

WHY IS FEEDBACK IMPORTANT?

People need feedback. Most people don't see themselves as others see them. For this reason, they often don't understand the impact their actions have on others. They have "blind spots." For example, people are not always sure when their work is appreciated. On the other hand, people often don't know when they are causing problems. Even well-intentioned and hard-working people rely on ingrained patterns for success. They are able to function without giving conscious attention to their actions, so they are often the only ones who don't know they are adversely affecting the performance of their group.

Performance improvement. Feedback is essential to learning. If people don't fully appreciate their strengths, how can they use these strengths to their advantage? If they aren't sure how their actions create problems, how will they know what to change and where will they find the motivation to improve?

Motivation. People who take a professional attitude toward their work want feedback. They want to know what is working and what isn't. They want to know if managers are pleased with their performance. They want to contribute to solutions, not be the cause of problems. They don't like having blind spots, and they want to know how to improve. They are willing to invest in themselves to achieve better results, because they know this will increase their value in the career marketplace.

The challenge. As valuable and as desirable as it is, constructive feedback is not a regular occurrence in most workplaces. The two most common reasons:

- Most people are not sure how to give feedback effectively.
- They usually find it uncomfortable to confront each other about performance issues.