

Points to Remember!

Listen first.

Acknowledge the positive.

Give specific feedback with specific solutions.

Final thought: criticism is critical to quality performance.

Receiving Constructive Criticism

Competent. Strong. Independent. This is how we think of ourselves. For good reason, too — we are. And if we're honest with ourselves, we also know we aren't perfect. But we'd rather admit our mistakes to ourselves in private than have them pointed out to us in public. For that reason, we may respond to criticism with some grumbling, in public or in private. The truth, though, is that we can't see ourselves in our entirety. We need others' feedback to grow, and we owe it to ourselves and our coworkers to accept it.

1. **Listen.** It may be true: Our supervisors and coworkers are intelligent, experienced people, so their feedback is credible. They have our best interests in mind, so we can trust that they're on our side. Give them the benefit of the doubt. Consider what they say.
2. **Clarify.** Don't counter-attack. During the conversation, our basic instinct might be to deny the input or turn the table. We must do our part to keep the scope narrow and clear by clarifying exactly what we are being asked to improve and how we are to do so.
3. **Give ourselves a break:** Okay, so we could stand to improve something. At worst, we just participated in our own growth. Amazingly, though, most of us are more likely to misperceive doing something the wrong way as being wrong, at least initially. The difference in wording may be small, but the difference to our self-image is substantial. We are improving one aspect of ourselves. Let's remember that.

Participant Signature(s) and Date:
