Use the following information to guide a class discussion about feedback after your students complete their gallery walk.

The Importance of Feedback

Feedback is a vital part of any leader's skillset. Project managers, team leaders, teachers, coaches develop this skill over the course of their careers. Not just giving feedback, but also receiving it is essential for efficiently sharing information within teams and groups. Let's take a closer look at its value and learn how to get better at providing it.

Constructive feedback is a robust tool for creating healthy environment, boosting productivity and engagement, and achieving better results. This works for business, sports, education, and many other activities.

Feedback positively influences on communication, team members' interaction and teamwork results in different fields. Here's how it works for different processes:

- The importance of feedback **in the workplace** is hard to overestimate: sharing information on what can and needs to be improved helps optimize work process and get things done in less time.
- Feedback is of great help **in leadership and communication**: it creates a clear picture and increases transparency.
- Feedback plays the crucial role **in education and learning** by helping adopt new knowledge sooner and avoid repetitive mistakes.
- The same applies to feedback **in sports and coaching**: it helps learn new skills and get better results.

Why Is Feedback So Important?

So, what exactly is so great about feedback? Let's see how team leaders can use it to influences communication and work inside their team or group.

- **Feedback keeps everyone on track**, when done regularly. That's beneficial for everyone involved in any type of activities: working on a project, preparing for an event, studying, etc.
- **Feedback helps your team avoid major mistakes** by creating a clear and honest communication flow during any kind of teamwork. It saves you the time of correcting someone's work, reduces errors caused by miscommunication to a minimum, and prevents regrets of those who feel like they failed.
- **You form better relationships** with the people on your team by encouraging honest feedback. It often involves criticism, which is something most people aren't comfortable with. But when given in the right way, it can help them evolve.
- **Constructive feedback motivates people** and boosts their performance. A friendly approach works well here. You can not only help others see what they might be doing wrong, but allow them to use this as a piece of advice, not judgment. Make them feel like you believe in them and just want to help them reach the project's goal sooner. That will make them even more motivated to do a good job.
- **Feedback promotes personal and professional growth**. Feedback is about listening actively, taking the time to analyze, and then thinking of the best possible solution to perform better. It provides positive criticism and allows to see what everyone can change to improve their focus and results. It brings people together and creates a healthy communication flow.
- **A friendly work environment** where everyone's open to criticism and even seek feedback themselves (both from you and from their teammates) is another positive effect that saves you big time. It's not uncommon that the best ideas come from someone on the team who simply mentions a solution to a problem or points out an issue that others haven't noticed yet.

- **Business-related, direct benefits** of feedback include business growth, saving money, making more sales, completing projects on time, and other positive changes in finance, relationships with customers, and company's market positions.

All this makes people on the team **more engaged in the work process**. You might notice they show more involvement and loyalty once giving feedback becomes a regular practice.

The Skill of Providing Feedback

For a team leader, manager, or teacher, it's extremely important to give feedback in the right way. While it is a powerful practice that creates a visible positive effect, it can also hurt people, lower their self-esteem or make them feel underappreciated.

To do this right, plan your approach in advance. Take into account some simple advice on what to do and what not to do when providing feedback and receiving it.

- First, avoid anything that can be heard as blaming or judging: you want to **motivate people** and show them area for improvement, not the opposite. Always explain your team how open communication about possible improvements is a win-win situation. Mention their strengths first, after which you can point an aspect they can work on more.
- Make sure you're **specific**. The employees should know exactly what aspect of the project you're talking about, what they did wrong, and how it can be improved.
- Give people **time to understand** your feedback and make sure to receive their responses. They should be comfortable with sharing how they feel about it. Be open-minded and take into account your team members' points of view.

- Don't forget to **let them be part of the problem-solving process**. Even if you already have a specific solution in mind, hear them out, then share your proposal using some of their words or ideas.
- It is not uncommon that people aren't actually sure what happened or what their next step should be. That's why you should **ask questions** in the end and see if the other person received your message. Follow up after a few days to see how they are doing and whether there's still an issue.
- Last but not least, **encourage team members to provide feedback** as well. Leave your ego behind, ask them if they have something to add about your performance and role as a manager, and carefully listen to what they have to say. Let them give examples too so you can see what exactly they mean, then discuss this openly and together to find a way to make it work and use the feedback effectively.

Summary

Promoting feedback in a team should be your next move. Make room (and plan time!) for it in the process of planning your future activities. Take into account that, in fact, feedback should be present at every step. Give your team time to get used to this new, open-minded and feedback-friendly environment.