What is Feedback?

Definition:

Feedback is the information provided to the student by the teacher in order to explain the results of a specific task, project, or dynamic that was performed in the classroom.

Purpose:

Feedback lets students know what they did good, what they did well, what they did great, and what could be further developed. It is a crucial part of teaching, one that most students look forward to. This can be divided into 2 categories: positive, and negative.

Positive feedback:

Also known as reinforcement, it lets the student know in what areas he/she performed correctly or as expected. The student is praised.

Negative feedback:

Better known as corrective feedback, it lets the student know in what areas he/she could do better, and often provides ways of improvement. However, it could be misunderstood if not done properly, resulting in scolding rather than improving.

Ups and Downs

Positive aspects:

If feedback is done properly, consistantly, and regularly, it can be a benefitial tool for the classroom, helping students make progress in their learning and building good rapport between the teacher and the learner.

Negative aspects:

If done irregularly, unclearly, and is often criticism, feedback will backfire into a pessimistic point of view of the student's self. Instead of focusing on their progress, learners will more often be aware of what they did wrong and feel dissapointed.

How to Give Feedback?

Techniques:

Ask-Tell-Ask

First, ask the student how they felt while performing a task, and how they think they did. Then, tell them what they did well and in what areas you think they could improve. Be specific. Finally, ask them how they believe they can achieve such improvement and encourage them.

How to Give Feedback? (cont)

Sandwich

First, praise the student for something they did really well on. The smallest detail done correctly counts. Then, include a suggestion as to the area where they could improve and how this will help them in their progress, specifying the actions they can take. Finally, praise them for their past actions that led to the current progress, and encourage them to take action.

Bridge

First, discuss past actions that they either improved or eliminated completely (referring to errors, mistakes, etc.). Then, discuss their present state of learning, defining what they did correctly and what they can improve. Remember, be specific and realistic. Finally, discuss what is further expected from them, and how they can achieve a specific goal in the future.

Important Suggestions:

Be prepared.

Don't try to come up with suggestions on the spot. It won't work. Take your time with each student/team's task/project, and focus on what they did in advance.

Important Suggestions: (cont)

Be specific.

Don't babble or rant about. If possible, have a clear list of praises and suggestions for them to take notes of. Only note the most relevant ones for the subject.

Be realistic.

Don't ask students to do something above their level. Be aware of their current capacities and abilities and develop suggestions according to them. Also, don't adress personality traits as things to improve; focus on the task rather than them as a person.

Be kind.

Don't think of feedback as a punishment session. It's your way of helping them be aware of their own learning, and to develop autonomy in the process. Always smile, praise, give assurance, and encourage them.

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