



How-to Guide: Give and Receive Feedback

Insights to Action is a suite of resources meant to help state and local public health agencies improve recruitment and retention by acting on their data from the Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS). Find more tools like this at <http://debeaumont.org/programs/insights-to-action/>.

Giving and receiving feedback is an integral part of the supervisory relationship. In the book *Thanks for the Feedback* by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen, the authors separate feedback into three categories: appreciation, coaching, and evaluation. Each of these types of feedback is integral to employee improvement and success.

- Appreciation is feedback that helps communicate to employees that you notice their work and that it matters.
- Coaching helps individuals improve.
- Evaluative feedback helps people understand where they stand in the organization, and what to expect as a result.

Below is an excerpt from a free [book conversation guide](#) created by Stone and Heen. You can use these questions to assess how effective you are at balancing each of the feedback types.

- Think of instances where you were looking for one type of feedback (appreciation, coaching, or evaluation) and you received another. What was your response?

The Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS), conducted in 2014, 2017, 2021, and 2024, supports the government public health workforce by measuring strengths and gaps to inform future investments in funding, training, recruitment, and retention.



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- In your team, what kind of feedback is most frequently given? How? What kind is least frequently offered? Why do you suspect that is?
 - How is evaluation expressed (both verbally and non-verbally) in your work environment? When has this evaluative feedback been helpful, and when has it not?
 - Whose coaching has been most helpful to you? What did they do that you found so helpful?
 - How much appreciation is expressed on your team?
 - When you give feedback, is it most often evaluation, appreciation, or coaching? What inclines you to tilt in one direction over another?

Stone and Heen also write that receiving feedback as a supervisor is just as important as giving it. If your immediate reaction when you receive feedback is to “wrong spot,” or name all the things that are wrong about the feedback you receive, try to disrupt that pattern by thinking critically about your own reaction. What might be right about the feedback you were given? Everyone has blind spots, and sometimes feedback can help those blind spots come to light.

To continue exploring the concepts above and learn more about how people can more effectively give and receive feedback, check out the following resources from Triad Consulting Group:

- **Feedback conversation kits:** these guide managers and their team members through feedback and performance review conversations.
- Read *Thanks for the Feedback* and use [this discussion guide](#) to facilitate conversations in your work unit and with direct reports.
- Listen to these podcasts with Heen, author of *Thanks for the Feedback*:
 - From *Changing Conversations*, [talking about feedback](#)
 - From *The Tim Ferriss Show*, [talking about feedback](#)