

Stop making these feedback mistakes

If you want your feedback to matter to employees, avoid these common—but reckless—mistakes:

Delay sharing feedback. First, you should share feedback immediately. The longer you wait, the more it loses its power. However, never tell people you want to share feedback with them and then wait days to do it. The person will only worry about what is to come.

Use email to share feedback. You should never use email to share negative feedback. It is rarely taken well, and there is way too much room for misunderstandings and confusion. However, even when it comes to positive feedback, say it face-to-face when possible.

Go in without a plan. Even for informal feedback sessions, you should at least outline what you are going to say to ensure that you cover everything and that you establish next steps if necessary.

Chicken out when it comes to negative feedback. When delivered effectively, negative feedback can be the single best way to improve performance. Keep the conversation positive and forward-thinking, but be direct in setting expectations.

Do all the talking. All feedback sessions should be two-way. Begin by asking questions to understand the situation. Ask employees to offer their own solutions and action plans. If you lecture employees, they could tune you out.

—Adapted from [“10 Common Mistakes Leaders Make Delivering Feedback,”](#) Sonia Di Maulo, Bud to Boss Blog, www.budtoboss.com.