

2011-2012 Executive Leadership Series Feedforward Peer Coaching Exercise

Feedback provides observations and evaluations about past behavior. Because it tends to be critical in nature, feedback is difficult to give and receive. It also tends to focus on past events rather than future possibilities.

Feedforward, on the other hand, involves asking questions to provide suggestions for the future that might help the person achieve positive changes in a performance area. In this feedforward exercise, no discussion of the past is allowed, and no attempt to defend or explain past behavior is permitted. The coach responds with questions that will help clarify what the client thinks the issue is or what the client would like to achieve.

1. Consider the performance dimensions presented today and identify a goal you want to achieve or a skill you want to develop over the course of this year's Executive Leadership Series.
2. Frame the goal or skill challenge in this way: "I want to get better at . What ideas do you have for me?"
3. When the facilitator says go, pair up with someone from your ELS team and repeat the sentence and question from Step 2.
4. When you are in the role of coach, you can inquire, for example, "What have you tried that worked or didn't work so far?" Or if you are ready to provide ideas or advocate, you might suggest an idea: "In my experience, here is an idea that has worked for me..."
5. When you are in the role of client, take notes on the ideas that are generated. Be careful not to dismiss or reject suggestions. Remember to thank your coach for willingly taking the time to help you.