

Providing Difficult Feedback: Dynamic and Integral Relationship Between Teaching, Learning, and Feedback

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Objectives

- Learning how to provide clear and concise feedback to motivate behaviour change and maintain relationship
- Gain insight into impact of one's tone and body language on feedback
- Learning how to deal effectively with students using feedback.

Outline

- Defined
- Evaluation
- Purpose
- Types
- Effective Feedback
- Ineffective Feedback
- Giving Difficult Feedback.

Feedback Defined

- "transmission of evaluative or corrective information to the original or controlling source about an action, event, or process" (*Webster's Dictionary, 2001*)
- "transfer of information from teacher to student following an assessment" (*McMillan, 2004*)
- "information about performance supplied to students by the teacher" (*Brookhart, 2004*)
- one of the most contentious areas of teaching (*Svinicki, 1997*).

Feedback vs. Evaluation

- Feedback
 - "frequent ongoing review of strengths and areas for growth with suggestions for further student or practice" (*Kaprielian & Bell, 1999*).
 - Intent: improve performance
- Evaluation
 - More definitive or final, resulting in a grade.

Purpose

- Improving performance
- Opportunity for growth
- Elicits emotion and arousal
- Affects intrinsic motivation, encouraging students to work harder to develop expertise
- Influences learning esp. if elaborative feedback used (*Andersone et al., 1989; Kluger & DeLisi, 1996; McKendree, 1990; Schooler & Anderson, 1990*).

Types of Feedback

- **Informational**
 - Whether answer, procedure, behaviour is correct or incorrect
- **Elaboration**
 - Explanation of errors and/or guidance toward the correct response, procedure, or behaviour
- **Formative**
 - Foster learning under non-judgmental, non-threatening conditions
 - Provides remedial guidance via suggested reading and/or resource seeking

- **Summative**

- Document how well a student achieved a set of the expectations for that particular rotation
- Part of a continuum that requires daily feedback to be meaningful
- Comparison of performance to requirements or standards
- Intended as judgment of an outcome.

Providing Feedback with a Purpose

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|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| • Predictable | • Context | • What to Avoid. |
| • Timing | • Medium | |
| • Content | • NonVerbal | |

Predictable or Known in Advance

- Why:
 - To improve, students “must have a concept of their learning goal, the ability to compare actual with desired performance, and the ability to act in such a way as to close the gap” (Sadler, 1989)
- How: use a standard proforma that is designed with course objectives in mind
 - Criteria through templates and/or examples
 - Develop specific understandable and attainable learning outcomes
 - Before student goes into room to conduct a procedure on the patient
 - “When you go to see the patient, check your watch. Limit yourself arbitrarily to history gathering for only 5 minutes, then come find me, even if the history is incomplete.”
 - Clarification of both student’s & teacher’s goals on first day is essential for both to develop a learning partnership = foundational to respect.

Predictable: Plan for It

- Frequent feedback requires deliberate planning and attention
- Discuss it in class
- Ask students how they would like to receive feedback
 - Daily and predictable occurrence
 - at end of a clinical session
 - a predetermined time
- Link feedback to teaching.

Timing: Instantaneously

- Close enough to actual behaviour that students can remember clearly their own performance
 - Immediate (*Kneebone, et al, 2002*)
 - is highly valued
 - increases learning.

Timing: Frequent

- Often, daily
- Mini-evaluations of 30-60 seconds of overall performance vs. larger final feedback once at the end of a rotation
 - Helps teacher and student identify growth or lack of change necessary
 - Immediate action more reading or practice
 - Enhances development of skill.

Content: Complex Communication

- “I” messages which focus on observable behaviour
 - “When I am interrupted, it detracts my line of thought. I’d appreciate if you would allow my to finish my thoughts before you respond”

Content: Amount (*Corno & Rorhkemper, 1985; McKeachie, 2002*)

- Brief and concise
 - Most important point or two
 - Informative in terms of pinpointing probable source of student errors.

Content: Behaviour Specific (*hsc.unm.edu/som/med/Feedback%20Checklist.pdf*)

- Related to agreed upon performance criteria
- Focus on observable descriptive behaviours
- Identifying errors and providing alternative solutions is ideal (*McKeachie, 1999*)
- Direct feedback to actions that the student can modify
 - “What-How-Why” Model:
 - Provide specific examples of what needs to be improved, how it needs to be improved, and why it would be better
 - “I observed you inserting the catheters ... Ideally, the unit needs to be inserted ... because this would ..”

