

# Difference between feedback and Evaluation

## Assessment as Feedback by Grant Wiggins

Grant Wiggins says "that in terms of feedback, many teachers mistakenly think that giving such general praise as "Good job!" is feedback, for example. But such praise only keeps you interested; it cannot improve your performance, which is what feedback can do."

So, let us begin at the beginning and ask: What is feedback? How does it differ from other forms of performance-related information? And what must assessment be to provide more of it?

What is feedback? Feedback is information about how we did in light of some goal. We hit the tennis ball and see where it lands, we give a speech and hear (as well as witness) audience reaction as we speak, we design an experiment and check the results for error margin, we use the word processor and the spell checker underlines misspellings – feedback. Though we use the word more loosely in day-to-day talk to encompass many kinds of effects or reactions, here we narrow the meaning of feedback to its more technical meaning: information about what and was not accomplished, given a specific goal.

## Feedback

- Facts: what events/behavior happened, related to goal
- Impact: a description of the effects of the facts (results and/or reactions)
- Commentary: the facts and impact explained in the context of the goal; an explanation of all confirmation and disconfirmation concerning the results

Feedback is information about what happened, the result or effect of our actions.

## Elements of evaluation

- Evaluation: value judgments made about the facts and their impact
- Praise / Blame: appraisal of individual's performance in light of expectations for that performer

Evaluation is a value judgment about the meaning of the results.

Finally, evaluation judges overall performance against a standard. Feedback tells me whether I am on course. Guidance tells me the most likely ways to achieve my goal. Evaluation tells me whether the course I am on can be deemed competent or successful.

## Helpful Feedback is:

- Descriptive rather than evaluative
- Specific rather than general
- Appropriate for the student rather than to the benefit of the supervisor
- Usable (do not address issues the student has no control over)
- Solicited rather than imposed
- Timely (not weeks after the event)
- Open and honest rather than just aimed to make the student feel good
- Non-threatening (Trusted) rather than producing anxiety or fear of rejection