



How to Respond to Criticism

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Constructive criticism is a good thing. It helps you improve yourself and refine your skills. *Destructive criticism*, on the other hand, is useless and serves no good purpose, aside from hurting your feelings.

Destructive Criticism - What Should You Do?

Even though it's difficult receiving destructive and negative criticism, you should still listen to it. This type of criticism is normally motivated out of someone else's need to feel superior, but there may be a shred of truth in there somewhere.

Try not to take it personally because, chances are, you're not the problem. The person lashing out may be feeling envious or jealous, which colors their opinion.

Destructive criticism tends to be a personal attack. ***When the heart of an insult or comment is you (rather than something you've done), it is destructive and should be ignored.*** After all, no one has the right to determine your self-esteem!

Constructive Criticism - How to Respond Appropriately

Constructive criticism is meant to help you. ***Listen carefully to what the person is saying.*** When the speaker is finished, ignore any personal attacks and simply let them know you'll consider your actions.

Constructive criticism can be useful if it's based on performance or behavior. We don't always see our own behaviors in the same way others do, so listening to others' viewpoints can be helpful.

Constructive criticism usually comes from a place of genuine concern. If the person giving the criticism didn't care about you, they wouldn't offer the criticism in the first place.

If you receive professional constructive criticism from a superior, you should take notes and ask questions. If your boss is giving you constructive criticism about your job performance, take it to heart.

Your boss is likely speaking from experience and their job is to help you improve and excel. If they're taking time out of their day to offer their insight, it means they value you as an employee and believe you can do better, so the least you can do is listen.

Types of Constructive Criticism

There are certain expressions you can look for to know you're receiving constructive criticism. If you hear these, then recognize the person is trying to help you rather than attack you. Listen well to these types of criticism, analyze if there is credence to what is being said, and then act on their suggestions.

- 1. The compliment sandwich.** Someone gives you a compliment followed by a suggestion for an area of improvement and then finally, another compliment.
 - This tells you that the person sees the good things you do and thinks you can improve further.
- 2. Encouragement criticism.** In this type of constructive criticism, the person is trying to help you do better at something you're already doing fairly well.
 - This tells you the person knows you try hard and maybe even wants to help you take it to the next level.
- 3. Thank you.** If the conversation starts with someone thanking you for a job well done, you can be sure that they appreciate your efforts.
 - This person usually wants to help you do better because they like you.

When responding to constructive criticism, you want to be sure to understand where the person is coming from before you say anything. ***You should always ask them to clarify something if you don't fully understand what they're saying.***

When you receive constructive criticism, consider what is being said honestly and objectively. ***Constructive criticism is all about improving.*** Unless you accept it from this point of view, it will be difficult to change your behavior for the better.

The only thing you need to say when receiving constructive criticism is simply "Thank You."

Responding appropriately to criticism shows your maturity and willingness to improve. So swallow your pride, take it in the spirit in which it's offered, and you'll come out on top.