

Performance matters:

the need for constructive criticism



video artsTM

A Video Arts production
featuring John Cleese, Andy Taylor,
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Titles in this series:

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An inside job: meeting internal customer needs
Building the perfect team: Belbin's team role theory in action
Can you spare a moment?: counselling skills for managers
Demanding customers: customer care made perfect
Does the team work?: improving effectiveness through teamwork
First among equals: leading a team
How am I doing?: the performance review
How to lose customers without really trying: keeping the customer satisfied
I wasn't prepared for that: overcoming the fear of making presentations
I'd like a word with you: the discipline interview
If looks could kill: the power of behaviour
It's your choice: selection skills for managers
Meetings, bloody meetings: making meetings more productive
More bloody meetings: the people side of meetings
Negotiating - tying the knot: a skill for life
No complaints?: complaints and the customer
Not my type: valuing diversity
On the receiving end: making call centres more effective
Performance matters: the importance of praise
Performance matters: the need for constructive criticism
Project management: leading a project team
Report writing: the art of writing a good report
Selecting the perfect team: utilising internal and external resources
Sell it to me! parts 1 & 2: essential skills for a salesperson
Straight talking: the art of assertiveness
Talking to the team: how to run a team meeting
Team spirit?: how to be an effective team member
Telephone behaviour: the rules of effective communication
The balance sheet barrier: the basics of business finance
The best of motives, parts 1 & 2: informing and involving
The dreaded appraisal: both sides of the appraisal interview
The grapevine: communicating in a world of change
The helping hand: coaching skills for managers
The paper chase: cutting back on paperwork
The unorganised manager, parts 1 & 2: damnation and salvation
The unorganised manager, part 3: divine intervention
The ultimate change show: managing change
The ultimate stress show: managing stress
Who sold you this, then?: effective after-sales service
You'll soon get the hang of it: the techniques of one-to-one training

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SSW-1-SSW-21 Self-study workbook*

OHP-1-OHP-6 Presentation 'slides'/OHPs*

Certificate*

*Copies of these resources are available in electronic formats to allow you to customise them to your specific requirements and to print the required number of copies from the master for the sole purpose of the training envisaged by the programme, and not for any commercial purpose.

Video-based training from Video Arts

Congratulations on choosing **Performance matters: the need for constructive criticism** from Video Arts to help develop the skills in your organisation. Video Arts recognised as the world leader in video-based training, with over 30 years' experience in staff development. With more than 250 video, DVD and e-learning/on-line programmes covering all the essential skills of business, you can remain confident that training with Video Arts is the most effective way to improve the skillset of the people within your organisation.



It is important to help staff understand that criticism is an essential part of a manager's responsibilities.

Why train?

Train hard, fight easy - Marshal Zhukov

These days, it is difficult for organisations to become successful and stay that way. The pace of change is faster, competition is tougher, customers are more demanding, innovation is more prized, but harder to achieve.

Part of the response has been to create leaner, flatter, more flexible structures, but structures don't run organisations and create success, people do - intelligent people, energetic people, reliable people and, most of all, people with the right mix of up-to-date knowledge and skills.

That means people who are trained, not for a lifetime's work, not just once in a while, but as a central, continuing part of their working lives.

Why use video-based training?

Video is familiar. Television is how most people find out what is going on in the world. It is not surprising that this is a medium they are comfortable to learn from when they are being trained.

Video makes demonstration easy. We can show situations being handled badly. We can contrast that with how to handle them well.

Video is flexible. It can be the cornerstone of a course run for a group by a specialist trainer. It can quickly provide simple, clear lessons for a team whenever it is convenient for them. It can bring interest and enlightenment to a self-study programme.

Video injects realism. It lets us present those being trained with emotional, as well as rational, problems to solve. Ask a group '*how would you deal with an angry customer?*' and you will get a tidy, textbook answer. Use video to confront them with an angry customer and you will get a much more realistic reaction.

Video provides variety. Different people learn in different ways and none of us have an infinite attention span. Video provides us with a powerful means of injecting variety into our training.

Why use Video Arts' programmes?

Winston Churchill once said that he loved to learn, but hated being taught.

That is the secret of successful training: how to help people who want to learn. We do it by combining:

A storehouse of professional knowledge and expertise, developed over 25 years and drawing on some of the best minds in the business.

