

Giving Feedback to Learners

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Objectives

- Difference between summative and formative evaluation
- Why feedback is important
- Providing feedback effectively

Formative vs Summative Evaluation

■ Formative

- Formal or informal
- Given continuously through the learning experience
- Used to promote steady progress toward performance goal

■ Summative

- Formal
- Given at end of period of instruction
- Used for grading and comparing students' performances

What is Feedback?

Feedback is the control of a system by reinserting into the system the results of its performance.

If the information which proceeds backwards from the performance is able to change the pattern of performance, we have a process called learning.

Why is feedback important?

- Effective teaching requires feeding back to students regarding how they are performing the tasks required of them.
- Feedback presents information that helps the student stay on course in reaching learning goals. Without it, “mistakes go uncorrected, good performance is not reinforced, and competence is achieved empirically, or not at all”. (Ende, JAMA, 1983)

Sources of Information for Evaluation and Feedback

- Students' presentations/group participation
- Asking questions of the student
- Observing student performing tasks, i.e. interviewing a patient, performing physical exam
- Review materials produced by the student, i.e. write-ups
- In the patient care environment, get input from others-residents, nurses, patients

Setting the Stage for Feedback

- Communicate that you and students have the common goal of student learning
- Ensure that the goals are clearly understood by the student
- Give formal feedback in a private, quiet, comfortable place

Draft Student Evaluation for Colleges

- Performs Basic Physical exam techniques correctly
- Understands ethical principles
- Prepared for Session
- Group Participation
- Demonstrated Inquisitiveness
- Showed enthusiasm

Evaluation (cont.)

- Punctual
- Respectful of others in the group
- Maintains Confidentiality
- Maintains boundaries
- Dresses appropriately
- Receptive to feedback

Timing

- Provide feedback often and soon after a behavior that needs improvement or is especially good.
- Tailor frequency to student needs.
- Make feedback a regular, natural part of the learning experience.
 - “Draw out the quiet, restrain the verbose.” J. Sadler
- Communicate with the student that you are giving feedback.

Content of Formal Feedback

- Review performance goals (evaluation form)
- Base feedback, when possible on data from direct observation of behavior.
- Give constructive comments focusing on behaviors that can be changed.
- “Sandwich” negative feedback between positive comments.

Content of Feedback (cont.)

- Focus on specific performance, not generalizations, i.e. rather than “your interactions with patients are condescending and unprofessional”, try “you need to introduce yourself and speak at a level the patient can understand”.
- Elicit learners thoughts.
- Check to see that the learner has understood the feedback given (teach back).

Verification of Feedback Techniques

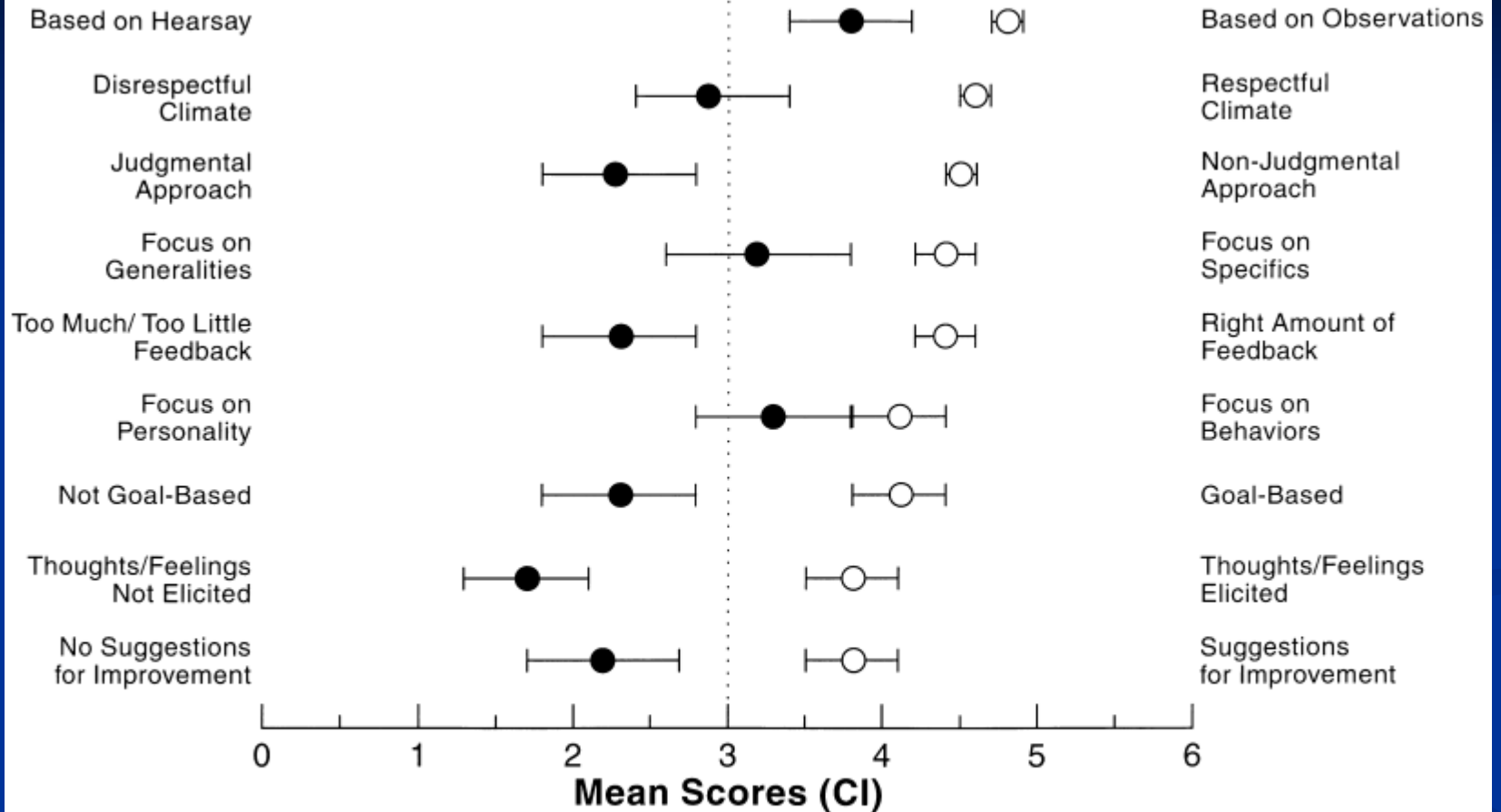
(Hewson, MG, JGIM 1998;13:111)

- 83 educators' personal experience with feedback
- Described feedback they received and scored whether it was helpful or unhelpful
 - 5 point scale with 3 being neither helpful nor unhelpful.
- Described feedback assigned to recommended or nonrecommended techniques.



Nonrecommended Feedback Techniques

Recommended Feedback Techniques



Differences between mean scores for helpful and unhelpful incidents are all significant $p < 0.01$
 Spearman's rank correlation between helpful and unhelpful incidents on all nine measures = 0.78, $p = 0.013$

● Unhelpful incidents (N = 28)
 ○ Helpful incidents (N = 74)

Giving Feedback-Summary

- Learners want feedback
- Take every opportunity to give ongoing feedback
- In addition, give scheduled formal, defined feedback
- There are better ways to provide feedback, but there is no “wrong” way
- Just do it!