



# LEARN HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK & DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS

## Objectives

Simple yet effective workshop to help different kinds of people (especially teachers, youth workers etc.) to discover personal strengths (advantages/strong sides) and to learn to give feedback, thus, to be able use it more effectively in life and be able to lead healthy communication.

The workshop teaches how to give feedback by using concrete and applied examples.

Attendees will learn to interact with different types of people, to communicate clearly and respectfully, and react appropriately. They will also learn how to negotiate effectively and be able to defend a position and concerns and lead a discussion.

- Age group definition and adaptation: The workshop is designed for participants from early adulthood (19-29) to more mature ages. Facilitators will adapt the topics discussed and examples used according to the age and interests' composition of the group.

- Possible time formats : The Workshop consists of two parts. These two parts can be used as two separate workshops (to give feedback / to learn your strengths), also on different days. All together, depending on the length of each task and size of the group, the workshop can take from 2 to 3 hours. This workshop can also be held online.



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## Time frames overview:

### How to give feedback →

Step 1.1. - 1.2 Introduction and explanation – appr. 20 min.

Step 1.3. - 1.4 Practical task – appr. 35 min.

### How to identify own strengths/advantages and learn to use it →

Step 2.1. - 2.2 Introduction and explanation – appr. 20 min.

Step 2.3. - 2.4 Practical task – appr. 60 min.

Step 2.5. Sum-up – appr. 10 min.

Step 2.5.1. (optional) – appr. 20 min.

## Group sizes

Ideally workshop attendance would be limited to five participants. If the number of participants is bigger, they can be divided into smaller groups with max. five participants each.



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# DEMOCRACY SKILLS ADDRESSED (1)

## Analytical and critical thinking

The ability to evaluate and make judgments about the situation, events and experiences in a logical and systematic manner.

## Self-Assessment

Being able to accept oneself as an independent unique personality with an experience she/he/they has made and acquired.

## Active listening and observation

Being able to listen attentively to the other parties and find out connections and conclusions, which might be helpful by expressing one's own opinion and solving problems etc.

## Empathy

Understanding and relating to other people's thoughts, beliefs, feelings and opinions about themselves, and seeing the world from other people's perspectives (without judgement).

## Mediation

Being able to listen to the arguments, and navigate and negotiate towards optimal solutions.



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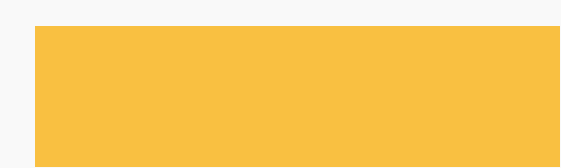
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# DEMOCRACY SKILLS ADDRESSED (2)



## **Conflict-resolution**

Addressing, managing and resolving conflicts in a peaceful way by guiding conflicting parties towards optimal solutions that are acceptable to all parties.



## **Cooperation skills**

Participating successfully in shared activities and tasks, encouraging others to co-operate and engage so that group goals may be achieved.



## **Tolerance**

Accepting others opinion and being able to discuss it if needed.



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## Process

### **STEP 1.1 APPR. 5 MIN.**

Introduce the importance of concrete, kind, and empathetic feedback; emphasising it is a very useful and important skill – either between friends or working colleagues.

Advice for facilitators:

- Most people do not give feedback or do so in an vague or harsh way
- Feedback is good for both the one giving and receiving
- Feedback given in a kind and empathetic way is another way of learning and acquiring information
- We tend to think feedback is an activity used in a professional setting with working colleagues. However, the principles of good feedback can be used in all relationships and situations, thus people can learn how to communicate and express themselves in a healthy way.

### **STEP 1.2 APPR. 5-10 MIN.**

- Provide participants with the “WSheet\_Feedback and strength workshop” document which includes the overview and description of tasks, so participants can follow along with your explanation. (See attached Document “WSheet\_Feedback and strength workshop”.)



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- Introduce the **A-E-I-O-U model** (invented by American teacher, scientist Ellen Raider) of giving feedback with concrete examples. E.g. your colleague with whom you are working with has a very annoying way of communication – he demands to get answers all the time and straight away.

### A for Acknowledge

Recognize the positive intention of the person giving feedback and relay this recognition to them.

E.g. "I know that you are very passionate about the success of the project, and passionate about your work and always involved. This is great".

### E for express

Tell me about the situation that worries you. Express your observation in a sentence that may begin with "I feel / think..." Avoid value judgments, describe only the facts and situations and/or your feelings about the situation.

