

# Feedback and Evaluation

Feedback and evaluation are important aspects of running and improving an EVS project. It can also be useful for measuring the success of a project.

Even though feedback and evaluation have a similar purpose they are not exactly the same.

## Feedback

Feedback means that one person gives another person information about his or her impressions, thoughts and feelings related to a concrete action. The goal of feedback can be an improvement, but it can also be acknowledgement. Receiving feedback can help a person to find out how he or she is doing and how to improve.

Feedback can be made face to face or written; it can happen in pairs or in groups. Feedback is no one-way street, so it should also happen vice versa. Feedback can take place during but also after a project and it can happen more than once! It can be formal by making appointments but it can also be informal whenever something needs to be said. Feedback isn't anything one needs to wait for, you can also ask for it.

Giving and receiving feedback should follow some rules, so it can be constructive and helpful. It might be helpful to agree on common rules before the first feedback session.

## How to give feedback

- The goal of feedback is acknowledgement and/or improvement (not: getting rid of frustration)
- Talk about your own impressions, thoughts, feelings
- Talk about specific actions and behaviour (not about personality)
- Talk in private (not in front of the whole team)
- Give suggestions for improvement, encourage the other person to try something new or to do something in a different way
- Give positive feedback as well
- Ask the other person for his or her view

## A bad example would be

"You are always late to our meetings! We cannot rely on you! The other volunteer before you was much more responsible than you are!"

## Better example

"You have been late at our last two meetings. It was important to us that you are there from the beginning so you would receive all important information. Please try to be on time next time!"

## How to receive feedback

- Be open to the feedback and listen actively.
- Ask questions for better understanding
- Evaluate the feedback. Is it justified?
- Give feedback (see above)

## Bad example

You are always so unfair! I'm a volunteer, not your slave! You don't even know what EVS means!

## Better example

Thank you for your feedback. You are right, I have been late at the last meetings and I will make sure to be on time next time. I did not feel very motivated to go there because I cannot understand properly what you are talking about. Would it be possible for you to summarise important points in English at the next meetings?

## Evaluation

Evaluation has not so much to do with sharing impressions, feelings and thoughts but more with assessment and rating. It can be used for the improvement of a project but also for measuring the success. To evaluate your EVS project will also help you to write the final report at the end.

## Before starting with the evaluation process, it might help to answer following questions

- What would you like to evaluate? If you would like to evaluate one big topic like "our current EVS project", try to split it into several smaller topics. Like: tasks, learning, accommodation, mentoring, etc.
- Who will do the evaluation? It might help to evaluate the project together with others. The volunteer will have another impression of different aspects than a colleague in the receiving organisation or the mentor.
- Why are you going to evaluate? How do you want to use the results of the evaluation? Would you like to use it for further improvement, for the final report or maybe for other reasons?
- Which methods will you use for the evaluation?

## There are different methods that can be used for the evaluation of a project and you can also combine them, depending on your goals and needs.

- Written evaluation: using a questionnaire (yes/no; rating from 1-5; open questions) or maybe also creative writing
- Oral evaluation: in person or in a group, structured conversation or open questions, interviews or group discussion, etc.
- Observation: What have you/others seen, heard, noticed?
- Collecting and analysing material: pictures, protocols, reports, etc.

## Now you can start evaluating

- Describe: What is or was going on? How is something? What has happened?
- What is the quality of this action or topic?
  - How is the overall satisfaction?
  - Were the initial goals reached?
- What are/were the reasons why it is/was going like this?
- How can you use the results of the evaluation for your future work?

Even though you might decide for an oral or another kind of non-written evaluation, it might help to write down the most important outcomes. You can use this information for future EVS projects and it can also help you to finish the final report at the end of the project. Also, it is useful to think about what from planned evaluation is usable for creating the Youthpass for EVS volunteer. If the outcomes of your project have not been as good as expected, don't worry. Identify the reasons, maybe get some support and make it better next time.

Remember: There are no mistakes, only learning opportunities!

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