Writing Matters!

Introduction to Giving Effective Feedback

Objectives

✓ Assessing Student Writing

✓ Avoiding the Grammar and APA trap

✓ Providing effective feedback while also effectively managing time

✓ Examining the importance of effective feedback
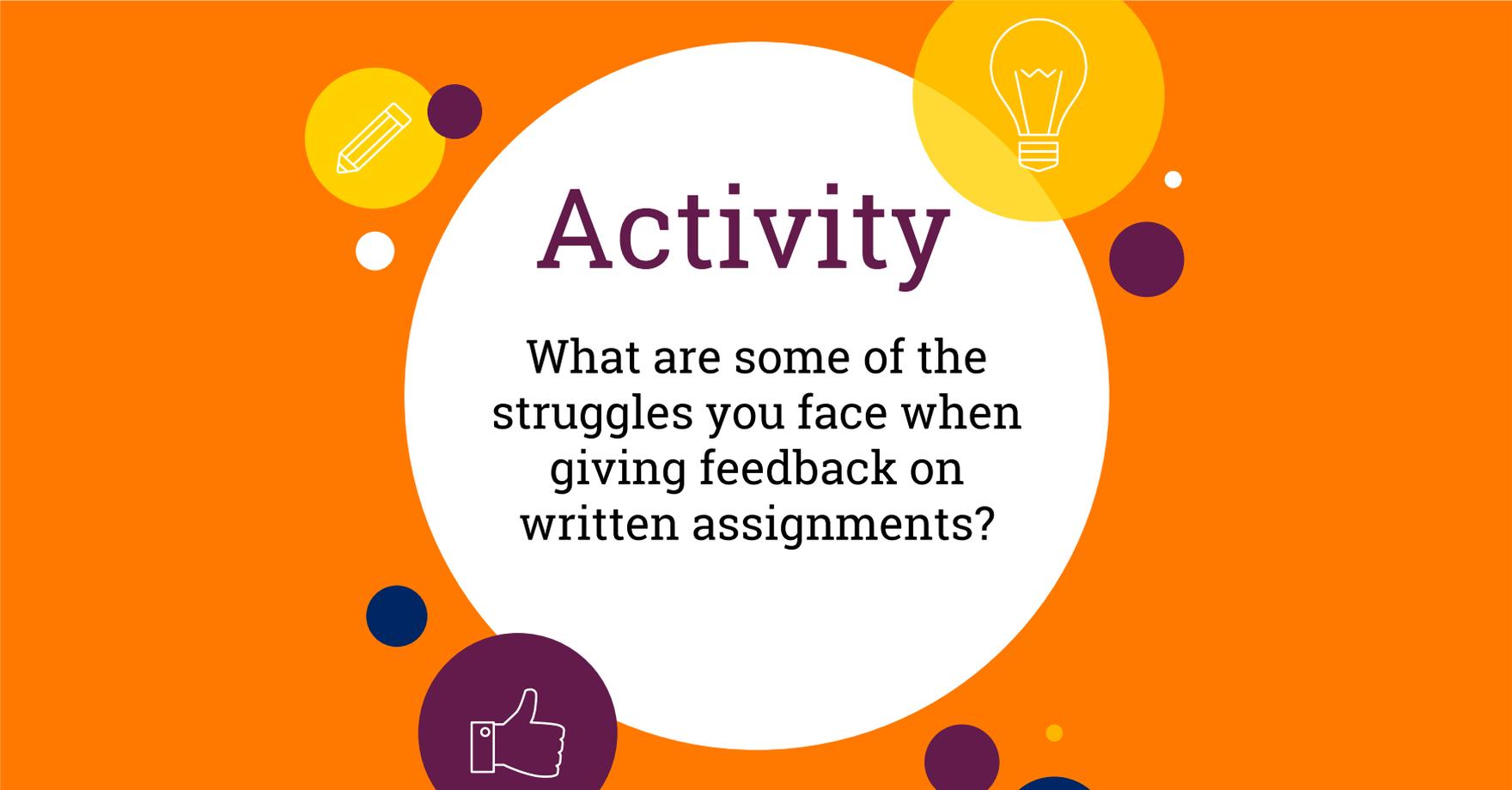
Activity

What are some of the struggles you face when giving feedback on written assignments?

Assessment Hierarchy= Feedback Prioritization

Course Content-Thesis-Analysis-Addressing the Prompt

Organization-Idea Development- Using Evidence/Research

APA-Grammar

Please see my margin comments along with the following suggestions:

Millie, you have a good start here! I'd like to suggest that for your revisions that you focus on organization, academic voice, proofreading, and APA corrections.

