Do's and Don'ts for Giving Feedback

The purpose of feedback is to help organizers get better at what they are doing.

Be honest and supportive, and give people specifics they can use.

HELPFUL FEEDBACK

- Specific advice on things to do next time. For example, *"You said X, next time you could say Y."*

- Use examples, or hold up a mirror by saying "what I heard you say is...".

- Focus on tangible things the organizer did to affect the outcome.

- Discuss specific solutions to every problem you identify.

- Identify a clear path she can follow to succeed at what she's being asked to do.

- Also, be specific about things he did well, and why it was good.

- Written feedback should be concise, focused and consistent with informal feedback.

NOT-SO-HELPFUL FEEDBACK

- Advice to "be" different: be more comfortable, get more experience, be more outgoing.

- Generalizations: "That was great!"

- Inconsistent feedback or so much feedback that the organizer misses the point.

- Observations and feedback on things the organizer cannot control.

- Bad advice, or advice not translated into teachable skills.

- Saying "Convey a sense of urgency" (unless you explain how).

- Too much focus on what a worker did or said instead of how the organizer made a difference (or not).