



Stony Brook  
University

# THE OMBUDS OFFICE

*We're here to listen with an open mind.  
We're here to help resolve problems fairly.*

[stonybrook.edu/ombuds](http://stonybrook.edu/ombuds) • (631) 632-9200

*Confidential*    *Impartial*    *Informal*    *Independent*

## GIVING & RECEIVING FEEDBACK

**What is feedback?** It is information that we receive from another person.

- Although often perceived as negative, feedback can be instrumental to our success. “Constructive feedback” tells us where or how we can improve.
- Feedback is usually verbal. Through body language it can be non-verbal.
- Because our self-image can suffer from less than positive feedback, it’s important to keep an open mind and not tune out the messenger.
- Nobody is perfect and learning is part of living. Remember when you learned to ride a bike? Feedback helped you know what you were doing right before you could fly down the road.

**Feedback tips for the messenger:**

- **Create** a safe environment so that questions or concerns can be addressed.
- **Explain** the purpose and positive intent of feedback.
- **Be clear** on the desired outcome or expectations.
- **Focus** on the future while not criticizing past actions.
- **Identify** specific content to praise work well done and provide guidance for areas that need improvement.
- **Encourage** discussion and open dialogue. Make feedback a two-way, shared activity.
- **Allocate** sufficient time to give feedback and be sure it’s in a confidential setting.





Stony Brook  
University

# THE OMBUDS OFFICE

*We're here to listen with an open mind.  
We're here to help resolve problems fairly.*

[stonybrook.edu/ombuds](http://stonybrook.edu/ombuds) • (631) 632-9200

- **Develop** an action plan with follow up conversations. Identify goals and specific objectives with a realistic timeline for completion. Indicate criteria for success.
- **Check** for understanding by asking and responding to questions, clarifying and rephrasing when necessary.
- **Meet** periodically to check in with one another and review progress.
- **Provide** support materials, strategies, classes or training to achieve desired goals and to improve performance.
- **Help** engage, motivate and support the person.
- **Reinforce** accomplishments.

*We all need people who will give us feedback. That's how we improve. --- Bill Gates*

*If you don't get feedback from your performers and your audience, you're going to be working in a vacuum. --- Peter Maxwell Davies*

©2015 Donna L. Buehler

