

Quick Guide: Positive mini-disciplinaries (2)

Having prepared and planned your meeting in Part 1, the feedback meeting is the next stage. We know what is (or isn't) happening but we need to know why so we can get the person back to an acceptable standard of performance. So here are the **top ten tips** to help you give the feedback:

1. There are usually only three reasons for poor performance, and your careful questioning will help determine this. **The first is capability:** an inability to perform the task or role to the required standard. If this is the reason, consider why. Is this due to inadequate training or knowledge? Has a new or extra responsibility suddenly been "dumped" on them?
2. **The second is disciplinary:** a refusal to perform the tasks and duties to the required standard. Again consider why this may be, but remember it will likely lead to a formal disciplinary if the situation cannot be managed now.
3. **The third is external:** they are experiencing stress or pressures at home or in their private lives. This may be a temporary "blip" however it is still important that the person is aware their current performance is below par and will need to be back on track within a defined time period.
4. **Use the positive sandwich** (Praise - Punch - Praise) as the basis for your feedback. Consider your tone of voice when giving the feedback: it should be calm and confident.
5. **This means remind them of one or two of their good points** followed by the situation you want to discuss, and conclude with another of their good points.
6. **Let's assume** "Miranda" is not meeting work deadlines. You might say, "Miranda, you're a willing and experienced member of the team however I'm concerned that four times in the last fortnight you missed client deadlines."
7. **Ask for an explanation.** For example, "Why is this happening? You're such an organised person."
8. **Use open questions** to encourage them to give a full explanation. For example, "What was the situation when you ...?" or "How did you deal with ...?"
9. **Ask them to make suggestions** to get their performance back on track. For example, "What steps can we take to overcome this?" or "What would you suggest is a good way to improve this situation?"
10. **Set a final target date** by which to recover their performance, and build in markers and steps along the way for review, adjustment and praise.

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