Faranak Fahimipour essay - week 5

If you are required to give feedback about your classmates/colleagues (work or performance),

would you like to give positive comments or negative comments first?

There is no doubt that feedback plays a pivotal role for improving people’s performance in work environment. However, knowing how to give feedback to the colleagues that is not perceived as judgmental or rude is very important. People usually give positive and negative comments to each other to improve their work, however some people prefer telling positive comments first and then give negative ones and some prefer vice versa. I personally like to give positive comments first and then give negative ones for some reasons. In what follows, I present some reasons which aptly substantiate the position I have taken.

First and foremost, I think that if I give positive comments first, my colleagues accept both positive and negative comments better and easier. People like to hear compliments about what they have done. If I give them positive comments first, they will feel satisfied. So they will be a better recipient for negative comments. As a result they will be more open to receive feedback. In contrast, if I will give negative comments first, people will get defensive. Therefore, they don’t accept my comments even if they are right. For instance, in my personal experience I worked in an office that did not have a friendly environment. Whenever the office owner wanted to give me feedback, she was starting with negative ones. So, I didn’t feel comfortable. She destroyed my self esteem. So I ignored her comments and tried to defend myself instead of listening to her comments and adjusting myself to be better. If she had started with positive feedback, I would have received comments more open-minded.

Another factor to take into consideration is that, giving the positive comments first is very critical in case of time constraint. Sometimes because of time restriction, I have to scarify some comments when I talk to my colleagues. As a result I prefer to tell positive ones first as they are more important than negative ones. For instance, in my office meeting we only have one hour to tell all the feedbacks that we received from our clients. Always I give positive feedback first as I know they are more important than negative ones for my colleagues, often times when I go through the agenda I have to drop off some comments. Giving the positive comments first there is less possibility to drop positive ones.

In conclusion, I think giving the positive comments first to colleagues is more effective because the positive comments are more important and helpful than negative ones. So it is highly recommended that everyone consider tell positive comments first to their coworkers then give them negative ones.