

The Evaluation

The goal of participating in good peer-review and evaluation is to give and receive helpful, honest and *specific* constructive feedback.

Most praise and feedback we receive is generic, and while encouraging, it may not help us improve:

- "Good job!"
- "Well done!"
- "I enjoyed your message this morning!"

This part of our workshop is designed to drill down for specifics, -to give and receive a thoughtful and helpful opinion on what worked for the listener and what could be improved. In order to grow and improve the speaker needs to know specifics like:

- Which point was most useful?
- What was your favorite part?
- Which illustration resonated most with you?
- How can I improve?

Be specific. If your feedback is too general or unclear, your message can be misinterpreted. As a result, the message may be ignored and no improvement will occur.

Follow the evaluator's mantra—**what I saw, what I heard, what I felt**. Focusing on these points will help you sharpen your evaluation skills and offer helpful feedback *from your point of view*.

Remember that you are only speaking for yourself, giving only your opinion. You are not speaking on behalf of the audience; in fact, your opinions may differ from those of the rest of the audience. Avoid saying "we think," "we believe," "the audience would have," "the audience didn't understand," and other words that imply you are speaking on behalf of others.

Personalize your language. Use "I" phrases and stay away from phrases like "You didn't...," "You should have...," "You failed to..."

Use words like "I believe ...," "My reaction was ...," "I suggest that..."

Evaluate the speech, not the person. Your main goal is to support and encourage, while offering at least one actionable suggestion for improvement. Watch for symptoms of fear or insecurity. Empathize with the speaker's desire to learn and become a better presenter. Let them know you are rooting for them!

Make sure your praise is honest and sincere.

And remember, always end your evaluation on a positive note