

Guidelines for Giving and Getting Good Feedback

Giving Good Feedback

- *Take peer feedback seriously.* Peer feedback is important. It is good practice for both the givers and the receivers. Put your best effort into your assessment.
- *Get the big picture.* Look through everything you are reviewing once before you begin to give feedback. Getting an idea of what your classmates are trying to communicate or accomplish helps you help them meet their goals.
- *Think like the audience.* You are the practice audience for your peers. Try to think about how the audience will respond. What is unnecessary? What is missing?
- *Be specific.* General comments like “This is great” or “I don’t understand” do not really help people do good work. Tell your peers what is great, confusing, or missing and why. This helps them know what they should keep doing and what they need to change.
- *Make positive comments.* Always say something good about your peers’ work and make the comment about something substantive, even if it is just an idea you inferred from their work.
- *Use “I” messages.* Avoid using “you” in your comments. Use “I” language to show your peers that you are responding as an audience member and not as a judge. For example, instead of saying, “You need to add some more detail to this explanation of your experiment,” say “I’d like to read some more detail about your experiment.”

Getting Good Feedback

- *Take it seriously.* Think of peer feedback as an opportunity to improve the quality of your work as well as a way to learn new strategies that you can use on future work. Expect to get useful information and be gracious about and grateful for the feedback you get.
- *Ask questions.* Self-assess your work before you get feedback. Think carefully about issues you see that you have not been able to resolve. Ask specific questions like, “Does this order make sense to you?” or “Do you think I should add more evidence here?”
- *Consider all feedback.* Take the time to seriously think about all the feedback you receive. It may reflect questions or problems that your audience will have, and you need to consider it.
- *Remember, you are the author.* You make the decision about whether to accept a reviewer’s feedback and what to do about it. You are responsible for your work, and what you do with feedback is up to you.