

Needs Assessment

The City has recently promoted several high-performing employees into supervisory positions. While these supervisors are technically competent, employee engagement surveys and HR consultations indicate that many supervisors struggle to provide clear, timely, and constructive feedback.

Common complaints include:

- Employees receive vague feedback during evaluations.
- Supervisors avoid difficult conversations.
- Feedback is often perceived as personal criticism rather than performance coaching.
- Performance issues persist because expectations are not clearly communicated.



Giving Effective Feedback Using the SBI Model

By the end of this session, participants will:

- A. identify the three SBI components;
- B. distinguish objective from judgmental feedback;
- C. and apply the model to a workplace scenario.

Norms

- Be present
- Participate fully
- Assume positive intent
- Honor time
- Focus on application



Why Effective Feedback Matters

Opens Dialogue

Facilitator prompt: "How many of us have received feedback that was vague or unclear?"



Drives Growth

Improves performance and supports employee development



Builds Trust

Builds trust and reduces misunderstandings



The Problem with Traditional Feedback



Vague: "You need to communicate better."



Specific: "During Monday's project meeting, you shared deadline changes verbally but did not send a follow-up email. Several team members were unclear about the new timeline."

Effective feedback is specific, observable, actionable, and less personal.

The SBI Model: A Simple Structure



Situation

When and where did it happen?

"During yesterday's department meeting..."



Behavior

What specifically did you observe?

"You interrupted three team members before they finished speaking."



Impact

What was the result?

"Team members stopped contributing ideas."



Focus on facts. Avoid assumptions, labels, and motives.

SBI in Action: Before & After – Scenario 1

Traditional Feedback

"You need to be more engaged."

Judgmental, vague, hard to act on.

SBI Feedback

"During the last three project planning meetings (Situation),

you did not provide updates on your assigned tasks
and did not participate in discussions regarding project
milestones (Behavior).

The team was unable to fully assess project progress and
several decisions had to be postponed until additional
information was gathered (Impact)."

CLEAR

OBJECTIVE

ACTIONABLE

1:00

Practice Activity: Build an SBI Statement – Scenario 2

i Scenario: A supervisor notices an employee consistently arrives 10–15 minutes late to weekly team meetings.

Exemplar SBI: "During the last three weekly team meetings (S), you arrived 10–15 minutes after the scheduled start time (B). The team had to repeat information and meeting efficiency was reduced (I)."

Discussion: How might the employee respond differently to this vs. "You need to be more professional"?





Key Takeaways

Situation

Describe the context — set the scene so the feedback is grounded in a specific moment.

Behavior

Describe the behavior — stick to observable facts, not interpretations or labels.

Impact

Explain the impact — connect actions to outcomes so the path forward is clear.

"People cannot improve what they do not clearly understand. SBI turns feedback from opinion into information employees can act upon."

Today:

- Intent to use SBI survey

30 days:

- How many times have you used SBI?
- What barriers have you encountered?
- How confident are you now compared to before training?

60-90 days:

Supervisor Survey

- I regularly use SBI when providing feedback.
- SBI has improved my coaching conversations.
- Employees better understand expectations after feedback discussions.

Employee Survey

- My supervisor provides clear examples when giving feedback.
- I understand what actions I need to take after receiving feedback.
- Feedback conversations are constructive and helpful.