

D.E.S.C.

Describe

Do

1. Describe the other person's behavior objectively.
2. Use concrete terms.
3. Describe a specified time, place, and frequency of the action.
4. Describe the action, not the motive.

Don't

1. Describe your emotional reaction to it.
2. Use abstract, vague terms.
3. Generalize for "all time."
4. Guess at your downers motive or goals.

Express

Do

1. Express your feelings.
2. Express them calmly.
3. State feelings in a positive manner, as relating to a goal to be achieved.
4. Direct yourself to the specific offending behavior, not to the whole person.

Don't

1. Deny your feelings.
2. Unleash emotional outbursts.
3. State feelings negatively, making put-down or attack.
4. Attack the entire character of the person.

Specify

Do

1. Ask explicitly for change in your downer's behavior.
2. Request a small change.
3. Request only one or two changes at one time.
4. Specify the concrete actions you want to see stopped, and those you want to see performed.
5. Take account of whether your downer can meet your request without suffering large losses.
6. Specify (if appropriate) what behavior you are willing to change to make the agreement.

Don't

1. Merely imply that you'd like a change.
2. Ask for too large a change.
3. Ask for too many changes.
4. Ask for changes in nebulous traits or qualities.
5. Ignore your Downer's needs or ask only for your satisfaction.
6. Consider that only your Downer has to change

Consequences

Do

1. Make the consequences explicit.
2. Give a positive reward for change in the desired direction.
3. Select something that is desirable and reinforcing to your Downer.
4. Select a reward that is big enough to maintain the behavior change.
5. Select a punishment of a magnitude that "fits the crime" of refusing to change behavior.
6. Select a punishment that you are actually willing to carry out.

Don't

1. Be ashamed to talk about rewards and penalties.
2. Give only punishments for lack of change.
3. Select something that only you might find rewarding.
4. Offer a reward you can't or won't deliver.
5. Make exaggerated threats.
6. Use unrealistic threats or self-defeating punishment.