

Make Your Criticism Kind & Clear

Radically Candid Criticism is HIP

Being kind means caring about what's best for the person long term, not just what feels easiest right now. Being clear means leaving no room for interpretation about what you really think — while also being open to the possibility that your opinion is wrong. We call this **HIP feedback**.

Humble

It is important to walk into a feedback conversation with a sense of humility, knowing that your point of view is an important piece of a larger puzzle. Speak from your point of view, but leave space for them as well.

Helpful

Consider the goal of the conversation. Are you having it to win, or are you having it to help? Make sure your goal is to help the other person succeed, otherwise it's not helpful.

Immediate

Give feedback immediately, or as close to immediately as possible. When you wait too long, you can get caught up in debating details versus immediately nipping something in the bud.

In Person or On Video

If you have feedback conversations over the phone or email, you lose much if not all of your ability to get a sense of how your words are landing, as well as an opportunity to hear the full extent of the other person's experience.

In Private

The part of your brain that interprets physical threats is the same part that activates when you feel a threat to your identity or ego. If you criticize someone in public, chances are they will go into fight, flight, freeze mode and be unable to take in what we are saying.

Not About Personality

Make sure to focus on the behavior, not the person. For example, would you respond better to someone giving you feedback about the need to show up to work on time, or would you prefer that they give you the feedback by calling you lazy?

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When providing criticism, the most important thing is to be humble and helpful. You may be wrong, and you want the other person to tell you if you are. Communicate your intent to be helpful as clearly as you communicate the feedback itself.

Have the conversation in private and in person so you can pay attention to the other person's body language. If you can't meet in person, the next best option is video. Just like when you're breaking up with someone, we beg of you, don't have these conversations in text, over email... and especially not in Slap.

To make sure you're not criticizing someone's personality when delivering criticism, you can follow the **CORE** framework:

C — **Context** (Cite the specific situation.)

O — **Observation** (Describe what was said or done.)

R — **Result** (What is the consequence that is most meaningful — to you and to them.)

E — **nExt stEps** (What are the expected next steps?)

Here's some helpful criticism that Kim Scott received from her boss: "After the meeting, when I told you that you said 'um' a lot and recommended a speech coach," (**context**), "you made a brush-off gesture" (**observation**). "This makes me feel like you weren't hearing me and won't go to the speech coach I'm recommending, which would be a shame because if you stop saying um so much you'll be more effective" (**result**). "Go to the damn speech coach! (**nExt stEps**)"

Practice Your Skills

Think about a time where someone gave you a piece of criticism that you are grateful for.

How did it feel to get it? What did they do that made the experience successful?

What would have happened had you not received that feedback?