Giving an employee feedback to correct a behavior can be an uncomfortable conversation for some. Letting undesirable behavior continue can have a negative effect on your customers, your crew and your business. Review the following to make giving feedback a positive experience that will motivate your employees to do great things.

Determine first…	**Is this the right time and place?** Feedback is best delivered out of the range of other people and when the receiver is not under pressure. Sometimes it is best to leave the conversation for later, but don't delay for too long. Feedback is most effective when delivered while the behavior to be discussed is still fresh in everyone's mind. **Will the other person find the feedback useful?** If the other person can't use the feedback to improve, why give it? Do not give feedback when its only purpose is to make you feel superior or give you a target for your frustration. **Do you have the right information?** If you offer feedback based on incomplete or inaccurate information, it's likely to be ineffective. Ensure you have all the facts before having the conversation.
Follow these steps *Most of us dread the prospect of criticism, so it is also important to reassure the other person that you're not hassling them, but rather trying to help.*	In simple terms, this means taking the following approach: 1. **Describe the behavior.** Be specific. State the facts as you see them. 2. **Avoid loaded terms that produce emotional reactions and raise defenses**. Be specific and use clear examples rather than vague generalizations ("*You're always late*"). Rather, present the facts in specific terms: "*You were 10 minutes late on Monday and 30 minutes late on Wednesday. Is there some reason for this behavior?*" 3. **Explain the consequences.** Describe what happened as a result of his or her action such as: "*Others had to cover for you.*" The key is to stick to the facts, rather than sit in judgment. 4. **Build on the other person's strengths.** You can help your employee keep the feedback in perspective by including positive comments about their overall behavior: "*Your overall performance represents good teamwork and general punctuality. There seems to be these occasional diversions from an otherwise good performance.*" 5. **Invite the other person to respond.** Resist the temptation to tell employees directly what they should or shouldn't do. A better approach is to avoid telling your employees what they should do, but rather invite them to develop their own action plan: "*Is there some way you could work toward 100% punctuality?*" or "*What are some ways that you can make sure that you follow up with every customer?*"
Keep in mind when giving feedback	• **Stick to the facts.** If you make it personal, you will only trigger a mud-slinging match, and that means wandering away from the facts and the chance of really solving the problem. • **Avoid sarcasm** or irony of any kind when looking to give critical feedback. It is likely to be seen as confusing and will substantially cheapen what you are trying to do. Stick only to one level of meaning in your discussions. • **Don't try to build a case** by linking this particular situation to other situations unless there is a strong connection. In high-intensity conflict situations, we often find that we try to build a case against the other person by linking situations that are only weakly linked. Stick to the specifics of this situation. • **Try to be calm and balanced** by keeping your voice and tone consistent as you make your points. • **Examine your own motives.** Are you really trying to solve a problem, or are you on a power trip, trying to show how important your ideas are, or trying to prove that the other person is wrong and you are right?
Look for balanced discussion	Ideally, both parties are offering comments and input on a frequent basis. • **Don't be apologetic or too soft.** Try to respect your employee's intelligence. Don't convey the message "*I'm not sure you can handle this.*" • **Don't pack in too much.** Stick to a single clear issue. Too much feedback at once can be very disheartening. • **Focus on concrete/recent examples** of the behavior you want to point out. It's difficult to go back over old ground. • **Don't lecture.** Encourage the other person to respond in a conversational way. • **Keep your own emotions in check.** Your goal is to have your employee respond to the information in the feedback, not to your emotional state. Good feedback is neutral; all you're doing is holding up a mirror so other people can see themselves more clearly.
If things turn defensive	Address the defensiveness by asking for clarity, or by saying something like, "*It seems that you have a strong opinion on this subject. Let's discuss it further.*" Piling on more evidence to strengthen your "case" will only make the situation worse. Your role as the leader is to help employees understand that they can do better. Listen to their concerns and coach them back to success. Help them to develop their life and social skills. This development not only helps your business, but helps them to be successful and happy people.