

Career Smarts

Anne Carbert, Career Counsellor & Transition Coach

Listen to my interview with Martha online on the Resources page at www.annecarbert.ca.

MARTHA DOVE



Martha is a counselor, coach, trainer and facilitator. She specializes in the areas of conflict management, performance improvement, and career development.

With a Masters Degree in Social Work, Martha's background spans public affairs, management training and organization development.

Since 1989, Martha has managed Martha Dove & Associates Inc., a consulting company providing unique workplace coaching, training, and facilitation services.

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Responding to Feedback in the Workplace

Communication at work can be particularly challenging in situations where your job performance is critiqued or you're given impromptu feedback. Sometimes performance feedback is vague and unclear and requesting more details can reduce guesswork and frustration as you try to improve your job performance and relations with superiors.

Consider why it might be difficult for your manager to give helpful feedback

- may not be experienced or supported in conducting performance reviews and may be under a lot of time pressure
- may not have taken the opportunity to prioritize issues for discussion

Do what you can to ask for more focused and specific feedback

- find a moment to jump in and slow down the conversation to prompt your manager for more details
- use a professional, non-threatening tone
- ask for details and examples around a specific behaviour
- clarify the impact of the behaviour you're discussing so you know why is it important that you do things differently

Remember ...

- be clear by identifying specific behaviours and examples
- balance talking, asking questions, and listening
- ask open-ended questions and paraphrase to check for understanding
- be realistic about the time involved in clarifying these issues and fostering good communication – you may need several meetings

Selected Resources

- *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking when Stakes are High*, K. Patterson, J. Grenny, R. McMillan & A. Switzler
- *Dealing with Difficult People: How to deal with nasty customers, demanding bosses & annoying co-workers*, R. Cava
- employaid.com - has some free articles as well as resources and tools for members

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