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**Getting Learner Input on How to Improve Faculty Teaching**

Sometimes the numerical ratings or narrative comments on teaching evaluations are not specific enough to clearly identify what the exact teaching issue is. If this is the case, it is very helpful for you to talk to learners to get additional information. Below are suggestions for how to do this.

1. Ask the faculty member if s/he would be willing to have you reach out to learners to get additional information to better understand the teaching issue. Reassure the faculty member that you will not tell learners there is a “teaching issue” but that she/he would like to improve teaching.
2. If the faculty agrees, ask him/her to give you a list of learners with whom they have worked.
   1. Focus the list on the types of teaching/group of learners where there are the greatest concerns based on the evaluations.
   2. Ask the faculty member to identify both learners they feel they work well with and those where it feels more difficult.
3. Email the learners to ask if they would be willing to meet with you by phone or in person. One on one meetings work best. See below for potential [email language](#Exampleemail).
4. When you talk to the learner do the following
   1. Set the stage for the conversation
      1. Thank them for taking the time to speak with you
      2. Explain that the faculty member would like to work on his/her teaching and reached out to you to assist. Highlight that just like learners are always striving to improve, the same is true of faculty (this sends a positive message about continuing professional development)
      3. Tell them you are speaking with multiple individuals and that their comments will be completely anonymous
   2. Identify faculty strengths/areas for improvement
      1. Ask the learner what are the teaching strengths of faculty member.
      2. Ask the learner in what ways the teaching could be better. What aspects of teaching need to be improved? Make sure to get examples. Really probe to get the actual behaviors that require improvement.
      3. If the learner is having difficulty articulating the issue, ask them to think about their favorite attendings. Ask them to describe what those teachers do that the faculty member should consider doing when they teach.
   3. Summarize
      1. Ask the learner to identify the top 2-3 things that would be the “biggest bang for the buck” to improve teaching.
5. Continue to meet with learners until you feel that you are not getting new information. This typically occurs after talking to 2-4 learners.
6. Summarize the information for the faculty member (make sure the information is de-identified). Try to provide specific behavioral suggestions of what the faculty member should do differently when they teach. When possible- identify the top 2-3 areas for initial focus.
7. Meet with the faculty member to review the suggestions. Do not tell the faculty member which of the individuals from the list you actually met with.
8. If the faculty member is agreeable, consider identifying someone to directly observe teaching to see how suggestions for improvement have been incorporated.
9. If the faculty member is agreeable, follow-up with learners in 3-6 months for additional feedback.

Example Email

Hi Everyone,

Dr. XXX reached out to me because s/he wanted to get some additional feedback about his/her teaching [can insert specific teaching domain such as lecturing, teaching in the OR, inpatient teaching, outpatient teaching, small group teaching]. Dr. XXX has identified you as someone s/he has worked with.  Dr. XX cares about teaching and would like to make sure s/he is being as effective as possible. Would you be willing to meet with me (or talk by phone) so I can get your feedback about his/her teaching strengths and opportunities for improvement? It is especially helpful to hear from [medical students, residents, fellows, etc] first-hand what they think is working and not working. Most importantly, I would not identify you with your suggestions so your confidentiality would be maintained. I would really appreciate your help.

Below are times I could meet in person or talk by phone (and location). I can send other dates and times if these don’t work.

 [Insert times]

Thank you for your help.

Your name