

Course: Business English

Level 3

Day №9

Unit 5 Performance at work

5.1 Criticism and Feedback

What kind of things have you been criticized for by your boss?



- ***In your current country/company, who can criticize? When?***
- ***How do people normally respond to criticism?***

***Look at the ways people respond to criticism.
Match each way with an example sentence.***

Give an excuse

I don't agree at all

Accept criticism

Could you give me some examples please?

Give an apology

But please I didn't have any help last month.

Argue

I'm sorry. I won't do it again.

Request feedback

OK. I understand.

Boss: The customers are complaining that you are often rude to them.

Employee: I don't believe you. When did they complain?

Boss: Your co-workers say you're lazy and they have to cover for you.

Employee: Could you give me specific examples?

Boss: You've been late everyday this week. It's unacceptable.

Employee: I'm sorry. I'm not sleeping well. I'll go see a doctor.

Boss: You forgot to process this order before you went home last night.

Employee: I was really busy with other things. I thought it could wait.

Boss: Your appearance does not really match our dress-code standards.

Employee:

Boss: Do you have anything to say? Well?

Employee:

Look at the responses to criticism in the box.

Read the five dialogues. How does the employee deal with criticism in each situation?

give an apology

request feedback

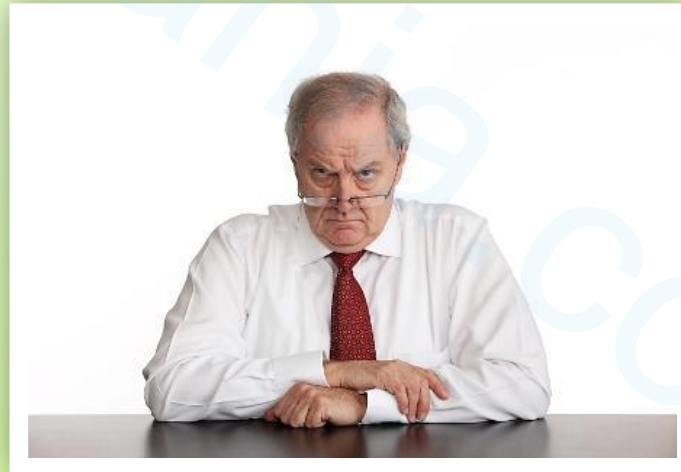
give an excuse

argue

remain silent

Role play: Which response would you use for these criticisms?

- 1 . You don't work as hard as the others.***
- 2. Your appearance is not up to our standards.***
- 3. You don't seem to be very interested in your job.***
- 4 . You should have learned how to use this computer system by now.***
- 5. You never smile.***

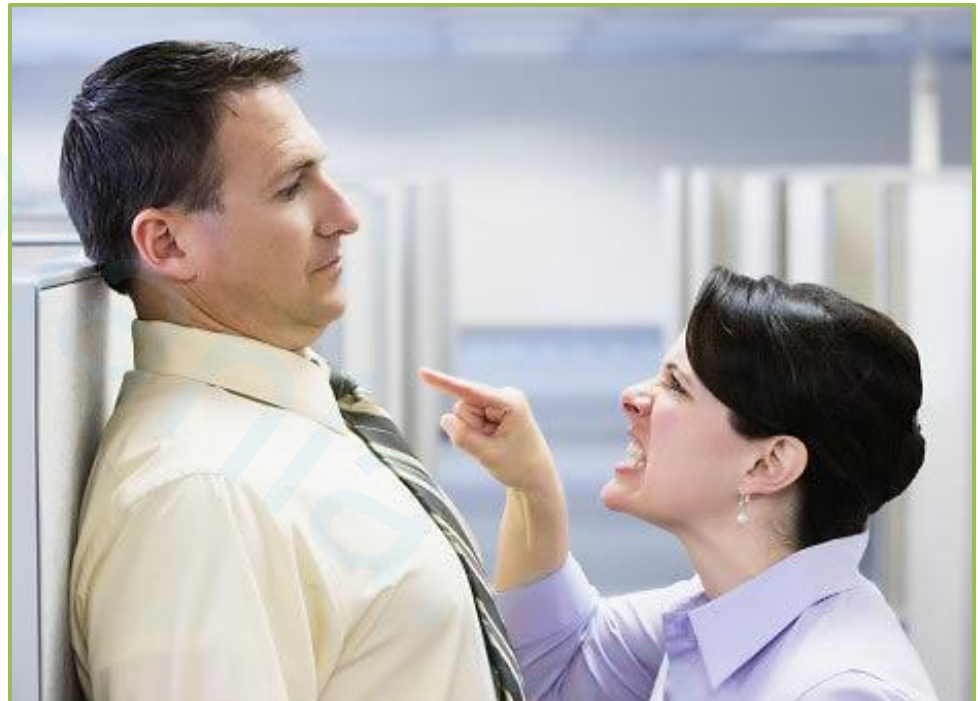


Unit 5 Performance at work

5.2 Handling Feedback and Criticism

- *How should you respond to criticism?*

- *Why do you think it's important to respond well to criticism?*



Responding well to criticism

Acknowledging – when someone criticizes you and the criticism is accurate, an appropriate response is simply to agree. This technique allows you to accept your mistake without apologizing.

Criticism: *Where have you been?! You were going to meet me at 10:00!*

Response: *You're right. I didn't come at 10:00. Thank you for being so patient. An emergency came up at the office as I was leaving. I tried to call you, but couldn't get through.*

Disarming – allows you to defuse the situation, without acknowledging that you actually *agree* with the criticism. Find something in the criticism that is accurate and acknowledge it.

Criticism: *You're such a slob. You never clean up after yourself.*

Response: *You're right. I did leave the dishes in the sink yesterday.*

Probing – when you can't tell if the criticism is valid or unjustified because the critic is vague, it allows you to gain enough information from the critic to determine his/her intent.

Criticism: *You don't work well with the customers.*

Response: *Would you give me an example of what I do that you believe is "not working well" with the customers?*

Respond to the following criticisms using any of the techniques.

- **Criticism:** Why are you being so mean to Margaret? Did you two have a fight?

Response: _____.

- **Criticism:** You are never in the office. I have to do all the work!

Response: _____.

- **Criticism:** Your punctuality is appalling.

Response: _____.



TIPS: Handling Feedback at Work

- **The more feedback, the better.** The more feedback people get, the less defensive they become. You should always ask for lots of feedback so that you become better at handling it. You may also turn up some useful information. Because some people are reluctant to offer criticism, asking often increases your chances of hearing from everyone. Make sure you ask frequently so that people get used to offering criticism.
- **Empathize with your critic.** Most people find it hard to give honest feedback. Remember that giving feedback is often harder than receiving it. Encourage your evaluators and thank them.
- **Explain what you want.** Make your request for feedback be more specific. Ask: “What can I do to improve?” rather than “How am I doing?” Ask for information not an assessment: “What would you like me to do more/less often?” rather than “Was my performance good?” Give people time to prepare their feedback. “I’d like to get some feedback. Could we talk next week?”
- **Keep cool.** Remaining calm when someone is criticizing you is hard to do. Remember that honest criticism is for your own benefit and may save you a lot of pain later on. Value criticism as a tool for your development not as a hindrance to it.

***Thank you for
today!***

***I'm looking forward to
seeing you again!***