Student Accountability Conversations

Center for Career Development
SUNY BROOME

Having difficult conversations will not only increase student productivity and professionalism, but also help them to learn what is and isn't acceptable in a work environment

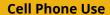## Providing Feedback: The BEAR Method

Behavior- describe the specific details of what behavior needs to be adjusted

Effects- describe impact of the behavior or action

Alternative- what is the alternate behavior you would like to see the student exhibit

Result- what the result will be when alternative behavior is adapted

(Harms & Roebuck, 2010)

Cell Phone Use

Joe, your student employee is constantly on his phone. You are bothered by this unprofessional behavior and wish to address this with him. A conversation may look as follows:

Behavior: Joe, I want to discuss your cell phone use while working at the front desk.

Effects: Our offices first impression is important to us- your cell phone can hinder you from providing adequate customer service and is unprofessional in a service oriented work environment.

Alternative: Going forward, I would like you to leave your cell phone in your backpack while at work- if you are looking for projects to complete, please let me know.

Result: This will help ensure our offices customer service and professionalism quality and provide you with more experience with professional ettiqette.

Communicating Professionally

Carlos, your student employee is responsible for responding to your office email. You receive a call from an upset parent that incorrect information was provided via email. A conversation may look as follows:

Behavior: Carlos, I want to talk to you about answering our office emails. I received a call today from an upset parent about incorrect information they received.

Effects: Responding information that we aren't completely confident with can negatively impact our offices perception as well as inhibit our students from achieving success.

Alternative: I appreciate you managing our email, and understand that it is stressful to not always know the answers. I encourage you to partner with me when you aren't sure how to answer a question, or forward me the email and I would be happy to answer it myself.

Result: This way, you will not need to be stressed or concerned about answering questions wrong and we can ensure all students receive correct information that will help them succeed.

Time Management

Amanda, your student employee is always running late. Although a few minutes doesn't bother you, recently she came in 45 minutes late for her shift today. A conversation may look like:

Behavior: Amanda, I noticed that you were around 45 minutes late for work today. Is everything okay?

Effects: Although a few minutes is understandable, being late for work severely impacts your co-workers and how our office runs. We need you here at the time you are scheduled.

Alternative: Please make sure you are on-time for all of your shifts going forward- if you are running late or something has happened, please call or email me to let me know! We are here to support you and want to ensure you are set up for success in this role.

Result: When you are on-time, our office will operate smoother and you will be more relaxed. This is a critical skill employers seek while they are hiring and will be very imporatant in your professional future.

Taking Initative

Aaliyah, your student employee, is fantastic. She completes all tasks you ask her to, however, after she completes something, she pulls out her laptop to work on her homework. You want to better utilize her skill sets and her time working with you. A conversation may look like:

Behavior: Aaliyah, I am so grateful you are working with us this semester. I want to talk to you about how you spend your down time.

Effects: After you finish your tasks, not communicating they are complete or you have no more tasks to complete means I am unable to discuss what I'd like you to do next. I want us to make the most of your time working here and innovate new projects for you to work on.

Alternative: Lets create a brainstorming google document of projects you can work on after you've finished up what I ask you to do each day- don't hesitate to let me know as soon as you have completed a project as I'd love for us to work together to find more for you to work on.

Result: This will give you more experience working in a professional setting developing transferable skills as well as help me complete more tasks. We can tailor projects and experiences to be focused on what you are interested in learning and what your ultimate career goals are!

Professional Dress

Susan, your student employee, has worked with you since January. It is now the end of April, and the temperatures are rising into the 80s. Two days in a row, Susan has worn a crop top to work. A conversation may look something like this:

Behavior: Susan, I know it has gotten REALLY hot outside. I wanted to discuss your dress the past two days- crop tops are outside of our dress code for work.

Effects: I want you to be comfortable and wear what you love, however, it does need to be within our dress code. We want to ensure our first impression is professional and that is why our dress code exists

Alternative: I have printed out a copy of the dress code form you signed during your on-boarding as a student employee for you to reference- please ensure you are adhering to this document and don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions about what is/isn't acceptable

Result: Professional dress will be important in any career you choose- it is important to begin practicing this now to ensure our office has a great first impression and you gain experience being part of the professional world.

Phone Ettiquete

Kelvin, your student employee, works at your front desk and answers phone calls. Although you have provided a script for him to read from, he continues to answer the phone "Hello?" and communicate unprofessionally with those calling your office. A conversation may look like:

Behavior: Kelvin, phone etiquette is really important to us in our office to ensure that we are providing professional support to those who call us.

Effects: When we don't communicate professionally, those calling us will receive the wrong impression about our office- we want to ensure a positive and professional presence on campus.

Alternative: Although we have scripts, I have created some role play guides for us to practice together. I am going to call the phone, and then you will answer it and pretend I am someone looking for help. This will help you develop problem solving skills and professional communication skills in a safer setting where I can provide you feedback.

Result: Phone etiquette will be important in your future career- I am glad I can help you learn this valuable skill as your supervisor to help with your future and ensure our office has a great first impression.

Providing Feedback: Final Tips and Tricks

- **ASK-** is there any additional training they need? anything you can do to better support them?
- **CONNECT-** Learn about their career goals, their strengths, and where they would like to improve. You can support them with these things and communicate the value of what they are doing within their role at your office
- **ADDRESS**-Address issues as you see them- waiting a week will make it more difficult and discussing it when it happens can be more helpful for student development and understanding