



Receiving Feedback with NVC

5-Step Process for Workplace & Personal Relationships

Key Principle:

Step out of the right/wrong mindset. Hold curiosity about your impact on the other person and keep a willingness to learn. Feedback is information — not a verdict.

Step 1: Listen Carefully

- Stay curious — approach with genuine interest in their experience.
- Focus on understanding, not defending.

Workplace Example: “I’d like to understand more about what you noticed.”

Personal Relationship Example: “I want to hear you — please tell me more.”

Step 2: Check Your Understanding

- Ask clarifying questions to ensure you’ve understood.

Example Questions:

“Can you give me a specific example of when this happened?”

“When you say ‘unhelpful,’ can you share what I did that gave you that impression?”

Step 3: Manage Your Reactions (this step may of course arrive earlier in the process)

Notice if your body goes into **fight, flight, freeze, or fawn**.

- **Fight:** Arguing or becoming defensive.
- **Flight:** Avoiding the conversation.
- **Freeze:** Shutting down or feeling blank.
- **Fawn:** Over-apologising or agreeing just to keep the peace, even if it’s not true for you.

If you feel overwhelmed, it’s okay to pause the conversation: “I’m not able to take this in right now — could we agree on another time to talk?”

- Remember: expanding your capacity to receive feedback can take time.

Step 4: Assess the Truth of the Feedback – Share your Honesty

When Completely True:

- Acknowledge: “I agree — I realise that I didn’t proofread my work. I usually do this”
- Share feelings: “I feel disappointed about this.”
- Ask about impact: “How did this affect you?”

When Partly True:

- Agree with the accurate part: “You’re right, I did arrive late for work on 3 days not 5 days. I’m sorry this had an impact on you and the client.”

When Wholly Untrue:

- Disagree respectfully: “I wasn’t late at all this week, I was asked to cover in the back office when I arrived, I realise you may not have known this and didn’t see me”
- Share what matters to you: “Reliability is important to me”
- Seek understanding: “I’m wondering why you didn’t know I was in and how to make sure you have clarity about this in the future– do you have some ideas about how this can happen?”

Step 5: Learn and Decide

- Ask yourself: “Is this feedback useful for me?”
- Decide: “Do I want to make changes based on this?”
- If it’s not useful, release it — don’t carry it as a burden – you may need to share why you think it’s not useful and have a dialogue about this. Maybe there is more to discover.

Remember

- Feedback reflects the other person’s experience, not your whole identity.
- Receiving feedback well is a skill that grows over time — it’s a practice, not a performance.

www.tracyseed.com