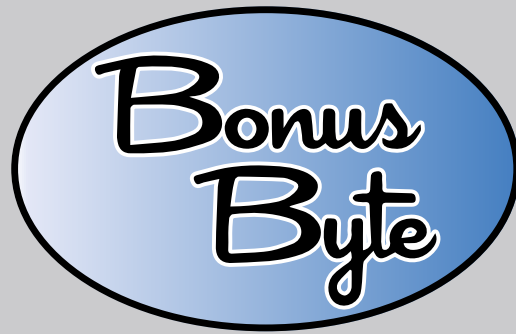


BUD

TO



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**Using Communication Styles
to Provide Better Feedback**

USING COMMUNICATION STYLES TO PROVIDE BETTER FEEDBACK

by Guy Harris

Most supervisors are responsible for delivering performance feedback to members of their team. A face-to-face meeting is the most common way to deliver feedback.

One thing to remember during this meeting, the words you use are only part of your message. Your full message is a combination of the words you choose and the emotion you transmit.

When you deliver performance feedback, the emotional part becomes particularly challenging. People receiving feedback are often at an elevated emotional state, and you run the risk of sounding like you are criticizing or threatening them in some way. This combination creates a potential minefield that even supervisors who are coaching people from good performance to excellent performance can find difficult to navigate. The situation becomes even more complicated when you need to deliver truly negative feedback.

By understanding the emotional filter of the person receiving feedback, you can adjust your delivery to improve your odds of delivering an accurate message. While the details and specifics will change based on your past relationship with your team members, the exact nature of your message and the environment you work in, there are some predictable response patterns you can use to help you craft your message so that you minimize the risk of an emotional confrontation.

Regardless of the other person's particular emotional filter, all work performance feedback should be directed at objective, observable issues – behaviors, words, actions, results, etc. However, even though you do not want your feedback to be emotional in nature, you do want to frame it based on their emotional filters.

In addition to the other person's communication style (emotional filters), you can also consider the three sources of feedback power you learned about in *From Bud to Boss*:

- Position or Power
- Expertise
- Relationship

These three sources of feedback power are perceived differently by people with different communication styles. While all three are at work in any coaching relationship, there are some perception patterns you can use to better understand the perspectives of other people. As a general rule, the position and expertise sources are more important to task-oriented people and the relationship source is more important to people oriented people.

Here are more specific tips for offering better performance feedback based on the communication style of the person receiving the feedback.

Dominant Style (Fast paced and task-oriented)

- Speak directly to how their behaviors, words and actions impact how quickly they will see results.
- Focus on actions over emotions.
- Avoid saying anything that might indicate you don't respect them.
- They tend to interpret power based on personal decisiveness and action than on position.
- They seldom respond as strongly to relationship based appeals as they do to power or expertise based conversations.
- They often perceive expertise based more on accomplishment than on credentials, training and certifications.

Inspiring Style (Fast paced and people-oriented)

- Show them how their behaviors, words and actions affect the way other people might perceive them.
- Connect new behaviors with creating more recognition for them.
- Avoid saying anything that communicates you don't like them.
- They often interpret power based on the influence and relationships you have with other people of influence more than they do solely on position.
- They often respond strongly to feedback from people they like and believe like them.
- Expertise is often secondary to relationship for them.

Supportive Style (Reserved and people-oriented)

- Tie their actions to how they can help others and how their contribution builds the team.
- Rather than focus entirely on what you want done, make time to discuss how you want it done (with their input).
- Avoid pushing too quickly for results. Give them time to process what you have said before asking for a response.
- They often view power through the filter of how you apply your positional power to support and build the team.
- Relationship is important to them. If they sense that you do not appreciate people as people rather than as tools to get work done, you will have little relationship power with which to offer feedback.
- Expertise is important to them yet, like people with inspiring traits, it is a secondary concern to relationship.