The highest possible production values, both in the videos we produce and in the support material that goes with them.

The magic ingredient - humour - which can make a delight of the dullest subject.

Introduction

Encourage. Motivate. Mentor. Support. Praise. Coach. Train. Develop. These are all words which describe good modern managers' responsibilities towards members of their teams and, because they all sound like positive, uplifting activities, there is little difficulty persuading most managers that they are, in principle at least, 'a good thing'.

'Criticise', on the other hand, is a word with precisely the opposite ring to it. Nobody likes being criticised and very many managers, perhaps because of their experiences of being on the receiving end, avoid criticising their staff when they can and do it badly when they cannot.

And yet, how are people to learn from their mistakes if someone does not point them out and help them to improve? It is not as if errors disappear and performance gets better by magic. On the contrary, when managers see a problem, look the other way and hope for the best, the chances are the next mistake will be bigger than the last. It is a little like ignoring the first signs of toothache.

Criticism is an essential part of every manager's job and we do those who work for us a disservice if we avoid it. Of course, once we recognise that giving constructive criticism helps people to improve, we need techniques to make sure we do it properly. This programme based on the video **Performance matters: the need for constructive criticism** will provide these.

Objectives

Those who work their way through the **Performance matters: criticism** training programme will be able to:

- Recognise the purpose of criticism and the difference between positive, constructive criticism and the negative, destructive variety
- Understand and be able to apply the seven golden rules of giving criticism
- Devise an action plan to improve their ability to give constructive criticism

Using **Performance matters: criticism**

- **Dual use.** The programme can be used either as a conventional training course with a small group or for self study by individuals. The pack contains guidance and appropriate materials for each use
- **Resources on disk.** Most of the support materials, such as OHPs and the workbooks, are supplied on disk. This makes it easy for you to customise them to your specific requirements and allows you to print as many copies as you need for group or individual use

The target audience

The programme will benefit everyone in an organisation. It will be particularly useful to all managers, supervisors and team leaders who have responsibility for directing and supporting the work of others.

Eight to twelve is the ideal group size.

The course leader

You do not have to be a professional trainer to lead a group through the programme. Line managers will be able to deliver this course on giving constructive criticism with confidence by using the materials and detailed guidance provided.

Further resources

Other titles available from Video Arts that will help you improve individuals' ability to give constructive criticism include:

Video Arts: Laughter and Learning

- **I'd like a word with you: the discipline interview** This programme deals with the next step up from giving criticism - the discipline interview. Three managers who do this badly learn how to correct their mistakes. Ethelred the Unready, played by Hugh Laurie, thinks it is a ritual and doesn't prepare. Ivan the Terrible, played by Paul Merton, doesn't ask questions or listen to explanations. Gillian the Silent, played by Dawn French, expects a battle of wills and is convinced she is going to lose
- **Can you spare a moment?: the counselling interview** This programme covers how to handle delicate situations with sensitivity
- **This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you: the bad news interview** This programme demonstrates how to give bad news with as little damage to the employee's morale as possible
- **Managing problem people** This series of videos shows how to turn problem people into positive performers
- **Straight talking: the art of assertiveness** This programme is about assertiveness - how to make sure that you and the messages you want to put across are noticed

Video Arts World Series

- **Tough interviews** In this masterclass programme psychologist Philip Hodson shows how to handle some of the most difficult interviews a manager can face, including dealing with poor performance
- **Feedback for performance** We all need feedback - recognition when we are doing well, guidance when we could be doing better. This programme shows how to give and receive feedback in a variety of situations. As well as an 18-minute drama it contains 30 short video triggers
- **No smoke without fire** This is an excellent introduction to grievance handling and discipline. It demonstrates the importance of taking a flexible, problem-solving approach to grievances and a firm, but equitable approach to breaches of discipline

Books and other publications

- **The assertiveness pocketbook** and **The interviewer's pocketbook** These are from the hugely successful Management Pocketbook series

What the pack contains

The Performance matters: criticism video

The video is introduced and narrated by John Cleese. He begins by saying how humiliated, depressed and demotivated people feel when they are criticised badly. The fact that few of us relish having to criticise others is often explained by our having been made to feel that way when we were on the receiving end. He emphasises the importance of correcting people's mistakes as quickly as possible and explains that, fortunately, there is a set of techniques to help us do it properly.

