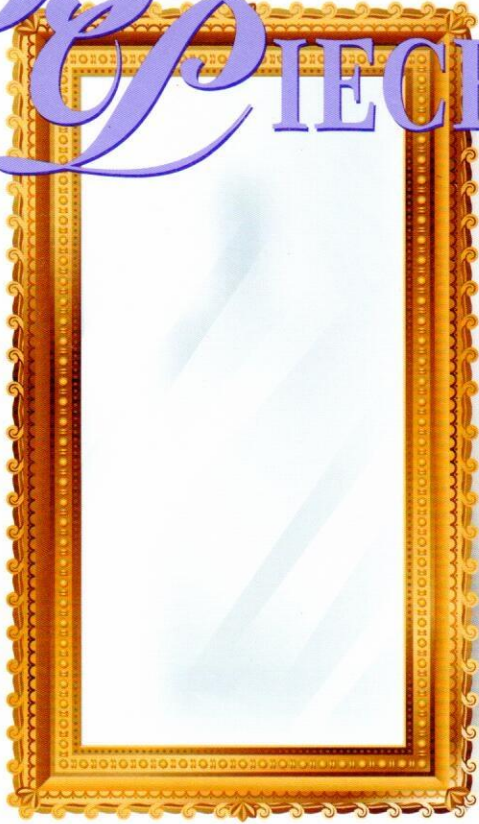# BITS & PIECES

7 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

By Marjorie Mauldin

The way you approach giving feedback will determine the effectiveness of your message and the outcomes associated with it. Follow these seven tips, if your goal is to improve relationships and boost results:

1. **Ask for permission.** Set a positive tone and a foundation for dialogue when you have to deliver feedback. Get buy in from the other person by asking if it's OK before you offer advice.

2. **Stay positive.** Don't vent, blame, shame, or shout at your counterpart. Doing so will put them on the defensive, cause them to shut down, and make it impossible for them to hear what you have to say.

3. **Be clear and direct.** Avoid using vague or passive language, and be prepared to offer examples that support your position.

4. **Course correct.** Don't let your conversation get derailed. If things begin to stray off topic, gently guide it back to the original topic. Always keep the focus on the issues related to the current discussion.

5. **Give them your undivided attention.** You've had an opportunity to share your perspective—now it's time to listen. Don't interrupt when the other person is speaking, but once they are finished, do follow up with questions to clarify what they have shared with you.

6. **Seek agreement.** Once all parties have been able to speak, review and agree on the key points raised during the discussion.

7. **Have a call to action.** Working together, create a plan that allows for action and translates the feedback into an expected outcome.

Marjorie M. Mauldin is founder and president of Executive Forum and the author of *Feedback Revolution*. She provides leadership and feedback training leadership for Fortune100 companies, government agencies and municipalities. To learn more about visit: ExecutiveForum.net, ilovefeedback.com or twitter.com/ExecForum-CO.