1. **Organization**- Your prompt asks that you write about 5 concepts of communication and how to best implement them within the organization. I suggest that you include each of these as a section header within your paper. This will alert your reader that you have all 5 of these and where each one begins and ends. Also, within each section, I suggest 3 paragraphs. In the first, define and describe the concept. In the second, share why that concept is important for an organization. What could happen if it didn't exist? And in the third paragraph, share how you would implement it into your organization. Give examples to show this.

2. **Academic voice**- After you have revised, go through your paper and remove any slang or clichés. Also, remove any instances where you write, "I think." See my margin comments about this as well.

3. **Grammar and mechanical errors**- You have a number of errors in your writing and this distracts your reader from what you are communicating. You don't want that! I suggest that you put your papers through Grammarly, which can be found in your course within the Writing Center tab under Grammar Help. This will help you to identify, correct, and avoid writing errors.
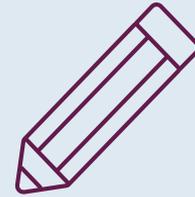
Effective Feedback

Focus on the Content and Writing.
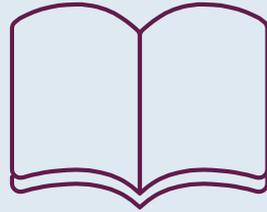
Feedback on Higher-Order Writing Concerns will improve subject-specific content.

Effective Feedback

Address the full prompt: You have not yet addressed all of the items in the assignment prom. This prompt is a complicated one, to be sure. If you carefully break down the prompt, you will see that it is asking you to:

- discuss the problem,
- propose a solution to the problem,
- evaluate the validity, reliability, and biases of the sources you used in addition to pointing out where more research is needed, and
- show ethical implications of your proposed solution.

You might create a section heading for each of these areas to make sure you cover all parts of the prompt.

Effective Feedback

Thesis: The prompt for the final paper for your course asks that you analyze four events in history and discuss what significant conclusion(s) you came to after reviewing all of these events. Therefore, your thesis may be something along the lines of: "After reviewing a number of events on [your chosen topic], it is clear that [the significant conclusion(s) you came to]."

Thesis: A thesis should indicate the purpose of the paper or what you plan to accomplish in your paper. Since the purpose of this paper is to reach a conclusion about your ethical question by applying various ethical theories, you need to indicate all of this in a thesis. State which theories/perspectives you are applying to your ethical question and what conclusion or answer you reached after applying these theories. For example: "After applying the X and Y ethical theories and the Z ethical perspective, to the question of _____, it is evident that the most ethical response to this is _____."

Effective Feedback

Develop this paragraph more: I suggest working on your overall paragraph development here. Your point is not thoroughly explained. To help you fully develop your paragraphs and explain yourself a bit more, follow this:

o Topic sentence that states the topic or point of the paragraph

o Give a Fact/Detail/Reason/Quote/Statistics that supports your point

o Explain this fact

o Give *another* Fact/Detail/Reason/Quote/Stat to support your topic sentence

o Explain this fact

o Closing Sentence

Use this guide for more help.

Effective Feedback

Provide evidence as support: Be sure that you provide some evidence from research that supports this point or claim. Evidence can be statistics, expert opinion, or research studies. If you're having trouble locating useful research, remember that the librarians here at Ashford University can be a fantastic resource! You can find their contact information within the Library tab in the course.

See this [video](#) for more help.

Effective Feedback

Organization: Let the prompt help you to organize your paper. This is how I suggest that you organize:

Introduction: In this paragraph, you need to introduce your topic and then indicate what about that topic you will discuss in the paper. End with a thesis statement that shares what ethical theory you will apply and what conclusions you reached.

Body Paragraphs
- Theory explanation: In this paragraph, you will define and explain the ethical theory you will use.
- Application: In this paragraph, you will apply the ethical theory to the topic. How would this theory view the topic? What conclusion or answer do you come to for your ethical question after applying this theory?
- Objection: In this paragraph, you will discuss a weakness of applying this theory to your topic.

Conclusion
This paragraph will briefly summarize the main points you have made throughout your paper. You also need to restate your thesis--that you have used a particular ethical theory in order to answer your ethical question.

Effective Feedback

Provide more of your own ideas and words: You have provided a lot of great research here! However, you don't have enough of your own ideas and words to create a balanced paper. While you certainly want to include material from sources, you don't want this information to take over your paper. You can correct this by utilizing the PIE method for each body paragraph found here. And be sure to integrate your research into your paper by following the ICE method for any information that you've included from a source found here.

Feedback Traps: Grammar & APA

What can the student absorb?