We then meet Karen, who works in the Planning Department of a local authority. Because she is in a hurry to get home, she fails to check an important file, an omission which causes her boss, Martin, to look foolish at the next Planning Committee Meeting and earns him a rocket, delivered by email, from his Chief Executive.

In the remainder of the video we watch Martin, prompted and guided by John, attempting to criticise Karen for what she has done. At first he doesn't want to do so at all, because he is frightened of how she may react. Once John convinces him how important it is, he makes all sorts of mistakes. For example, he doesn't agree the facts with Karen, he doesn't ask her for an

explanation, he doesn't listen to what she has to say and he attacks her personality, instead of concentrating on what she has done. However, as the video progresses, John explains the techniques Martin ought to be using and we see him doing it correctly.

The video ends with a summary of the seven golden rules - Do it quickly, face to face and in private; Agree the facts; Ask and listen; Criticise the action; Explain why it matters; Agree a remedy; End on a compliment.

Course leader's guide

- An outline of a half-day programme
- How to prepare the programme
- A detailed session plan. This tells the course leader precisely what to do and which resources to use in each session of the programme

Group training workbook

This workbook allows those taking part in a group training course to record the conclusions they reach during the various sessions and the actions they propose to take as a result of the course. The workbook is supplied in an electronic format.

It also contains a copy of the course objectives and programme and a set of notes which summarise the main points of **Performance matters: criticism**.

Self-study workbook

This workbook, which is supplied in an electronic format, contains detailed instructions which enable individuals to work systematically through the programme. Users will find that they are prompted to record their answers to questions about what they have seen and to produce an Action plan.

The workbook also contains a set of notes which summarise the main points from **Performance matters: criticism**.

Links to NVQs

Both workbooks contain a checklist of material which those who have taken part in the programme should collect, such as examples of communications briefs on specific projects, to form a portfolio of evidence which they can use to support a claim for competence in elements of NVQs.

Presentation 'slides'/OHPs

These are master copies supplied in Microsoft® PowerPoint® on computer disk for printing onto acetate or for use as a computer-driven 'slide' show.

Certificate

There is also an electronic version of a blank certificate which users can customise and issue to those who have completed the course based on **Performance matters: criticism**.

Computer disks

As explained above, the computer disks contain copies of:

- Group training workbook (Microsoft® Word®)
- Self-study workbook (Microsoft® Word®)
- Presentation 'slides'/OHPs (Microsoft® PowerPoint®)
- Certificate (Microsoft Word)

(Microsoft®, Word® and PowerPoint® are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.)

Course leader's guide

Course programme

How to prepare the programme

Session 1 Introduction and objectives

Session 2 Criticism in practice: purpose; experience

Session 3 Criticism: the seven golden rules

Session 4 Criticism: the attitude problem

Session 5 Criticism: asking and listening

Session 6 Criticism: role-plays

Session 7 Action plan



Course programme

This is a suggested programme for a half-day course based on **Performance matters: criticism**.

You may choose to incorporate additional sessions to cover key points specific to your organisation or just take elements of the course and run a series of short sessions covering each aspect of **Performance matters: criticism** individually.

If you would like help in facilitating this course or in adapting it to your specific requirements, call Video Arts Training Services. An experienced training consultant can advise you or, for an agreed fee, design and run a course for you.

Video Arts Training Services can be contacted on:

Tel: 020 7400 4800

email: info@videoarts.co.uk

The programme overleaf is an outline of the course.

Each session is covered in detail later in the Course leader's guide.



People should only be criticised for what they've done, not what they are.

Session no.	Session content	Approx. timing
Session 1	Introduction and objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and housekeeping • Objectives • Structure of the course 	<i>10 mins</i>
Session 2	Criticism in practice: purpose; experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 3	Criticism: the seven golden rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Small groups • Discussion 	<i>40 mins</i>
Session 4	Criticism: the attitude problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Exercise 	<i>30 mins</i>
Break		<i>15 mins</i>
Session 5	Criticism: asking and listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Group exercise • Discussion 	<i>30 mins</i>
Session 6	Criticism: role-plays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-plays • Discussion 	<i>70 mins</i>
Session 7	Action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video summary • Action plan • Course summary 	<i>15 mins</i>
Total:		<i>4 hours (including break)</i>