

MODULE 2 ACTIVITY

Making Space For Vulnerability

With your practice partner or team, practice soliciting and receiving feedback. First, one person will give feedback to their partner or a member of their team using the tips below. Then, both individuals switch roles, giving a chance to each person in the group. Discuss what went well and what was difficult about this. To start, ask your practice partner or team member to select an area of work practice upon which they would like feedback.

Note: When providing feedback, you might feel insecure when discussing a subject your partner selected, but this helps with this initial practice.

Reflect on what you know and have observed about your practice partner's skills within the area they selected. Identify areas of strength and lesser strengths.



Proceed to provide that feedback. Here are some helpful tips for when you are giving feedback to a partner:

- First, ask for permission to provide feedback.
- Be specific but not condescending. The goal is to provide support, not criticize or “one up” the other person.
- Empathize. Providing any kind of feedback is going to cause a wave of emotion for you both. But by practicing empathy and giving space for those emotions without reacting, you create a psychologically safe space for colleagues to express themselves and then be receptive to your feedback.
- Provide feedback promptly; do not wait for a specific time.
- Provide feedback privately. Feedback is an intimate process and we need to respect that.
- Focus on performance, not personality. What this means is we avoid saying things like, “You are lazy sometimes,” and instead we say, “Sometimes the work doesn’t get done at the quality it needs to be.”
- Ensure your feedback is bi-directional by asking for feedback about how you can help your colleague.
- Follow up later about how the feedback was received.
- Do not use the “sandwich” method in which constructive feedback is preceded and proceeded by compliments. Although this method can be useful, it has become so popular that evidence suggests people “see” it coming and can disregard the compliments as inauthentic.

Once you have provided the feedback, switch roles with your practice partner.

After feedback for all involved has been provided, discuss how well the process itself worked for you in hearing and understanding the feedback, your own reactions to it, and your sense of trust and belonging with your partner(s).

Put a reminder in your phone to check back in 24 hours later.

Finally, continue to implement this practice as needed into your interactions with others, and change the context of the feedback such as whether or not you agree with a particular solution to a problem, perspective, or an idea.