

BOSS YOUR FEEDBACK

Key Objectives:

Youth learn the art of giving and receiving feedback. Youth will learn a formula for creating a feedback conversation that recognizes people's talents and supportively addresses growth areas. The formula focuses on unpacking and understanding performance and how to use performance feedback to improve outcomes. Youth will learn that even top performers can find new ways to apply their skills to achieve even greater outcomes.

Key Goals:

- ★ Youth engage in fun, safe and challenging activities in a creative atmosphere.
- ★ Youth learn the importance of receiving and giving feedback.
- ★ Youth identify their power skill strengths and learn how to explain them using evidence.
- ★ Youth connect their strengths to work readiness using the Hirability Skills Framework.
- ★ Youth interact with their peers to build a positive program community.
- ★ Youth build their skills identity. Identity formation will continue to grow and be reinforced throughout the series.

Key Hirability Skills:

- ★ Professional Attitude
- ★ Problem Solving
- ★ Team Work Ethic
- ★ Time Management

Set-Up:

- ★ Create four separate flip charts sheet diagrams. Title each with one of these headings: Body Language, Verbal Communication, Taking Action and Coping. Make a line down the middle and have "What To Do" on one side and "What Not To Do" on the other.
- ★ Your Feedback Planner Chart. (Explained in the lesson plan.)
- ★ Post the four Hirability Skill Posters on the walls, spaced far enough apart to use for group activities.



Workshop Duration:

60-90 MINUTES
depending on instructor facilitation options

Supplies Needed:

- _ MHA Labs Hirability Skill Mini-Posters
- _ MHA Labs Boss Your Feedback Worksheets
- _ Pens, pencils and/or markers
- _ Blank paper
- _ Post-It notes
- _ Flip chart paper or dry erase board with markers
- _ Timer, bell or chime to manage start and end of activities
- _ *Optional:* MHA Power Skills and Attitude Card
- _ *Optional:* MHA Labs Power Skills and Attitudes Poster
- _ *Optional:* Computer with speakers for playing music

WORKSHOP FRAMING FOR YOUTH

Reconnect to the larger goals of the series. Describe how your program is committed to youth empowerment through the work experience. How you, as the facilitator, are committed to supporting their skills development so that they can be successful on the job and in life. With your manner and your words, let them know that this series will take place in a fun, safe, challenging, creative atmosphere.

In this workshop, youth will learn a feedback formula to become experts at giving and receiving feedback. Up until this point, youth have been giving and receiving feedback using strategies provided in each activity. This

workshop is to focus on how feedback is a universal strategy that can be applied to any situation, between any two people or at the group level. Traditionally, feedback is framed as a sit down, formal session that strikes fear in the heart of the person receiving it. It is both ceremonial and stressful, and as a result rarely translates into growing from what is shared. It also exaggerates how long it takes to give, and as a result people feel as though they don't have time to do it. Feedback is simply a real-time, action-oriented conversation that connects what was expected to how we did, followed by a solution for next time. That is why we call it a Feedback Formula.

ARRIVAL WELCOME

- ★ It is ideal to have everything prepared ahead of time for each session in order to be fully present when youth arrive.
- ★ Stand near the entry and greet each youth as they arrive by their name. Ideally, check in on a personal or professional interest that you have learned about them. Or, create your own welcoming routine that fits your personality and program culture.

ICEBREAKER

Prompt:

Throughout the series we have been building more and more trust in each other. We have been learning about each other dreams, mission and goals. We have built relationships for accountability. Along the way, we have been giving each other informal feedback, simply letting each other know what we were thinking. Sometimes you have been thrilled by what you heard and sometimes you may have felt crushed by it. Let's really own the crush in our improv icebreaker.

Directions:

- ★ Throughout the program you have learned who your comedians are. This will be an improv so you might even tell them are doing Improv Theater where everyone is comedian. This activity takes some risk management, but there have been times where supervisors have made blunt harsh comments to youth, so it's safer to practice.
- ★ Invite each of the identified comedians to the front of the room. They will be your team leaders so select enough to have teams of at least three or four per team.
- ★ Ask each one of them to write an exaggerated JOKE insult that might be said to a fictitious person. Set parameters. It can't relate to anyone in the room and it can't relate to race, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation. If you are worried or want to contextualize for work readiness, you can frame it in the context of what a bad boss would say to someone who was really a bad employee.
- ★ Read the joke beforehand to make sure it meets the parameters.
- ★ Have youth group in teams. The comedian insults the first person and the receiver has to smile, say thank you and turn it into a compliment. If they can't spin it around they have to go back to the end of the line and practice again.

