Critic’s List

• **To give passive feedback:** Do everything you can to avoid revealing what you don’t like. Beat around the bush, hem and haw, be vague about negatives (“It’s nothing really...”). Make the person work to get the feedback out of you. Look away. Look embarrassed.

• **To use aggressive feedback:** Be vague about what you don’t like (“It’s a mess!”), make sweeping statements (“The whole thing is wrong!”), use absolutes (“You never do the dishes!”), criticize the person (“You’re a lousy cook!”), and adopt an aggressive nonverbal stance (glare, lean in, frown, speak loudly, and so on).

• **To use passive-aggressive feedback:** Act sweetly but meanly. Use back-handed compliments (“Sooo good for a beginner!”). Take false responsibility (“It’s all my fault – I assumed you knew something about art”).

• **To use assertive feedback:** Specify exactly what did not go well. Don’t exaggerate. Include the positive. Focus on the event, not on the person. Take responsibility (“I” statements). Open, relaxed, attentive nonverbal style.

Topics for negative feedback:

- You did a lousy spacewalk.
- You didn’t get the job.
- I’m giving you a low grade on your job performance form.
- I don’t like your report on the project.
- The redecorating job on your house isn’t to my taste.
- Your artwork is ugly.
- Your room is dirty.
- You’re going out too much.
- You talk on the phone too much.
- You’re driving the car carelessly.
- I think you’re seeing your new boyfriend too much.
- You’re not saving enough money from your paycheque.
- You’re making too many demands on me.
- You’re gaining weight.
- You’re too thin.
- You have a fear of commitment.
- You’re too unassertive – too much of a pushover.
- You haven’t finished the chores yet.
- You’re late again!
- All you do is sit around the house.
- You don’t do enough work to justify your salary.
- You’re giving me too much work to do.
- You annoy the customers.