TRAPS IN THE FEEDBACK PROCESS

Even when people have acquired the skills in giving effective feedback, there could still be ways that they limit their personal effectiveness. Often this comes from some personal issues that get activated. Look over the following list and see if any apply to you.

1. Needing to be liked/well thought of

2. Concern with hurting or damaging the other person

3. Worry that the relationship might be harmed

4. Fear of conflict

Do any of these preceding issues cause you not to raise negative issues? For example, to sugarcoat or under-state the feedback? Or to back-peddle at the first sign of resistance?

Or are there ways that you handle either giving or receiving feedback that causes problems? For example...

5. Becoming antagonistic/seeing the other as an adversary so that a win-lose situation develops; making blanket accusations about the other's character or motives.

6. Getting locked into one approach; not being flexible; not picking up on what is occurring in the interaction; not being open to new data or behavior.

7. Losing sight of the other's needs so that when giving feedback, it isn't stated in terms of how the change is in the *other's* best interest.

8. Giving feedback in too general terms; not being specific about the behavior or the effects and consequences.

9. (Since many *interpersonal* problems are interpersonally caused), taking on too much of the blame oneself.

10. Conversely, becoming defensive and not owning one's own part of the problem.

11. Not reaching specific conclusion but allowing generalities to suffice (e.g. "I'll try harder"); not checking that both parties have the same understanding as to what is being agreed to.

12. Failure to follow-up if there is a violation of the agreement