

## Tips for Supporting a Design Team

The following tips are meant to assist the Steering Committee's efforts to support the Design Team's progress throughout the program.

### Seeking to Understand First

*We demonstrate this with active listening techniques such as:*

- Listening without interrupting.
- Listening without judging or reacting in the moment to what is said, "Hearing the whole story".
- Communicating attentiveness to the speaker through facial expression and non-verbal behaviors (nodding, attentive body posture, etc.).

### Coming to Mutual Understanding

*We demonstrate this through paraphrasing and clarifying:*

- Stating what you heard using your own words.
- Checking with the speaker that we are capturing the message.
- Asking clarifying questions.

#### Examples of Paraphrasing:

"I heard you say \_\_\_\_\_".

"From what you said, it sounds like you felt \_\_\_\_\_".

"This is how I understood what you were saying \_\_\_\_\_".

#### Examples of Asking Clarifying Questions:

"When you said \_\_\_\_\_ did you mean \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_?"

"I am not sure what you meant by \_\_\_\_\_. Could you say more?"

# Giving and Receiving Feedback Effectively

## When Giving Feedback, Be:

**Specific:** Be explicit, free from ambiguity, and example-driven.

**Behavioral:** Focus on behaviors and ideas, not personality.

**Timely:** Give feedback as soon as possible, don't put it off.

**Frequent:** Allows for balance (positive and critical), becomes more the norm.

**Balanced:** Be sure to ask the employee what they think and give both positive and critical feedback.

**Constructive:** When providing critical feedback, focus on the merits of the proposal content. Provide clear suggestions for improvement, free of judgment and bias.

**Relevant:** Cover the most important aspects, allow for personal style.

**Accurate:** Avoid hearsay as feedback, get the facts.

## When Receiving Feedback, Be:

**Open:** Be willing to hear ways to improve, keep an open mind.

**Patient:** Listen without interrupting, justifying or explaining.

**An Active Participant:** If you do not understand, ask for an example or further explanation.

**Reflective:** Allow for time to process feedback and agree to discuss further if needed.

**Interested:** Pay attention, ask questions, and request examples.

**Non-Defensive:** Try to listen openly without prejudice or bias.

**A Listener:** Try to avoid the habit of "waiting to respond".

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