- Focus on two to five.
- Provide Resources.
- Hold students accountable.

What can you provide?

- How much time can you reasonably provide?
- Are there optional resources?
- You're more than a copy editor.

What does the rubric prioritize?

- Focus on content first.
- Weigh your investment.
- Ask yourself if it's a nuisance or problem.

Time Management:
Choose Your Battle

- Utilize Turnitin.

- Skim the paper first.

- Focus on 2 or 3 grammar and APA issues only.

- Direct students to resources.

Time Management: Harvesting Comments

- Harvest your in-text comments.

- Utilize the Effective Writing Feedback Playbook.

- Add feedback comments to Waypoint.

- Use a solid comment model:

  - State the issue.

  - Explain how it impacts the writing.

  - Describe how to address the issue.

  - Optional: Provide a resource.

Time Management:
Mini Lesson Playbook

For across the board mistakes, give feedback to the whole class.

- Break down the assignment prompt and provide written models of the assignment, then refer to these in your feedback.

- Use and provide Writing Center samples and resources from http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/

- Give APA instruction as a mini lesson, saving paper feedback for higher order writing issues.

Why is Good Assignment Feedback Important?

Instructor expectations vary.

Don't assume AU students know.

Course expectations vary.

Don't assume the worst.

Pedagogy happens in writing feedback.

Thank you!

Any questions?

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Objectives

✓ Discuss best practices for giving feedback on writing

✓ Practice applying best practices

Best Practice: Positive Comments

The Formula

- Positive comments
- The issue
- Why it is an issue
- Resource

It is clear you did thorough research on your topic and have a strong understanding of this issue. You also presented several possible solutions grounded in research evidence that is current and scholarly. As you revise, I suggest focusing on clear transitions and level headings because at several points in your essay, it is difficult for your reader to know if you are still on the same topic of discussion or if they missed something and the discussion has entered a different area. With these longer papers, it becomes crucial for you to help your reader along. Imagine that you are guiding a blind person from one room of a house to another. Use headings or clear transitions to tell your reader that we are now entering a new room or that we are still in the same room.

For help with transitions, see this resource:
http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/transitional-phrases

For help with level headings, see this resource:
http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/apa-style-elements

Positive Comments cont.

Good evidence!

In terms of interpersonal communication, what you think of yourself can affect all aspects of your daily life. Three ideas of the self that describe how an individual visualizes oneself are self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem. According to our text, "Self-concept can be defined as an appraisal of your own attributes and competencies" (Sole, 2011, Section 3.1, para. 1). For example, self-concept is our own personal assessment of our personality traits and our abilities. Sole goes on to share that "The term self-image is a broader term that psychologist Dennis Coon (1994) defines as 'the total subjective perception of oneself, including an image of one's body and impressions of one's personality, capabilities, and so on'" (Sole, 2011, Section 3.1, para. 2). That is, self-image would be both the negative and positive feelings that we carry about our skills, our character, and the way that we look and these feelings may or may not align with the way that others view us. Lastly, "Self-esteem consists of your sense of self-worth and the level of satisfaction you have with yourself; it is how you feel about yourself" (Sole, 2011, Section 3.1, para. 2).

Nice!

Roadmap to Revision:
Summary Feedback

1. **Develop a Thesis**. Be sure that you have a clear thesis statement that will tell your reader exactly what topics you'll be discussing in this paper. A strong thesis statement will also help you to get organized as you begin to write the bulk of this essay. For this assignment, see the sample introduction (with thesis) I provided in the course announcements.

For additional help with thesis statements, see this resource: http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/writing-a-thesis

2. **Read the Prompt**. Be sure that you carefully read the assignment instructions and are meeting all of the criteria. I have pointed out a few instances in my *margin comments* where you have not met the requirements of the assignment. I have provided a *tutorial as well as some samples* within the course announcements.

Practice:
What summary feedback would you give?

