



ISSUE: I have received feedback or constructive criticism at work.

THINGS TO CONSIDER: Employers give regular feedback to all employees. It is an employer, supervisor or manager's role to make sure that tasks are being done well. Feedback is meant to inform an employee of their performance and whether they are performing tasks as expected. After receiving feedback, you may be required to change how you are behaving or change how you are doing a certain task.

- **Feedback should be specific:** Constructive feedback should tell you exactly what it is you are required to change and in some cases when.
- **Feedback should be done at an appropriate time and place:** Constructive feedback should be given in a private location if needed, and as soon as possible, not days or weeks later after an incident.
- **Feedback is not meant to be hurtful:** Constructive feedback is not meant to be about you personally, but about a behavior or a way that you do something that is not working well.
- **Feedback is meant to be given respectfully:** Constructive feedback should be given respectfully and with a clear outcome or goal for change in mind. Yelling or name calling is not acceptable for either an employer or employee.
- **If feedback is heard and acted upon:** Feedback that is received by an employee and acted upon will help take care of an issue promptly. However, if an employee does not act upon feedback, downplays the issue and hopes that it will just go away, this will not solve the problem. Furthermore, a small issue may escalate and lead to the pile up of other issues. It is always in your best interest to face feedback head on and deal with issues as they arise.

THINGS TO DO:

- **Be open to hearing feedback:** Remember that feedback is not meant to be a personal attack on you and in the long run will make you a stronger employee.
- **Ask for clarification:** If you are unclear about the feedback, goals or timeline for change, in a non-defensive way ask for clarity right away. A good employer will want to ensure that you understand what is being asked.
- **Request time to think about it:** If the feedback makes you feel uncomfortable, or causes anxiety, then ask for the time you need to think about the feedback and let your employer know that you intend to come back and talk to them once you have time to think about what they have told you. It is important that you give the feedback serious consideration.
- **If you Agree with the criticism:** If after considering the feedback, you feel the criticism is true, a wise response is to agree. If you value your working relationship, it is important that you consider the feedback thoughtfully and indicate your intention to do something positive about it.
- **If you Disagree with the criticism:** You have the right to disagree with criticism and feedback and should let your employer know the reasons for your disagreement. This will be your opportunity to share why you have chosen to do things a certain way and it also opens up the possibility for a discussion on why an employer would like you to make changes. It may be that an employer opens your eyes to a more efficient way of doing things or the other way around. In the end, you may still disagree with the feedback, and you may still have to make a change to meet the expectations of your employer, however you can do so with greater understanding and awareness.

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