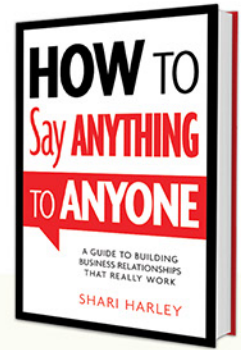


# EIGHT STEPS TO SAY ANYTHING TO ANYONE IN TWO MINUTES OR FEWER **BY SHARI HARLEY**

Conversations following these eight steps enable feedback recipients to remember the situation, see the impact of their actions, speak on their own behalf, and co-create a plan for the future.

Below is more information about the purpose of following each of the eight feedback steps:



- 1. Introduce the conversation** so feedback recipients know what to expect and both the feedback provider and recipient feel as comfortable as possible.
- 2. Empathize** so people know that you're having the conversation to be helpful rather than hurtful. When people know you're in their court, they can listen with less defensiveness.
- 3. Describe the observed behavior** so the recipient can picture a specific, recent example of what you are referring to. The more specific you are, the less defensive he will be. And the more likely he is to be able to hear you and take corrective action.
- 4. Sharing the impact or result** describes the consequences of the behavior. It is what happened as a result of the person's actions.
- 5. Having some dialogue** gives both people a chance to speak and ensures the conversation is not one sided. Many feedback conversations are not conversations at all, they are monologues. One person talks, the other person pretends to listen, while deciding what an idiot you are. Good feedback conversations are a dialogue during which the recipient can ask questions, share his point of view, and explore next steps.
- 6. Make a suggestion or request** so the feedback recipient has another way to approach the situation or task in the future. Most feedback conversations tell the person what he did wrong and the impact of the behavior, but rarely offer an alternative. Give people the benefit of the doubt. If people knew a better way to do something, they would do it another way.
- 7. Building an agreement on next steps** ensures there is a plan for what the person will do going forward. Too many feedback conversations do not result in behavior change. Agreeing on next steps creates accountability.
- 8. Say "Thank You"** to create closure and to express appreciation for the recipient's willingness to have a difficult conversation.

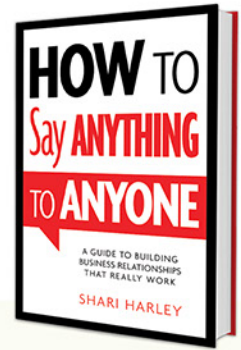
Get more information about how to give and receive feedback by reading Shari Harley's book, *How to Say Anything to Anyone: A Guide to Building Business Relationships that Really Work*.



© 2013 by Shari Harley. Shari Harley is the author of *How to Say Anything to Anyone: A Guide to Building Business Relationships That Really Work* and the founder and President of **Candid Culture**, an international training and consulting firm that is bringing candor back to the workplace, making it safe to tell the truth at work. Shari is known globally as an engaging, funny, content-rich business speaker and author. Shari's practical approach has led her to speak and train in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, India, Dubai, and Australia. Some of her clients include IBM, DirecTV, Starz Entertainment, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Noodles and Company, and the University of Colorado. From making meetings work and delegating better, to managing your career and saying anything to anyone, Shari's techniques are sure to delight and inform in a real, direct, and very funny way. To have Shari speak at your next event, email [shari@candidculture.com](mailto:shari@candidculture.com) or call 303-863-0948. Visit [www.candidculture.com](http://www.candidculture.com) to sign up for edgy career tips.

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You can say anything to anyone in two minutes or fewer. And shorter is better. People would rather hear they aren't cutting it for two minutes than twenty. So be clear and specific, and then end the conversation. If you have a good relationship with the person and he knows you're speaking for his best interest, once he gets over being shocked and upset about the feedback, he'll be grateful you cared enough to tell the truth.



- 1.** Introduce the conversation. Explain what you are going to talk about and why.
- 2.** Empathize. Say, “This is difficult for me to say and it may be difficult to hear.”
- 3.** Describe the observed behavior.  
Good feedback starts with the words, “I’ve noticed...”
- 4.** Share the impact or result of the behavior.
- 5.** Have some dialogue.  
Ask the feedback recipient for his perception of the situation.
- 6.** Make a suggestion or request for what you’d like the person to do next time.
- 7.** Build an agreement on next steps (if any).
- 8.** Say thank you. “I know this conversation was difficult. Thank you for having it with me.”



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