In terms of interpersonal communication, what you think of yourself can affect all aspects of your daily life. Three ideas of the self that describe how an individual visualizes oneself are self-concept, self-image, and self-esteem. According to our text, "Self-concept can be defined as an appraisal of your own attributes and competencies." Sole goes on to share that "The term self-image is a broader term that psychologist Dennis Coon (1994) defines as 'the total subjective perception of oneself, including an image of one's body and impressions of one's personality, capabilities, and so on'" (Sole). Lastly, "Self-esteem consists of your sense of self-worth and the level of satisfaction you have with yourself; it is how you feel about yourself" (Sole, 2011)
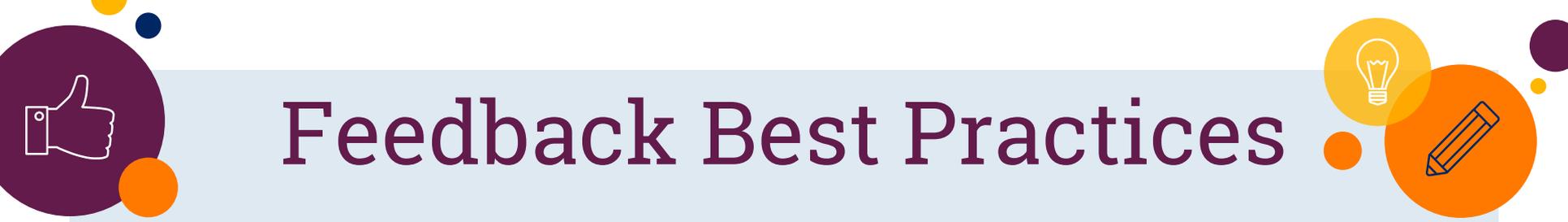
Feedback Best Practices

1. Be direct

Example: Book titles, movie titles, and journal titles should be in italics and not "quotation marks." For example, this should be *Essentials of College Writing*.

2. Don't ask questions

Example: Ineffective: "What do you mean here?"

More effective: This sentence is difficult to understand as a reader. Maybe say something like…….

Feedback Best Practices

3. Hyperlink to resources

Example: I suggest using the APA template to get your title page, headers, and page numbers correctly formatted. You can find the template on the bottom of this [Introduction to APA page](#).

4. Model what you would like to see changed or added

Example: This is a good start. Now, you need to add a thesis to the end of your introduction. Your thesis needs to be your opinion on your research question and the reasons why you feel this way. For example: Because of X, Y, and Z, customers should have the right to know if a product contains genetically modified foods. Click [here](#) for more help with thesis statements.

5. Make each comment a teachable moment or learning opportunity

Example: This is a comma splice (an incorrect use of a comma). To fix it, either change the comma to a period OR add an "and" or "but" after the comma. For more help fixing comma splices, click [here](#).

Activity

How would you enhance these comments?

1. Please be sure to address the assignment prompt.

2. Are you including evidence that supports your claim?

3. Please add in-text citations.

4. Your paper is not organized in a logical way.

#1

• **Ineffective**: Please be sure to address the prompt.

• **More effective**: You included an informative overview of your topic, but this assignment should have been an annotated bibliography that included 5 sources, not an essay. For help with annotated bibliographies, please see this resource: http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/annotated-bibliography

#2

- **Ineffective:** What evidence supports your claim here?

- **More effective:** In your paper you argued that schools should require students to wear uniforms. You also shared some ideas about why schools should do this. However, you did not include evidence to support those ideas. Remember that our argument is only as strong as the evidence we build it on, To strengthen your argument, find outside sources that can back-up your argument. For example, is there research evidence to show that wearing school uniforms reduces bullying? If so, include that to show that using uniforms can have this impact. For help finding sources, please reach out to the Library. You can access their services by clicking on the "Writing Center & Library" tab in the classroom.

#3

- **Ineffective**: Please add in-text citations.

- **More effective:** I noticed in your paper that you have a lot of great information and facts, but you don't cite where you got this great information from. You need to cite any information that is not common knowledge. To properly cite, include the author's last name and year in parentheses at the end of the sentence. For example: (Smith, 2017). For additional help with in-text citations, see this resource: http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/citing-within-your-paper

#4

- **Ineffective**: Your paper is not organized in a logical way.

- **More effective:** I noticed that you have all pieces of the required assignment, but your paper is not organized in a logical way so that your reader can understand your argument. Consider writing an introduction (with a clear [thesis statement](#)), and then build your body paragraphs so they are focused on one piece of your argument. For additional help, see the sample outline I posted in the course announcements.

Mini Lessons

A very common writing error that I see is **using a comma where a semicolon is needed**. A comma cannot do the work of separating 2 complete thoughts; but a semicolon can! If you have 2 complete thoughts, don't use a comma to separate these; use a semicolon!

For example:

- **Incorrect**: We should go shopping today, Macy's has a sale.

- **Correct**: We should go shopping today; Macy's has a sale.

Use this guide for more details: http://writingcenter.ashford.edu/semicolons

Mini Lesson Practice

What topic would you choose to create a mini lesson?

- ❑ In-text citation not included for a source
- ❑ Missing quotation marks for direct quote
- ❑ Paragraph structure hard to follow
- ❑ Direct copy/paste from course materials without citations
- ❑ Missing reference list
- ❑ Missing piece of the discussion

Thanks!

Any questions?