

Included in this document are:

- Tips for giving feedback
- Tips for group debriefing
- 12 scenarios that provide a thought experiment into how to approach stressful outdoor-related interpersonal conflict. Using the included tips as a guide, you should be able to provide teaching in a way that empowers your students, and they should like you better as their leader at the end.
- Storyline from the presentation
- Slide break-down
- The high-level message I hope folks walked away with
- 3-5 key points from the presentation.

Giving Feedback Pro-tips:

- Always give feedback ASAP.
- Never analyze someone else's motivation ("he wasn't paying attention," "he did it on purpose," "She probably freaked out").
- Negative feedback will be better received and less shaming if done in private (but try to praise in public).
- Be specific; saying "you're easily intimidated" isn't as helpful as saying, "I noticed that you backed away from that interaction with the trip co-leader even though you needed to communicate that you didn't think the route was safe."
- Consider the impact of your words and non-verbal communication (80% of communication is non-verbal so your tone of voice and body language mean a lot).
- Focus only on behaviors that can actually be changed (you can nag all weekend, but if a student's out of shape, you're not going to get them to go faster and that can lead to frustration and low self-esteem).
- Only address the topic under discussion. Try to avoid, "and another thing, what was up with your tone last Tuesday at that committee meeting?!?"
- Include personalized, specific strengths as well as areas that need improvement (NOT: "I think you're great, but your anchors aren't equalized and you're going to kill someone").
- Keep feedback participatory and simple: The best and easiest way is to encourage self-reflection; "how did you feel that lead went?" "Is there anything you would do differently next time?"
- Ask for validation. Saying "does that make sense?" will get you a "yup" but how do you know they got your message.

Informal Post-incident Group Debriefing Pro-tips (an useful reflection and learning opportunity that is possible once everyone's safety is assured):

- Start by asking the group open-ended questions, "How do you feel that went?"
- Help members express feelings and make rational, real-world connections.
- Try not to waste anyone's time by letting a topic go on too long.

- Give all students and opportunity to talk about what happened, and call on students by name if they haven't talked by using an open-ended question, (e.g. "what are your thoughts Steve?").
- Be sensitive to body language.
- Avoid telling them what you think or lecturing them.
- Don't let a student dwell on their mistakes or perceived shortcomings.
- Problems are attacked, not people.
- Immediately cut off all personal criticism directed at another group member.
- Fear inhibits learning; make the debrief a place where talking feels safe.

Scenario 1:

A new instructor is helping out on a Mt. Erie field trip. He was just granted basic equivalency, and so has never taken a Mountaineer's course. He comes highly recommended, and has a stellar climbing resume. You're the trip leader, and notice that he is walking near an edge without using a prusik on a hand line, which is the safety protocol you went over in the morning. You feel he's putting himself and the people below him at risk. How do you talk to him?

Scenario 2:

You are the lead instructor for a group of basic students who are cragging for the day. You have a handful of newer instructors to help you. One instructor, who graduated from your basic program, has been working with a student, preparing her to rappel back to the base of the cliff. You show up just as she begins to rappel, and notice that the ropes are tied together with a EDK with 6'' of tail beyond the knot. How do you talk to this to the student, as it clearly needs to be addressed immediately? And how do you provide feedback to the instructor that missed that potentially dangerous mistake?

Scenario 3:

You're the lead instructor for a group climbing Sahale. It's a busy day and there are lots of independent climbers everywhere. You just finished belaying your assistant lead up the first pitch. Now you're waiting while he builds an anchor so he can belay you up. While you're waiting, two independent climbers down climb past your assistant lead, and continue down climbing to you. You say hi to them, and they tell you that they gave the assistant lead a locking carabiner. The climbers tell you that your assistant instructor was on the verge of tears. She wasn't scared of the lead, but was grappling with the fact that she forgot a second locking 'biner. She was terrified that you were going to yell at her – she told the climbers she felt safe using two 'biners with opposing gates for the anchor but you would yell at her for forgetting the second locker and appeared so freaked out that the climbers just gave her one. How do you handle this situation? When do you give feedback? How do you give feedback?

Scenario 4:

You are the lead instructor, and there are three new instructors you tasked with teaching the students how to backup belay. It becomes obvious to you that they don't know how to do it, and nobody is communicating that they didn't know how to do it. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 5:

You're the leader in the back of a rope team descending Mt. Baker after a long climb. The student in the front leads our rope team very close to a cornice and you are afraid it will collapse under her. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 6:

You are leading a day hike on the Wonderland Trail. One of the group members sprains her ankle on the trail. Another group member has a higher level of medical training than you do and she wraps the ankle, but you think the wrap is too tight because her foot is turning purple. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 7:

Your SIG group is climbing in Vantage. You're sunning yourself on a rock when you notice that one of your students, who is belaying a top roped climber with an ATC suddenly lets go of the rope with her belay hand for a second because a bee landed on her leg. She yelps, brushing it away, and says she's allergic to bees but she didn't get stung. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 8:

You are leading a SIG group up Mt. St. Helens and you notice that a 45 year old male student who typically minimally participates, and generally keeps to himself has not been taking care of himself at rest breaks; he's not layering correctly, not eating or drinking. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 9:

You're leading a winter hike up Granite Mountain. On the drive you carpooled with your twenty-four year old male basic student who tells you he is psyched to get back into sports because he was the star quarterback in high school and is naturally athletic and gifted at every sport he has ever tried. He appears to have gained some weight since high school. Now he is leading the way, kicking steps for the group, and refusing to switch out even though the pace of the group has slowed to nearly non-existent progress. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 10:

You're leading a climb up the Tooth. It's late springtime and there's still a lot of old crusty snow on the approach. It starts getting really icy so everybody stops to put crampons on except one of your students. He's a great climber and he states, "this is totally not crampon terrain. I'm not putting mine on." However he's slowing down your travel by slipping with almost every step and you're afraid he could slide some significant distance and hurt himself. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 11:

You're leading a Tooth Climb with your SIG group. You're chatting with some of your other students on a ledge while the last student is belayed up the pitch below you. You look over and suddenly realize that the student is belaying with her ATC in lowering mode (not guide mode) but the student clearly thinks it is in guide mode. How do you address this situation?

Scenario 12:

You're leading a climbing trip up Olympus. You just summited with your whole group and you can tell the group is exhausted and is suddenly realizing the ramifications of the amount of hiking that is between them and the parking lot. You have to do one rappel to get back off the technical rock pitch at the top back down to the snow so you can begin to descend the volcano. One of the members of the climb rappels down after you, and you realize when they get to the bottom of the rappel that the student failed to use an auto block while rappelling. How do you address this situation?

Presentation Story Line:

Here's the story line from the agenda slide: People join SMR because they want to provide care for the outdoor community in a way that also conveys respect in the face of humiliating stuff. Of course I have a story for this r/t and old climbing accident. Because we with SMR have been doing this job, we're experts at knowing how to deal with the specific trials that come with outdoor accidents and how to not judge the people involved in them, which we know leads to better outcomes. But, can not judging people also be translated into a useful concept for use in our other climbing related interactions with each other? What happens when we don't judge our climbing partners for their mistakes? What happens when we don't judge our students? Can we still communicate / how do we do that? Will the partner/student still learn from their mistakes? Will there be unsafe consequences or will the outcomes be better there too? The pineapple story is a story illustrating how it is possible to communicate, people do learn from their mistakes and the outcome ends up being better. Cheri has a story about how she ended up not being able to climb with someone anymore because, although she maintains respect for him, she isn't able to provide any sort of feedback that seems to get through and this is a safety issue and sometimes there is no way around it. Here are useful ways to communicate in a respectful way that work almost all the time. You try it. Any Questions?

Slide Breakdown:

Slide 1: This is a pretty slide with our names on it

Slide 2: This is our agenda for the next hour

Slide 3: This is why you should listen to us

Slide 4: People join SMR because they want to provide care for the outdoor community in a way that also conveys respect in the face of humiliating stuff. I have a story for this r/t and old climbing accident that illustrates why respecting someone leads to better outcomes.

Slide 5: This is what respect means r/t climbing accidents. SMR is good at doing this r/t rescuing people. We learned from experience that people are good at introspection - they already know what they did; you don't have to tell them. And you're not so concerned that they learned their lessons anyway, because odds are you're not climbing with them again. But what about using this technique with your teammates/climbing partners/students? What are the pros and cons to treating these people this way?

Slide 6: Communication skills to ensure your teammates/ climbing partners/students are able to do the introspective work necessary for learning without disrespecting them.

Slide 7: Conflict in action, leading to good communication skills, leading to learning and better partnership.

Slide 8: Cheri has a story about a partner who she can't communicate with, and therefore no longer climbs with, although they maintain mutual respect.

Slide 9: Group project helping attendees get better at communication skills ensuring teammates/climbing partners/students are able to "get it" without disrespecting them.

Slide 10: Feedback/ Questions

What is the high-level message that you want to land with everyone when they walk out the door?

Telling people what they did wrong doesn't make them want to change. It just makes them feel bad, and leads to poorer learning outcomes. But changing the communication style allows for most wrongdoers to be introspective enough to figure out what they did and how not to do it again, while actually improving your relationship with them.

What are the 3-5 key points that you want each participant to walk away with?

- People usually know they screwed up without you telling them; usually we all go home and agonize about our mistakes enough already.
- Research shows that learning outcomes are better if your student doesn't feel they're being judged as a person, so being clear when you do give negative feedback that this is feedback specific to their one specific behavior or skill; not about them as a person.
- You can still communicate that there is a problem, you just need to use some specific techniques in order to do this.
- You can maintain respect for a person, find yourself not willing to climb with them, and that's okay. Sometimes people aren't in a place in their life where they're able to listen, or it's not their time to learn a specific skill, and so, continuing to respect them and hold out hope for them, but also deciding not to climb with them until they are able to change is okay.