

Gambits for Constructive Feedback

As students, and as professionals, you are expected to work with others productively to accomplish tasks. The contexts may vary—academic study groups; group projects for a particular class; committee work; professional project teams; or high-stakes work meetings.

In effective groups, members reach their goals and are satisfied with their experience. They recognize the contributions of all members and share a sense of accomplishment.

In some of these contexts, you can be assertive and take steps to increase your chances of working effectively together. General guidelines follow:

- Know your group members and acknowledge their strengths
- Establish ground rules
- Have a facilitator (even a rotating one)
- Communicate frequently and openly
- Learn strategies to avoid or deal with common group problems

➤ Making Suggestions/Giving Advice

May I make a suggestion?

Don't you think . . . ?

Wouldn't you say (agree or think) . . . ?

Wouldn't it be better if . . . ?

Why don't you try . . . ?

You might want to consider

I need/find/am wondering. . . .

Let's

Perhaps we could

Why not . . . ?

How about . . . ?

I suggest that we

➤ Asking for Suggestions/Advice

Do you have any suggestions?

What do you think?

What would you do?

What should I do?

➤ Accepting and Rejecting Suggestions/Advice

That's a good point (idea, approach)

Thanks for reminding me.

Yes, why don't we try that?

I want to think about that.

I hadn't thought of that.

That's a good idea but

That would be great, except

Yes, but don't forget

Yes, but keep in mind

Yes, but consider

Possibly, but