# Providing Feedback in Online Environments

Providing valuable feedback is essential to all learning experiences. Even though many of the characteristics of feedback are the same in various learning environments, it is especially challenging to provide valuable feedback in online environments. It is vital to adopt specific strategies to provide consistent, timely, and personalized feedback to students in online environments. For continuous improvement of online feedback, ensure that feedback is effective in promoting continuous student growth and success in online environments.

1. Why should the characteristics of valuable and beneficial feedback be the same in face-to-face and online environments?
2. What challenges do I face in providing feedback in online environments?
3. How can I provide consistent and personalized feedback to students?

**? to Consider**

## KEY Elements

Feedback is information provided to students about their actions or performance that impacts their future choices about academics and behavior. Providing valuable and beneficial feedback is essential for success. Meaningful feedback begins with clear expectations and instructions. Teachers should tell students what is expected from the them, when and in what frequency the students will get feedback, and how the students will get feedback. Considering students' individual strengths and needs, and providing personalized feedback, is more beneficial than broad whole-class feedback. To address students' individual and diverse needs, provide multimodal feedback by utilizing text, visuals, audio, video, or one-to-one conferences. Good feedback is concise, clear, specific, consistent, and timely. Constructive feedback, which is authentic and encouraging, is most impactful.

Providing effective feedback in online learning environments may be more challenging than in a face-to-face classroom. Challenges to providing feedback in online environments include technological limitations and lack of timely interaction. In face-to-face classes, teachers can gauge students' understanding and engagement by observing facial expressions and posture or inspire with a cheerful voice. It is difficult to portray these subtle feedback cues in online learning environments. While some of these body language and voice cues can be utilized in synchronous video conferencing, many are very difficult to recreate in asynchronous, independent, or self-paced learning scenarios. The limitations imposed by specific technology tools, different levels of technology use, or Internet conditions make providing effective feedback even more challenging in online environments.

Teachers should adopt specific strategies and structures to promote consistency, timeliness, and personalization of feedback in online environments. Setting clear expectations and procedures for feedback at the beginning of the school year or course is fundamental, including what technology tools will be used to deliver feedback, types of feedback students will receive, and when students will receive feedback. Build feedback expectations and procedures into daily or weekly schedules to ensure impactful feedback loops. To personalize feedback, use student names in written feedback, share feedback in audio or video formats, and include specifics about a student's individual work.

Providing effective feedback is a continuous cycle, including planning, acting, assessing, and revising. The process begins with planning for feedback, implementing the plan, then evaluating its effectiveness, and making revisions for further improvement. Continually evaluate the effectiveness of feedback strategies to provide the best and most productive feedback loop possible. Effective feedback is vital for student success in online learning environments. Effective feedback helps form enduring connections with students and ensure they stay engaged and on track.