

## Giving Sensitive Feedback – Part 2

We have done a series of workshops in using English to communicate a sensitive issue with a colleague or employee. It is important to use English with tact and sensitivity in this type of context. However, for non-native speakers it is all too easy to come across as direct and unfeeling. We created a scenario where workshop participants acted as HR professionals/managers supporting their teams in managing a range of confidential issues in a 1 to 1 meeting. Some of the key expressions we generated are noted below.

### **Context 2: From the perspective of the employee:**

#### **Setting the context of the meeting:**

- Thank you for agreeing to see me today.
- I really appreciate your time today.
- Thanks for agreeing to see me at short notice.
- It is a really helpful for me to talk this through.

#### **Stating your problems:**

- I have been experiencing a difficult time at work because...
- The last few weeks, months have been challenging because...
- I have had a challenging period because...
- I have struggled with...
- I have found my motivation has suffered in relation to...
- I have found the objectives difficult to deliver because...
- I am still very committed to xxx, however the last few weeks have been...
- I find it difficult to...
- My relationship with xxx has suffered because of...
- My level of performance has dipped because of ...

**Moving forward:**

- I would welcome the opportunity to...
- My next step is to....
- I think I need to...
- If it is possible, I would like to...
- I value your support and my next step is to...
- To move forward I need/want/would like to...
- It is important for me that we find a solution to...
- With your support I am confident I/we can...

For example, if you have a serious problem which requires immediate action, your language might need to be direct. However, if you require some support but are mindful of the need to retain your credibility in a very competitive environment, you might want to use more moderate language. The differences can be seen below.

**1) Urgent:** I really need your help, My performance has suffered because of...

**2) Considered:** I would welcome your support, While generally my work is going very well I am looking to find a solution to...