

Enhancing Working Relationships To Improve Profitability

5. Agree solution

An ideal result is to reach an agreement with the apprentice and make a plan for resolving the issue:

- If possible, work together on the solution.
- Ask questions to clarify expectations and to confirm that you both understand the solution in the same way.

6. Follow up

- Check the expectations are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and have an agreed timeframe.
- Summarise the agreed new behaviours or actions clearly and concisely
- Set a date for a follow-up meeting to review and monitor progress
- Thank the apprentice for their time and input – finish positively, looking forward.

ENHANCING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS TO IMPROVE PROFITABILITY



Giving feedback – managing difficult conversations



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Managing difficult conversations

- Deal with it straight away
- Be careful and considered in your approach
- Make an effort to maintain good relationships

The six stages of giving difficult feedback



1. Prepare your mindset

To drive a difficult conversation, you need to be prepared. It's a good idea to think about the following beforehand:

- When best to have the conversation
- Where best to have the conversation
- How you plan to start the conversation
- Think of some open/probing questions
- Organise to keep a record of the discussion

2. Get to the point

It's important to get straight to the point:

- Politely and concisely state what the issue is right away
- Stick to the facts you are sure of. Focus on the issue.
- Where possible, provide examples

3. Engage

It's important to have some strategies to engage and keep the conversation flowing:

- Ask for the apprentice's point of view and listen to it actively
- Use open questions
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues
- Use silence to give the apprentice time to ask questions

4. Exchange

In this stage, you are working towards a resolution. You want to avoid it being derailed by emotions, criticism, or blaming:

- Remain outwardly calm and acknowledge that the conversation is uncomfortable.
- Expect defensiveness, denial and other emotional responses.
- Suggest possible solutions to resolve the issue. Invite input.