



People grow in their areas of strength, not when their weaknesses are highlighted.  
Use your employees' particular strengths when crafting your message.

1. List below the top 10 strengths you see in your employee.

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2. Write down the BLUNT version of the feedback you need to give.

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3. Was there any emotion in that? If so, write it again. Still blunt, but without emotion.  
NB: It's okay (and even important!) to say "This made me feel X" but not, "I'm angry that you..."

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4. How might this issue be related to your employee's strengths?

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5. Rewrite your feedback from Step 3 factoring in your employee's strengths.

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6. Now rewrite it again trying either a different strength or a different way of phrasing. If possible, write the feedback in a way that you're opening dialogue. Ask your employee an open-ended question to prompt the discussion of next steps

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Compare numbers 5 and 6 and see if one feels like it will resonate more with the employee. Is one more comfortable for you to deliver? If neither seem like an obvious winner, keep trying different permutations.

If you're really stuck, take a break from this task and come back to it.

You may find the space you crave is the space you need.

By allowing yourself to step away from this activity, you can come back with renewed energy and the right level of focus to find a message that fits for you and your employee.