Giving Constructive Feedback to Peers

Savvy Strategies to Help you Succeed

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION FOR GOOD®

Introduction

As a Walden University student, you may be asked to provide constructive feedback to your peers as part of your discussion board responses or assignments. This short presentation outlines a few best practices and strategies to provide constructive feedback to peers.

PEER FEEDBACK ESSENTIALS

Giving feedback to peers may feel uncomfortable at first, but sharing constructive feedback is an essential skill needed in both academic and professional settings.

Peer Feedback Should:

- Be specific

- Include both positive and constructive feedback

- Be professional and respectful

BE SPECIFIC

As part of your peer feedback, be specific. Telling others "good job," "you made a good argument," or "your post could be improved" is not specific and is not constructive. Instead, share something specific your peer can use to improve their work.

Example

I found the research you shared very interesting and timely. However, I do not fully understand the connection you made between this research and the COVID-19 pandemic response. Could you explain this connection a bit more?

The student has shared a specific topic that is unclear. This feedback would allow the writer to explore how to make that point clearer in their post or assignment.

INCLUDE BOTH POSITIVE & CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Receiving constructive feedback can be difficult for many of us. To help your peer, use the "sandwich approach" to feedback by placing a criticism between two positives.

Example

Begin with something positive.

You shared a very thoughtful discussion of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); I learned a lot from your post about the implementation of NCLB I did not previously know. I believe your post could be improved by including some additional details about if NCLB had any lasting impacts even though it ended with the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act. You have a lot of direct experience as a teacher and administrator who had to work under the NCLB guidelines. I appreciate you sharing your personal insights alongside the specifics of NCLB as this provided me with another perspective on this topic.

Provide a specific criticism or suggestion.

Close with something positive.

BE RESPECTFUL & PROFESSIONAL

All interactions with peers must be respectful and professional, including when sharing feedback. When giving constructive feedback, focus on the content, not the person, and include your reasoning for sharing a particular comment, using resources to support your views.

You are WRONG on this issue. I don't know how you came to this conclusion after reading the assigned resources for this week. I would suggest you go back and read the article again.

This response is negative and unprofessional. It uses all caps, and it focuses on personally attacking the individual for their conclusion.

I found your post very interesting this week, because we seem to have reached different conclusions. After reading the article from Smith (2020), I concluded tutoring programs are beneficial to both the student and the tutor, based on the grade outcomes shared about each group. Could you share a bit more about how you came to the conclusion that such programs do not benefit tutors?

This response uses resources to support it and does not personally attack the author.

Closing

Before sharing any peer feedback, imagine how it would make you feel if you received it from a peer.

- Would it make you upset?

- Would you find it helpful?

As with any assignments or discussions you are working on, take the time to revise your peer feedback as needed so you can feel confident your message is professional and constructive.

Questions? Email us at
academicskills@mail.waldenu.edu