

4. HOW TO GIVE GOOD FEEDBACK

Assessment

The assessment of a student's performance should never be a long list of mistakes or omissions nor general comments that it was 'good' or 'bad'. The trainer should ensure that feedback is

- well-structured, specific and backed by examples
- focuses on three fundamental questions:

Is the interpretation :

1. coherent and plausible? (no contre-sens or contradictions)
 2. faithful in terms of content? (no serious gaps, mistakes and inaccuracies)
 3. successful in terms of form? (quality of output, communication, presentation).
- given on the basis of individual or group objectives and the stage of training
 - concise and to the point.

Diagnosis

Feedback should lead to a useful diagnosis, by

- Giving examples of mistakes revealing a specific problem. Avoid giving a long list of mistakes and negative comments on the performance
- Always try, together with the students, to find a possible reason for the mistakes made (lack of concentration, poor selection of information for note-taking, not keeping right distance from the speaker etc).

Practical advice/remedies

Once feedback has been given and specific problems identified, the trainer should then give advice to the student explaining what should be done to improve. Such advice should be:

- relevant to the assessment and diagnosis of the problems encountered
- appropriate to the stage of training
- commensurate with the seriousness of the problem
- constructive
- lead, if necessary, to the identification of joint or individual objectives for training sessions (and self-study sessions)
- expressed clearly and succinctly, orally in class and entered on to a trainers' forum and student's logbook
- followed up at subsequent training sessions.