E.g. "I also work hard to get excellent results, but I feel pressure when you expect me to answer your questions immediately - after working hours and on the weekends."



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### I for identify

Make your remarks stand out. Clearly state your goals and recommendations on how to improve the situation.

E.g. "I don't mind you writing me questions at the moment when you have them. However, I suggest that you give me more time to gather my thoughts and answer the request, for example, the next day. If there are urgent questions, let's agree that you will point it out, and I promise to pay attention as soon as possible."

### O for outcome

What outcome can each party achieve by accepting your proposal? Describe your vision of the end result.

E.g. "So, I will have more space to be with loved ones and not be distracted by work issues, which will allow me to rest better and work more productively. In addition, I will give you more thoughtful and, accordingly, better answers."

### U for understanding

Make sure the interlocutor understands you. Ask for feedback on the proposal. Agree on a specific plan of action or discuss alternatives. A good question would be, "Can we try this method for a while and see if we feel comfortable?"

E.g. "Let's try this approach for a month to see how it works, then review it to see if it meets our needs. What do you think about this?"



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## **STEP 1.3 APPR. 20 MIN. (5 MIN EXPLANATION + 15 MIN. WORKING IN GROUPS)**

Now participants will do a practical task. Divide them in pairs, they will need to come up with a possible feedback text based on the A-E-I-O-U model for the following situations:

- 1) You are a facilitator and have a very engaged participant on your project, but she/he/they is late for work every day, which annoys other team members.
- 2) You have a colleague/participant with whom you have a good relationship. However, she/he/they constantly interrupts you, and because of this, it is difficult for you to share thoughts and ideas about relevant issues.

Send these sentences-tasks in the chat, so participants can come to it if they forget.

Suggest to them to work by the following schemata: they take a letter, read it and separately think of possible feedback sentences, then share between them and think what sentence will be more suitable for the best feedback. With such a schemata of work, they can learn to work alone, but also to negotiate about the most appropriate solution working in pairs.

At the end of the exercise you (facilitator) can pretend that you are the person, to whom feedback will be given and they will read and simulate the feedback to you as the whole text using the A-E-I-O-U model sentences.



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Create break out rooms in Zoom and ask participants to work together for 15 min. and come back again.

*Remark, e.g.:* depending on the sphere of interests of the group, invite them to use a current or past situation from their life.

### **STEP 1.4 APPR. 10-15 MIN.**

Participants read their examples back to you as if you are the person receiving the feedback.

Guide them if they have missed some of the **A-E-I-O-U** letters or have questions. You can ask them afterwards what are their impressions and what was the most challenging (usually they will tell you by themselves).

### **STEP 2.1 APPR. 5-10 MIN.**

Now participants will learn how to give feedback and identify their own strengths aswell as other people's strengths.

Facilitator starts with an introduction:

- Shift your focus to your strength. Despite the common misconception that it is better to focus on one's disadvantages, it is better to discover one's advantages and use it to its fullest potential.
- When a person concentrates on their strength, she/he/they feels more powerful, inspired, and more resourceful.
- The more powerful we feel, the better we do our own work and get better results.



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- It becomes like the snowball effect: the better results we see, the more motivated we become. Thus we increase our chances to succeed and value ourselves and our work more, because we are aware of our potential and the way we can use it in many different situations.

Make a note to participants that wording here is very important, because sometimes we think that we have good or/and bad emotions, good or/and bad sides. This dualistic wording is not really advantageous to use in our lives. We have positive and negative emotions, but it is neither good nor bad. It is just a fact, as all of these emotions have a place in our life, the question is, how we handle it.

Tell participants that it is important to remember about the dualism of our personality: in some situations our negative characteristics can serve as positive and vice versa.

*E.g. a person is very empathetic and always ready to help, which is an extremely good thing, but their good intentions may be received negatively if they try to help without being asked to.*

Tell participants that there is a small (optional) exercise for that, if they would be interested they can do it at the end of this workshop or do by themselves later at home.

## **STEP 2.2 APPR. 5-10 MIN.**

Now participants will learn how to identify their strengths with the help of practical exercise.

This exercise will also be very useful to practically learn how to give feedback, as they will also need to identify the strengths of other people.



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If the workshop has up *to five participants*, they should all work together. If there are more they must be separated into groups of three people.

Introduce the task to participants →

Think about one event, experience, or situation:

- which felt really good
- which was fun
- which was a success

Please, make up a story, which you will tell your partner. You will have around 10 minutes for this task.