Content: Balance of Strengths and Opportunities

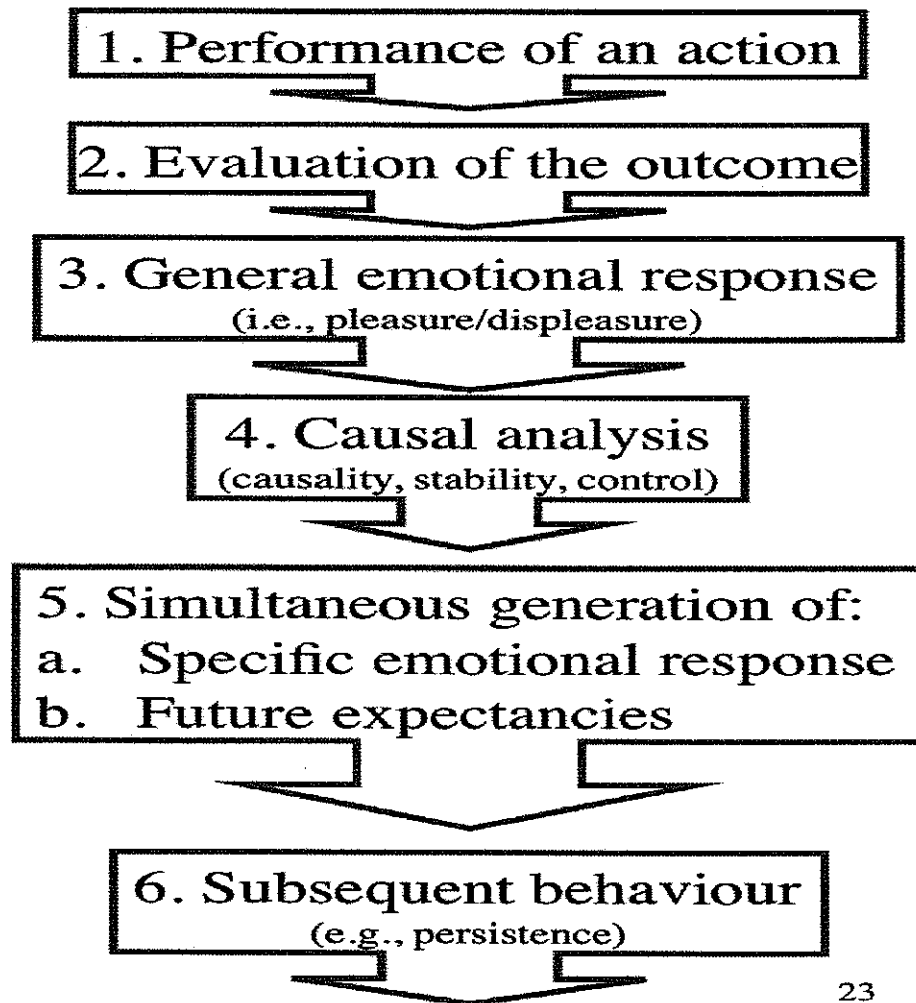
- motivation for improvement (*Kluger & DeKise, 1996*)
- 7 - 0 - 3 rule
- 11 vs. 1 principle
- **Sandwich: Positive - weakness - strength** or a direction for growth:
 - to develop a context with reference points
 - “I noticed how well you did the lung exam. You spent an appropriate amount of time on that and you demonstrated good technique. You missed a couple of important points on the cardiac exam, though, and I’ll show those to you. Then you’ll have an opportunity to show me how you have improved on the next physical exam.”

Content: Reinforce Change and Growth

- “What-Why model”
 - Provide specific examples of what was good and why
 - “That was a very good injection. You informed the patient about the procedure and the patient felt very little discomfort.”

Content: Attribution

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luck • Task Difficulty • Ability • Race | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Disability • <u>Strategic EFFORT!!!</u> |
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Context: Consider Student's Perspective

- What does the student hope to accomplish, what type of patients, skills, or knowledge should be included?
- Respect Privacy!
 - Between teacher and student
 - Not in front of patients
- Value
- Consider cultural values and differences (i.e., eye contact).

Context: Reciprocity (*Kraprielian & Gradison, 1998*)

- Rapport and availability
- Openness to hear their opinions
- Act on their suggestions when appropriate
- Increase students' level of comfort in hearing and acting on your feedback to them
- Why: Need to develop students' respect
- With limitations: Expectation that student should respond after emotions are "cool" - 3 - 4 days after.

