

## PROVIDING FEEDBACK

### Evaluation VS Description

There is a difference between evaluation (judgmental) and description (open to possibilities). Evaluation can imply that someone has failed and the sender of the message is the judge of that failure, resulting in defensive response. Descriptive language describes.

Messages with “YOU” attached at the beginning of a message are usually in an accusing tone of voice and are viewed as judgmental.

#### Example YOU:

- “You shouldn’t have done it that way. You really screwed up.”
- “You’re making me mad. You don’t care about anybody else.”

Being able to describe the effect of another’s actions without accusing results in a message that contains “I” rather than “YOU.”

#### Example I:

- “I might have handled it differently. What would you do different next time?”
- “I don’t feel safe when I hear... Next time, could you try...?”

Before you send a message, spend a moment to ask yourself, “What response do I really want?” You will be more likely to get what you want if your message is clear and non-threatening.

### Certainty VS Openness

We have all dealt with people who are certain they are right, and we have all dealt with people who are willing to listen and try alternatives. That is the difference between certainty and openness. When we communicate with someone who is certain they are right, we want to prove they are wrong. Any energy we would have spent solving a problem, enjoying ourselves, or discussing options is instead directed to defense and communication stops.