see if the students understood...*

Use the **third-person** pronoun to propose new teaching approaches and show how it has worked for other experts.

» *Dr. Smith uses...*

Use the **first-person plural** pronoun (“we”) when discussing teaching challenges and to increase critical thinking.

» *It’s difficult to know what to do when we are confronted by an angry student.*

Not sure how to address less-than effective teaching behaviors? Try to take an “advocacy inquiry” approach:

I noticed most of today’s session was a lecture, and it was a little difficult to tell what students were absorbing. Just out of curiosity, why did you choose a didactic approach to teach the content?

» Get more tips on giving feedback:

12 tips for giving feedback effectively in the clinical environment (Medical Teacher, 2012)

12 tips for providing feedback to peers about their teaching (Medical Teacher, 2018)

Additional Resource

Newman, L., Roberts, D. H. & Frankl, S. E. (2018). Twelve tips for providing feedback to peers about their teaching. *Medical Teacher*. DOI: 10.1080/0142159X.2018.1521953
Ramani, S. & Krackov, S.K. (2012). Twelve tips for giving feedback effectively in the clinical environment. *Medical Teacher*. DOI: 10.3109/0142159X.2012.684916



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