### *As example and for an inspiration*

This could be stories or situations from all possible parts of your life (*try to think of examples depending on participants background and purpose of the workshop; i.e. for facilitators – some experience from their facilitation work*):

- which are in some way special for you
- show up your skills in some special way
- revealed some challenges
- a pleasurable experience you would like to live through again
- you especially enjoyed
- something that easily comes to mind because you talk about or show it a lot.

It is important to describe this situation or experience in detail. “I have won this competition” or “then we made up again” is not enough. What did you do exactly? *Describe the concrete stages, step by step.*



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The following points can serve as an inspiration and help you to structure your story:

- your goal: what did you want to reach?
- A short summary of barriers which stood on your way.
- A short description, step by step, of what exactly you did. Here it is important that you tell the story in the “I” form and focus on the things YOU have done to reach your goal. Moreover, it is very good when you describe what your special style, and highlight how you used them to get things done.
- Short summary of the story / situation.

You can send these points to the chat, so they can follow up, or ask them to follow along in the document you have sent earlier. See attached Document “*WSheet\_Feedback and strength workshop*”.

### **STEP 2.3 APPR. 10-15 MIN.**

Give participants around 10 min. to think about their stories and to write it down with bullet points.

Answer questions if there are some and make sure that participants understand they have to give an example situation from their life and describe what they wanted to achieve, what barriers/circumstances they faced, and how they overcame it.



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## **STEP 2.4 APPR. 30-45 MIN.**

Now ask participants to take a look into the list of verbs and explain the way you will work further.

- One person tells the story and others listen attentively and choose *five characteristics* which represent him/her the best. Stress on that they can use the list of characteristics, which are in verbs you have sent earlier. See attached Document “*WSheet\_Feedback and strength workshop*”.
- Each participant is telling a story and the other people are listening and picking up characteristics.
- What exactly struck them about the skills and characteristics of a person in this story or situation. After a person finishes telling his/he/their story, the other participants can identify characteristics and briefly explain and argue why exactly these characteristics were chosen.
- Stress that this exercise is very good for defining your own strengths as well as those of others. It also teaches you while giving feedback to notice the special characteristics of others and be empathetic.

## **STEP 2.5 SUM-UP APPR. 5-10 MIN.**

Finish your workshop by asking participants about their experience.

- Did they enjoy the workshop and what did they like the most?
- What have they learned from it?



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## **STEP 2.5.1 (OPTIONAL) APPR. 20 MIN.**

This short but very effective exercise will help participants to strengthen the previous steps. They will see that there is no such thing as bad or good sides of ones personality or even bad or good emotions (there are positive and negative emotions). The duality of our personality is simply a fact.

The invitation here is to recognise the sides of your personality and be able to use it in different situations to your advantage.

Divide participants in pairs and ask them to write down in a column five own positive characteristics. They will have 5 minutes for this.

- Then ask them to write down next to each characteristic – how these can be defaults in other circumstances.
- *E.g. a person is very enthusiastic and can do a lot of things quickly, which is an extremely good thing. But, it could be challenging, when a person works in groups and is very impatient to “wait” or cooperate with other members.*
- Give them 5 minutes for this task.

When they are ready, ask them to share their thoughts with a partner. For this part give them around 5-10 minutes.

In the next step (5 minutes) you can ask participants (who want to share) to read out loud their examples.

**END OF WORKSHOP**



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## Methods (discussion, role play etc.)

Working individually / discussion / working in a group / working in pairs.

## All necessary materials/software

- Ask participants prior to your workshop to have paper, pencil or pen and a good internet connection.
- They will need to have a zoom or google meet app in order to participate.
- The list of characteristics, but also explanation of the **A-E-I-O-U** model, see attached Document "*WSheet\_Feedback and strength workshop*".
- Prior to the announcement of the workshop, send participants an Email with a small description of the workshop, and reminder about the materials they will need.
- Give them a small task to think about an example of a story, which they can use during the workshop.



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### **EMAIL EXAMPLE:**

**“To prepare:** there will be two parts to the workshop. We will learn to give feedback and to discover our strengths. In preparation for the workshop, I politely ask you to think on a story or situation from your life:

- which are in some way special for you
- show up your skills in some special way
- revealed some challenges
- a pleasurable experience you would like to live through again
- you especially enjoyed
- comes to mind easily because you talk about or showed it a lot



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