

Critical Feedback

Delivering feedback is a challenge. It can make you uncomfortable and anxious. Keep in mind that feedback can result in positive action and change. The results should be a willing commitment to an action plan for change. Do not use offering feedback as a license to criticize or judge.

Once students are in a defensive mode, they won't hear anything else you are saying. Feedback should be given to inform, foster better learning, and help improve academic performance. Giving students your past/present experience or providing them with examples of others' statements, actions, or behaviors are invaluable tools.

These tools provide students with valuable insights and help them gain knowledge about themselves. Feedback statements should refrain from giving advice, but instead, should focus on something you have heard them say, or have observed, or a behavior the student can do something about.

When having this conversation with the students: "Roll the video camera (in your mind) and simply describe what you see and hear." Focus on actions. Create a picture of the behavior in question. Be sure to give feedback in a timely fashion. What you want to do is tie the preferred behavior to the individual student's goals; this will help the student see and identify "what's in it for them?"