

SITUATION

This explains the situation and introduces the main characters.

A

DISCUSS

Answers will probably revolve around positive and negative feedback – no one likes receiving negative feedback, though most would agree it's a necessary part of the job. Those who give feedback probably regard themselves as fair and may regard anyone who does not receive it well as weak or unable to accept criticism.

VIEW

Different types and purposes of feedback
- Positive feedback: used to recognise performance and build motivation. - Critical feedback: used to give constructive ideas to individuals and teams on how to perform better.
Cultural differences with giving feedback
- In some cultures, the focus is on what has gone wrong / who is responsible for putting it right. - In other cultures, the focus is on what has gone right and celebrating/praising good performance.
Advice for giving feedback across cultures
- Understand different expectations - Use a style which others find acceptable.

REFLECT

- 1 Positive feedback may be confusing / irritating / seen as superficial in contexts where critical feedback is the norm. Negative feedback may hurt feelings in contexts where positive feedback is the norm.

B

VIEW

- 1 Rachel is worried about the schedule and she thinks that Gabriella is losing focus on deadlines.
- 2 Customers have been phoning Rachel because they are worried.
- 3 Revise the schedule as a priority, in order to speed things up.
- 4 Gabriella says nothing but looks unhappy.

REFLECT

As well as what Rachel says, her facial expression and the fact that she twice interrupts Gabriella and gives her critical feedback in front of the other team members will contribute to the negative effect of her words.

C

VIEW

- 1 Rachel's feedback can be seen as effective, in that it shows her attention to customers and focus on results. It's clear that Gabriella now understands what she needs to improve.
- 2 The feedback can be seen as insensitive and risky, if we assume that Rachel does not know or care that this style of feedback may upset Gabriella.
- 3 We listen selectively, and it is not always what we say but what is heard, i.e. what the other person selects, that is important.

D

DISCUSS

Consider whether Gabriella will respond in the same way to her colleagues if Rachel is still in the room, or not.

VIEW

- 1 Gabriella is upset and angry because she feels her hard work (80 hours last week) in the project has been ignored. She is not sure she wants to work on the project any longer.
- 2 They express support for Gabriella; she's been working hard and she may not feel appreciated.
- 3 Rachel reacts openly to the feedback and thanks them.

REFLECT

Some possible ways for Rachel to continue:

- Ignore what happened and carry on.
- Refer to the fact that Lucas and Eric have spoken to her about what happened.
- Apologise.
- Refer to what happened obliquely, i.e. by talking about something else.

E**VIEW**

- 1 Rachel gives positive feedback from the project sponsor (which she supports), with special recognition and appreciation of the contribution of Gabriella. This seems to create a positive response from Gabriella and the rest of the team, with smiles and congratulations from Lucas.
- 2 Rachel asks Gabriella to clarify the schedule timings for everyone, possibly to begin a more constructive discussion than before.

REFLECT

Answers could focus on how obvious it is that Rachel is responding to feedback from Lucas and Eric. Will Gabriella realise this and will she mind, or be pleased? This section ends with Rachel repeating that the schedules need to be revised – was this the right time to mention this?

F**VIEW**

- 1 She should give more positive feedback because it motivates people.
- 2 The need to be tough and direct in order to keep things on track with the need to support and motivate people with positive feedback.

G**VIEW**

- 1 People underuse positive feedback and criticise too quickly and too strongly when something goes wrong. This is what Rachel does.

People can be too critical and upset or offend the person getting the feedback, particularly if it's done in public in front of other colleagues.

- 2 Give more explicit positive feedback to colleagues who do a good job.

Make sure people hear critical feedback as an effort to support and help them.

- 3 When receiving feedback we have to be able to listen and not react defensively. Stay open during feedback and think seriously if what is said is useful and whether you need to change behaviour.

- 4 Feedback is all about learning and growing, and finding ways to be more efficient.

REFLECT

Use the feedback form to record your thoughts before discussing them with your partner.