

Good Taste Tip Sheet



Give feedback

People like feedback. They need it to know how they are doing. Give it readily and honestly. Use the sandwich technique to balance compliments and room for improvement – ask me for the [Influencing Skills Tip Sheet](#). Be specific. Saying “you handle conflict well” doesn’t actually tell someone their strengths as opposed to “your tone was maintained and it lessens the sense of confrontation.” Then they can build on these. The areas people need to work on can be “nudges” that guide them to do something a little differently, gradually improving. At any level, feedback is helpful, making sure it refers to a behaviour and not personality.

Underestimating is underestimated!

The doorman, security person or cleaner could be the only person who can save your hide when a problem hits. Everyone knows something or somebody you don’t. Everyone can help your reputation..or not! Making a good judgement is simply better practice. Look for the strengths in people, they will sense you’re seeing them favourably. In the event you make an error anytime, they’ll probably give you the benefit of the doubt because you’ve proved to be of sound character.

Get feedback

Interview others by asking a range of people for a few minutes of their time because you value their opinion. Ensure they know you appreciate their honesty and that this is a genuine chance for you to learn. Then ask open questions, such as:

- How do I come across to others?
- What would people describe me as?
- What do I do well?
- What could I improve to be better?
- Any other areas I could improve on?

You may be delighted with the results.

Thank YOU!

A thank you cannot be underestimated. Going out of they’re way, putting in more effort than was requested, thinking of you unexpectedly deserves a thank you (not “thanks” or “cheers”.)

A stash of cards (different designs) handy means you can avoid remembering you meant to thank someone when it’s too late. Handwritten gestures go a long way, especially posted. Emails are better than nothing but won’t have the impact.

Small gifts, as simple as a favourite coffee-shop coffee or snack shows you think about them too. Being appreciated is a fundamental feeling. You’ll get it back!

Suggestions please!

If you don’t have a suggestions box at work, suggest one! It should be anonymous for a full response. Ask for forms to be accessible on all computers so it can be printed off. Report these back so people know they’re registered and don’t make promises you can’t keep. People do want to contribute to ideas that affect themselves and others. Giving people an anonymous voice says more than what you do with the suggestions.

Be generous

It’s not hard to be generous. Try:

- Making someone coffee when you make one for yourself
- Spotting when someone is having a bad time and doing something small to ease it, such as answer their phone
- Giving credit where it is due
- Complimenting on a job well done
- Giving advice when you don’t have to
- Offering to help someone with an open invitation

If it’s not your discipline, it can become one. The bonus is that you get a great feeling from it.

Listen and learn

Appreciate that everyone can teach you something. By listening with the view of learning from someone else, they experience us quite differently. Consider when a “know it all” is just waiting for you to finish your sentence and add a comment, it doesn’t make you feel important or valued. We often make assumptions that we know what we need to know. When we do this we’re not listening for what we might learn. Our brain isn’t as attentive. People will appreciate you for being intelligent to listen.

Be friendly

We gravitate towards friendly people. Imagine being a party host: Ask how someone is, include people in a discussion when they’re in the proximity, making an introduction when people are strangers, offer help when you can, smile, take it slowly to give people your time. If you’re having a bad day then people do make allowances but try to stay out of the way.

Flirt

Making someone feel comfortable is a gift. Flirts do this extremely well. A typical flirt makes others comfortable and matches the language of the other person. Try being open, from your eyes showing your openness with with great eye contact, your jacket open (more relaxed) and your arms, legs and fingers uncrossed (i.e. open). Be open to the discussion taking place, be open to the other’s point of view, ask open questions to indicate you’re genuinely interested in the detail of what they have to say.

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Encourage your company to get staff feedback.

Asking for feedback shouts “We care what you think!” “Your thoughts are valuable!” “You’re an important part of this company!”. Requesting anonymous feedback on proposed changes will engage staff in the change. Staff can have a very good feel for how the company is perceived and how it is running. Most of us experience changes constantly. Often staff can indicate where you can tweak what you do to cater for their needs. They can also make low-cost suggestions previously not thought of.

Ask people how you can best work with them

Find out how they prefer working and what they have previously been proud of. These people are on your “team” if you’re coming into contact with them regularly. Even competitors or those engaged with you in “turf wars” at work will have something to gain from getting on well with you and you’ll learn something from them – sometimes a tip off, sometimes a shared experience.

Be good..

to yourself! If people see you beating yourself into the ground it can give off so many mixed messages. Whilst they may consider you remarkable in your commitment and “hard work” they may not wish to emulate you. They may feel that they have to be like you when they don’t want to. They may see you ignore lunch, have a disjointed home life, frequently stressed. We like being around energetic but reassuring people. It’s a difficult balance but to take care of yourself is a good start.

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