Evaluation versus Feedback

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Objectives

• Compare and contrast feedback, assessment, and evaluation
• Understand the key and complementary roles of feedback, assessment, and evaluation
• Describe common types of feedback used in educational settings
• Identify a key source of ‘feedback and evaluation stress’ and understand how it can be ameliorated
What’s the difference between ‘assessment’ and ‘evaluation’

• Assessment: objectively understanding the state or condition of a thing, by observation and measurement
Assessment falls into two general categories: formative and summative

- “Formative” assessment: measurement for the purpose of improvement → *assessment for learning*
Summative assessment / evaluation

• “Summative” assessment: measurement for the purpose of making a formal judgement → assessment of learning
  – By comparison to similar things (i.e. ‘cohort’ or ‘norm’ referenced)
  – By comparison to a standard (i.e., ‘criterion’ referenced)

• ‘Summative assessment’ = ‘Evaluation’
## Summary: Formative assessment versus evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Difference</th>
<th>Formative assessment</th>
<th>Evaluation (Summative Assessment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong>: timing, primary purpose</td>
<td><em>Formative</em>: ongoing, to improve learning</td>
<td><em>Summative</em>: final, to gauge quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong>: focus of measurement</td>
<td><em>Process-oriented</em>: how learning is going</td>
<td><em>Product-oriented</em>: what’s been learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Findings</strong>: uses thereof</td>
<td><em>Diagnostic</em>: identify areas for improvement</td>
<td><em>Judgmental</em>: arrive at an overall grade/score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback

• “All definitions suggest feedback is an interactive process which aims to provide learners with insight into their performance” (Clynnes and Raftery, 2008)
• Feedback can occur on its own or as a component of assessment/evaluation

Feedback: powerful yet often avoided

- Frequent meaningful feedback can transform a student’s learning and ensure standards are met
- Feedback is a difficult, and often neglected, component of teaching

Minimizing feedback or evaluation stress

• Providing ongoing and constructive feedback throughout a course/clerkship can ameliorate ‘feedback or evaluation stress’
• Make it part of the natural dialogue
• When students are kept up-to-date on their progress, both students and teachers can approach evaluations with a general idea of what is likely to be included → fewer unpleasant surprises!
Self-assess your feedback techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not recommended</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating a disrespectful, unfriendly, closed,</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Creating a respectful, friendly, open-minded,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>threatening climate</td>
<td></td>
<td>unthreatening climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not eliciting thoughts and feelings before giving</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Eliciting thoughts and feelings before giving feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being judgmental</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Being nonjudgmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being evaluative</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Being descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused on personality</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Focused on behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on generalizations</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Based on specifics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on unknown goals</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Based on well-defined goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not providing suggestions for improvement</td>
<td>- - - -</td>
<td>Providing suggestions for improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of feedback

• Positive or reinforcing
• Constructive
• Formal
• Informal
• Formative
• Summative
• All of the above
Summary

• Frequent formative assessment with feedback can minimize the risk of major problems occurring later on

• Feedback can help to:
  – Encourage self-reflection and improvement
  – Strengthen self-confidence
  – Reduce fear of evaluation