Medium

- Computer derived
- Written
- Verbal
- Human versus computer derived (*Mason, 2001*)
- Person who has respect as authority by student
- Provided in a natural context that displays performance recognition by a source student respects
- Use the student's name in the body of the comment (*Dornsife, 1993*).

Non-Verbal Cues

- Often more important than what is said
- 93% of message
- Punctuates verbal messages like exclamation marks, question marks, boldface
- General appearance and behaviour
 - Body language, Gestures, Facial expressions
- Vocal Cues
 - Tone of voice, Inflection, Pauses, Emphasis

Non Verbal Punctuation (*Knapp, 1996*)

- Confirming or repeating
 - NV is consistent with what is said verbally
- Denying or confusing
 - V and NV messages are contradictory
- Strengthening or Emphasizing
 - Adding emotional colour, feelings, and intensity
- Controlling or regulating
 - NV behaviour controls others and regulates the nature of behaviour

Body Language: Movement and Posture (*McMillian, 2004*)

- Emblem: direct one or two word verbal translation
- Illustrator: increases clarity, awareness, & augments what's being said
- Affect display: emotion through posture, gestures, & body position
- Regulators: indicate initiation, length, & termination of messages
 - Eye contact, head nodding, smiles, raised eye brows
- Adapters: rich source of info about attitudes, levels of confidence, and anxiety
 - Picking at oneself, chewing nails, fidgeting.

Gestures (context specific) *Taken from the DICTIONARY of GESTURES, SIGNS & BODY LANGUAGE CUES*

- Gaze Avoidance
 - Indicate uncertainty or disagreement with a speaker's remarks.
 - Sustained cut-off may reveal shyness or disliking
- Body Shift
 - A sudden body-shift may telegraph an unspoken feeling, mood, or opinion, and thus offer a probing point
- Arms Cross
 - Defensive barrier sign
 - Guard-like stance, suggestive of arrogance, disliking, or disagreement.

- Head-Tilt-Side
 - Show friendliness and foster rapport;
 - Show coyness, as in courtship;
 - Strike a submissive pose
 - Response to cute signs

- Blank Face
 - "Do Not Disturb." In shopping malls, elevators, and subways we adopt neutral faces to distance ourselves from strangers.
 - A subtle sign used to keep others a polite distance away.

Facial Expressions

- Primary outlet for expression & rarely distorts meaning
- Culturally specific
- Brows and forehead
 - Concern, anger
 - Eyes, lids, and nose
 - Fear, interest, intensity
- Continues eye contact
 - Averted eye contact
 - Pupils enlarged
 - Pupils contracted
 - *be aware of cultural differences*
- Lower face, mouth
 - Happiness and amusement
 - Smiles, frowns, twisted lips, a raised chin, a clenched mouth.

Vocal Cues: Tone or Affect

- Communicated more clearly and accurately
- More stable and consistent vs. verbal behaviour
- Not consciously controlled
- Relatively free of distortion and deception
- Need to attend to appropriate NVB:
 - Mood, mental state, attitude, self-assurance, responsiveness, confidence, interest, anger, fear
 - How something is said via NVB is as important, if not more important than what is said
- Be conscious of message sending via emotions:
 - gauge your understanding
 - gauge your motivation
- Model the same interpersonal skills that you expect from your students.

Feedback to Avoid (*Dornisife, 1993*)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much is overwhelming & not absorbed or helpful • Judgmental or Intent • Personality or character traits • Do not write what is best said in person • Anything other than the truth • Be especially sensitive when offering "commands" | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the use of "but" after a positive comment • Avoid attributing student's failure to race, gender, disability • Avoid becoming defensive towards the student • Above all, avoid humour, even the mildest sarcasm. |
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Student Feedback on Feedback (Piccinin, 1995)

- not given often enough
- not given soon enough
- usually not specific enough to be usable
- not rounded - emphasizes the negative
- not descriptive enough
- too much all at once

Effective Feedback...

- communicates positives first
- focuses on practices that can be changed
- separates negative & positive comments
- limits quantity of negative comments
- includes specific suggestions for improvement
- overall tone is supportive (Piccinin, 1995).

Summary

- Feedback is:
 - critical to ongoing learning for both students and instructor
 - best a "summary of interactions that must take place within a student-teacher relationship." (LeBaron, 2000)
- Find ways to ingrain as an invaluable part of the teaching enterprise
- Find ways to streamline and to make it consistent
- Students desire feedback that occurs within a dynamic learning process.

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