




Law Management Section Webinar

How to give effective feedback to lawyers


Presented by Kriss Will

KRISS WILL Consulting Management & Training


Webinar outline




Welcome
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Outline for today's webinar




- ★ The role of feedback in the workplace




- ★ Motivating positive feedback




- ★ TCT approach for delivering constructive feedback




- ★ Tips, traps and ideas




The importance of feedback




- ✓ Helps people to learn how to do the job




- ✓ Provides guidance to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour




- ✓ Assists in setting work standards and expectations




- ✓ An opportunity for a discussion about how things can improve




- ✓ Opportunity for praise/recognition/thanks



- ✓ Builds the confidence of the lawyer



- ✓ Provides guidance as to progress




- ✓ Builds skills, trust and productivity

- ✓ Is the basis of a good working relationship

Staff survey results show that lawyers would like more feedback, particularly younger lawyers.


Feedback for top performers

- ✓ Top performers contribute more to the profitability of a firm than average
- ✓ They thrive on recognition
- ✓ They relish challenges –lawyers are particularly motivated by “interesting and challenging work”
- ✓ You know they are valuable – tell them
- ✓ Do not assume you know what motivates them to remain with your firm – ask them
- ✓ They want to work with others who are top performers
- ✓ They like to be on the winning team
- ✓ Others recognise their talents.....



Feedback for top performers


- ✓ Recognition
 - ✓ Career progression pathways are critical – make sure you have this clearly documented
 - ✓ Titles to reflect seniority – make them worth striving for
 - ✓ Positive feedback on work well done – to them and others in the firm
- ✓ Challenges
 - ✓ Ask them what they enjoy most and provide as much of this as you can
 - ✓ Delegate some of the “good work” to them
 - ✓ Set “stretch” goals in the career development pathway
- ✓ Value
 - ✓ Actions speak louder than words – do the above
 - ✓ Pay market salary – there is a correlation between how much you pay and how much you value someone
 - ✓ Meaningful rewards – know what is important to them







Every day positive feedback tips

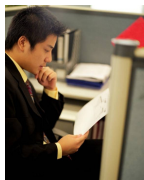
- ✓ More often – not an annual “thank you”
- ✓ Catch someone doing something right – people like to know they are doing the right thing
- ✓ Personally give feedback
- ✓ Can be in public (if not embarrassing)
- ✓ Pass on positive feedback – eg from clients or others in firm, and to partners in area
- ✓ Remember, what gets rewarded, gets repeated.....praise the behaviour you want repeated




 **Giving constructive feedback**

The difference between constructive and destructive negative feedback is usually how it is delivered....














 **Giving constructive feedback**

Planning and delivering using the "TCT" approach

- ✓ **T**iming
- ✓ **C**ontent
- ✓ **T**one




 **Giving constructive feedback**

Timing – Key points


- ✓ Give yourself time to think before you act
- ✓ Raise the concern sooner rather than later
- ✓ Not when you are angry - when you are able to control your emotions
- ✓ In private – do not want to embarrass or humiliate people.
- ✓ Give the lawyer an indication about what you want to discuss – do not ambush
- ✓ Allow time for discussion




 **Giving constructive feedback**

Timing - Tips


- ✓ You need identify the outcome you are trying to achieve as a result of the discussion before you start
- ✓ You will reduce trust by raising issues long after they have occurred
- ✓ Think about what else is going on for you, for them & in team to pick the right time
- ✓ Think about the right time of the day to have such a discussion
- ✓ Make time for follow up




 **Giving constructive feedback**

Content - Key points


- ✓ You need some!
- ✓ Be specific so person understands what your concerns are and have examples
- ✓ Be careful about second hand information – get the facts first
- ✓ Ask for their input/explanation/view
- ✓ Remember the outcome you are trying to achieve
- ✓ Preparation is crucial




 **Giving constructive feedback**

Content - Tips


- ✓ Talk about “gaps” in their performance & your expectations
- ✓ If the concerns are about “attitude”, express these in terms of the impacts
- ✓ Be able to identify and articulate what is the value of the discussion for the lawyer
- ✓ Lawyers are good with words – choose your words carefully




 **Giving constructive feedback**

Tone – Key Points


- ✓ Tone can communicate real intent (Helpful? In trouble? Concerned?)
- ✓ Decide how you want the person to *feel* at the end of the discussion
- ✓ The tone can change the meaning of a message regardless of words you use
- ✓ Rehearsing what you want to say can help the conversation come across appropriately





 **Giving constructive feedback**

Tone – Tips

- ✓ If you are angry, people are likely to only hear anger – is that the real message?
- ✓ The discussion also carries the weight of your position. Are you the right person?
- ✓ Inviting other people to be part of any discussion will change the tone
- ✓ Putting concerns in writing can change the tone as it is more formal & lasting
- ✓ The location can set also set tone...
- ✓ Remember your outcome....



 **Common traps** 


1. Forgetting that everybody makes mistakes – it is part of learning.
2. Not realising the impact on high performers when poor performance or behaviour is not effectively addressed.
3. Leaving issues go on for too long...
4. Surprising people with negative feedback at formal review time. You lose trust and confuse the person if there is uncertainty and unpleasant surprises.
5. Telling others but not the person concerned.

 **As a manager of lawyers** 

- ✓ Make it a normal & regular part of your role supervising & managing people.
- ✓ Make feedback useful for the recipient – link back to their development.
- ✓ Deal with the barrier of time by scheduling regular times.
- ✓ Understand that people want feedback – “no news” does not equal “good news”.
- ✓ Practice!

Summary

- ★ You owe it to your staff and business to be good at motivating top performers.
- ★ You owe it to your staff and business to be honest about their performance - you do them no favours by pretending everything is ok.
- ★ If you are going to succeed as a people manager, you must be able to give (and receive) feedback.
- ★ Most people do not find it easy to give feedback and it takes time to develop a comfortable style.
- ★ Plan, practice and learn.




Giving effective feedback

Reflect on your own approach

Access further information via email links (to be sent through)

Complete survey & send us any questions



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