ICEBREAKER CONT'D

- ★ At the end, each team picks their best insult-spin scenarios and shares to the larger group.
- ★ Encourage lots of laughing throughout the whole session.

Reflection:

Discuss how this sometimes happens for real at work and not in a joking way. Sometimes it is about race, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation which makes it especially abusive. Ask them if this has ever happened to them in real life. Ask if they just smiled and put their spin on it. If not, what really happened? Ask them to imagine what would happen at work if this was their supervisor and they

reacted negatively in this situation. Ask them to imagine the situation from the other side. What are you learning about this person? What might be going on in their life to behave this way? Then flip sides, ask the comedians to share how they think the receiver felt in the situation. Ask how this situation could have lasting impact on your relationship with that person. Discuss how all feedback, even the worst kind, tells us something. Have youth discuss what feedback culture they want to have in their program. Take notes on a flip chart. This is a good way to have them set their own feedback culture norms to reference back to.

ACTIVITY PLAN—PART 1

Prompt:

The biggest success stories are people who never stopped growing. They are accountable to their own high expectations, not just others. Your mission and goals set your expectations high and feedback from those around you is critical to your path. To grow you have to be open to all feedback, not just the compliments. But it is important for us to learn that there is no bad feedback – that is why many people call it constructive criticism. Feedback helps us learn what to improve, but it also gives us clarity on what people want from us. When your boss gives you feedback, she or he is really saying, “you need to do this better in order to do your job.” Their feedback is not optional. Let’s set up “rules to live by” for how we are going to be super skilled at receiving feedback.

Directions:

- ★ The first activity is to have youth identify the ground rules of receiving feedback.
- ★ Break into four teams and give them the flip chart paper you prepped.
- ★ One team brainstorms all of the positive body language suggestions to use when you are receiving feedback. Then what not to do. What does it look like when you are actually listening or not listening to someone?

- ★ One team brainstorms suggestions for what to say and ask to get clarity when you are receiving feedback. Then what not to say and ask.
- ★ One team brainstorms a list of reasons you may want to accept and act on the feedback. Then what cases might you not want to accept and act on the feedback.
- ★ One team brainstorms a list of coping strategies to use if you feel angry or hurt by the feedback. Then what not to do.
- ★ Have each team present their strategies. If they own this process then they are more likely to take their own advice!!! Provide additions if you have more to share and make corrections if there are actually problematic suggestions.
- ★ Ideally, leave these charts on the wall for the course of the program.

Reflection:

Have everyone identify one strategy they think they will have no problem doing and one that might be hard for them. Track on chart paper and then match youth who are strong at one and not the other to help support each other. This is also critical information for you as program staff for when feedback issues arise.

ACTIVITY PLAN—PART 2

Prompt:

In the icebreaker, we learned what can happen without a good strategy for giving helpful feedback. Feedback is real-time, but it is also a planned conversation. We know that everyone needs feedback but too few people feel comfortable giving it, so we have a simple five-step fill-in-the-blank formula. Using the formula will help you recognize people's talents and grow their potential. We are not trying to force you to talk in a certain way but the ingredients need to be there in order for it to work. After you practice it will become second nature and you won't need to rely on forms.