Cautious Style (Reserved and task-oriented)

- Speak to the value and quality of their work.
- Be prepared to back-up anything you say with data – quality reports, run reports, research data, etc.
- Keep your comments factual and observable.
- Structure and order are important to them. Your position carries some weight because they often honor hierarchy.
- Relationship is a secondary concern. They would often prefer that you like them, and what you think of their work is more important than what you think of them.
- They often place value on training, credentials and experience to determine expertise.

Remember that people normally exhibit at least two of these traits. So, no individual will fit neatly within one of these guidelines. As you speak with people, observe their responses to your approach and then adjust using these suggestions as a guide to navigate the emotional minefield of performance feedback.

ABOUT BUD TO BOSS

Bud to Boss provides new leaders and organizations looking to develop new leaders with insight, resources and powerful learning opportunities designed to specifically address the challenges of successfully transitioning from peer to leader.

To speak with someone about how we can help you or your organization, send a note to **info@BudtoBoss.com** or call the number on this page.

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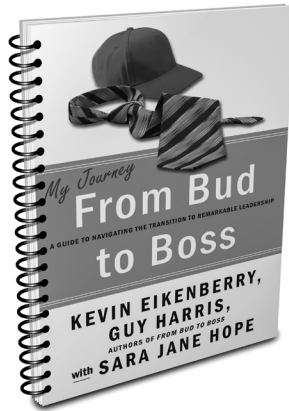
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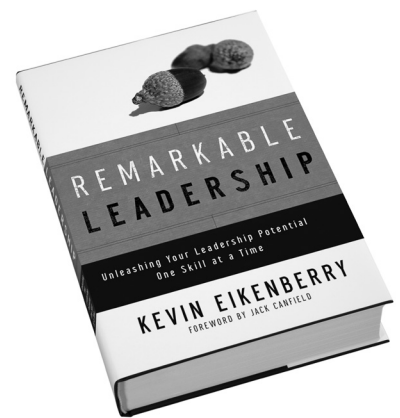


My Journey From Bud to Boss

A companion volume to the From Bud to Boss book, the Journey is a workbook designed to help you apply the knowledge gained to actual work experiences. It includes activities, questions, and exercises designed to take you beyond the concepts introduced to you during the Workshop or the book. And while this book is completely designed to be written in, all of the templates and tools are available in both PDF and Word document form so that you can use them over and over.

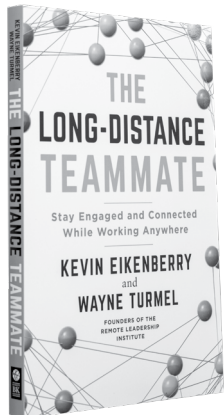
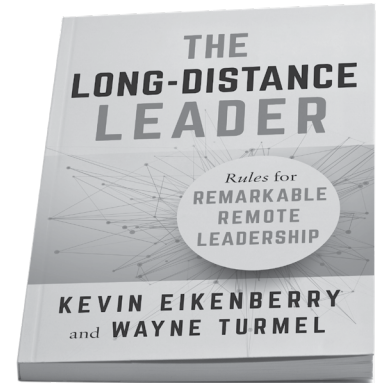
Remarkable Leadership

is a practical handbook written for anyone who wants to hone the skills needed to become a remarkable leader. This book outlines a framework and a mechanism for both learning new things and applying current knowledge in a thoughtful and practical way. It explores real-world concerns such as focus, limited time, incremental improvement, and how we learn.



The Long-Distance Leader

is a practical, candid look at what it takes to lead people, projects and teams in today's dispersed workplace. The book showcases 19 rules for being a remarkable remote leader, and offers practical models, tools, and best practices to tackle the real-world challenges from how we work and communicate virtually.



The Long-Distance Teammate

Written by the founders of the Remote Leadership Institute, this book is the most authoritative single resource for helping remote workers get work done effectively, build relationships that are both productive and satisfying, and maintain a career trajectory when they are not in constant close contact with their leader, coworkers, or the organization in general.

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