Directions:

- ★ For this activity you have control over the theme you want to use or use the one provided. Almost any theme can be converted into a role play and skit activity. For the one provided, it is consistent with the theme of being able to pitch your own skills, ideas and goals. Also, all youth understand brand marketing and commercials so the premise is universally understood and will not take extensive directions.
- ★ Handout the feedback worksheets.
- ★ Move to your own Feedback Planner flip chart or board that you prepped ahead of time.
 - Activity Context: “What’s Our Brand” Gameshow: Teams make a commercial skit for a name brand company but can’t use the company name. The rest of group has to guess the name of the company and give feedback.
 - Success Expectation =
 - Problem Solving: Your team will identify new ways to solve a problem in brand marketing.
 - Professional Attitude: You will bring energy and enthusiasm to the planning and delivery of the skit.
 - Team Work Ethic: You will actively help your team members.
 - *You can add additional skills but these three align directly to the Hirability Skills.*
 - Desired Evidence =
 - Teams are able to successfully describe a name brand company so that the majority of people can guess the name of the company.
 - All team members must involved in planning and delivering the skit.
 - Feedback Conversation = (Leave blank)
 - Solution = (Leave Blank)
- ★ Walk them through your feedback planner. Describe the activity, expectation for success, and desired evidence. Have them take notes on their worksheet. Reinforce notetaking. This is a critical issue on the job. Youth need to get in the habit of writing down what their supervisor wants them to do and clarifying if they got the expectations correct. Rarely will a supervisor give written assignments. Supervisors often complain about youth not taking notes on what they are being asked to do or youth misinterpret what they are being asked to do. Later, when they get critical feedback, it seems entirely unexpected.
- ★ Afterward, have different youth share back the activity directions, the expectations and what evidence you are using to determine outcomes. Ask if everyone in the room understands what is expected.
- ★ Have youth break into teams of four and give them paper sheets or flip chart paper if they want to take notes.
- ★ Ask youth to create a “commercial” skit for a company they all know. Everyone on the team has to have a role and act in the skit. They are not allowed to say the name of the company in their commercial or they are immediately disqualified.
- ★ Have each team act out their commercial. Capturing on video is a great idea to collect evidence, reflect and share.
- ★ For everyone who thinks they know what the company is, have them get in a line. They can come up as soon as they think they have the answer but they can’t guess until the commercial is over. You might want to establish a starting line with a piece of tape.

ACTIVITY PLAN—PART 2 CONT'D

- ★ When the commercial is over, the first person in line says what they think the company is. If they get it right, ask them to share evidence-based feedback on how the team successfully problem solved to create a new brand strategy. Ask them if they have any suggestions that would have made it stronger. They have been taught to use evidence in all of the prior workshops. Then have the next person give their feedback. Keep going if youth have new feedback perspectives to share.
- ★ After youth give their feedback you add your own evidence-based feedback and suggestions.
- ★ Repeat with each team.

Reflection:

Have youth sit with their teams. First, have youth go in a circle and say one way that their team members helped them succeed in the activity. Second, have them go back and suggest one thing the team could have done better. Even if their commercial was a success, push them to find ways to improve. It is important to build a culture of continuous improvement. You can have them write feedback Post-It notes if you want documentation for sharing and posting on your Hirability Posters.

FINAL REFLECTION—ASSESSMENT

Today was focused on giving and receiving feedback. Feedback is always helpful when working towards a goal, but it is also just a nice thing to do. A regular compliment turns into a powerful, inspiring message when it comes with a story. Giving people unexpected positive feedback is a great habit to build.

Directions:

- ★ Have youth think about someone in their life that helped them succeed in the past few weeks. They should pick someone they will see again the following week or can connect to via text or email. This can be their supervisor at work or someone in their life that is not in the program.

- ★ Have them use the feedback formula to write a positive feedback note for that person. You can share this example to model the activity.

- Dear Lisa,

Last week at the staff meeting, I was hoping that you would call on me to share the success of the project I had completed. Not only did you let me share, you had everyone give me a round of applause. It gave me confidence and I am going to work even harder the next time.

Thank you,
Michael

- ★ Have youth make the commitment to share their note and have them report their experience at giving positive feedback.

CLOSING ROUTINE

Prompt:

Reinforce the key objective for today. Every experience builds or uses a skill to achieve a positive outcome. We need to build the habit of not only reflecting on our own skills, but giving and receiving feedback on skills. I encourage you to make this a central habit of your life. This practice also helps you build your network. People love getting positive feedback so the practice will make you popular.

Directions:

Recommend that over the course of the next week youth ask their supervisor to give them feedback on something they are working on. Then find the opportunity to give two people positive feedback. These two people can be co-workers, family or friends. They should take notes on the feedback they receive and bring it to their supervisor or program staff check-in.