



January 31, 2013

Dear Friends!

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash! **Firelight is now open for Letters of Inquiry in Tanzania.** Please see the content below for details!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Call for Letters of Inquiry) Firelight Foundation - Organizations Improving Learning Outcomes for Children in Tanzania
(Resource) Tips on Giving and Receiving Feedback

(Call for Letters of Inquiry) Firelight Foundation - Organizations Improving Learning Outcomes for Children in Tanzania

If your organization is a charitable organization working to improve learning outcomes for pre-primary and primary school children in TANZANIA, Firelight Foundation invites you to send a letter of inquiry and provide us with basic information about your organization. We will give particular priority to organizations working in the Moshi/Arusha, Iringa, Mbeya, and Morogoro regions. We will accept applications from outside of those regions.

Under this funding, we seek to identify organizations that are focused on improving children's learning by creatively engaging family and community to help children to succeed in school, while also building a stronger relationship between what is happening in-school, outside of school, and what happens at home. Over a period of three years, Firelight will work closely with organizations to demonstrate the effectiveness of their innovative approaches to improve learning outcomes. Firelight will facilitate adoption of the most effective approaches among a network of community-based organizations.

Please submit your letter of inquiry by February 18, 2013. Please forward all letters of inquiry via mail, fax, or e-mail to:

Firelight Foundation

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Santa Cruz, California 95060 USA
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You can find the full guidelines on our webpage:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/grantees/apply-grant/>

(Resource) **Tips on Giving and Receiving Feedback**

Giving and receiving feedback is a vital part of working in effective teams. The feedback process is one of the best ways to improve performance and reinforce strong behavior. For adults who like to control their learning process, the process of giving and receiving feedback is an excellent way to process new information. Giving and receiving feedback can be sensitive, however. To maximize the effectiveness of the feedback, it is important to follow these guidelines.

Giving Feedback

- Pay attention to timing and location. It is best to offer feedback immediately following the incident in question. It is not always possible to provide feedback immediately following the incident. Email is not effective as a single way of providing feedback.
- Do not save feedback and deliver large quantities at one time, as this will overwhelm the receiver.
- Pay attention to the surroundings when giving feedback. Choose a location that is quiet and private away from peers, supervisors, or supervisees.
- If in doubt, check to see if the person is ready to receive feedback. Assuring that the receiver is not embarrassed or distracted will improve their response.
- Describe rather than judge. When you offer feedback, describe objectively what happened. Avoid making judgments or prescribing behavior. Focus on the behavior and not the person. Using an objective description in your feedback allows the listener to see what you are referring to in a non-threatening manner, and will help them discuss the problem with you.
- Make clear and unambiguous statements. Keep your sentences short and do not equivocate. Avoid applying labels, such as “incompetent” or “irresponsible”. Do not exaggerate, using statements such as “you always” or “you never.” Rather,

give specific examples or numbers. Your feedback will be more effective if the person understands your point, and does not feel attacked. In many cases, feedback given is punitive. It is important to model feedback that is constructive and supportive.

- Describe the impact of their actions. Explain what will happen as a result of this behavior. Showing the far-reaching effects of the behavior will help the listener understand why it is important to change. However, be careful to avoid blaming the person.
- Focus on modifiable behaviors. Feedback is not appropriate if the receiver has little or no control over the problem, for example an extremely high workload, or performing a task without training. In such situations it is better to problem-solve and identify realistic goals.
- Involve the individual. Allow the individual to work through the issue with you. Rather than presenting the problem and then offering all the answers, involve the person in a discussion. Allow them to explain their behavior and highlight their difficulties. Listen actively and paraphrase their key points. Ask the person to offer ideas about how to fix the problem. Allowing the individual to create solutions will increase the probability of their taking action.
- Summarise the conversation, and then follow up. Ensure that you are both clear on what the problem was, and how the problem will be fixed. Offer support and encourage the individual. Finally, follow up over time and praise any changes that have occurred.

Receiving Feedback

- Listen carefully. Do not interrupt the speaker. Make eye contact, and when they have finished ask questions to clarify their meaning
- Don't be defensive. As you listen to what they are saying, try to see their point of view, or understand how you can use this feedback effectively. If you disagree with a point, ask for more details or examples.
- Summarize what you have just heard. Put their feedback into your own words and ask them if you have understood correctly.
- Feel free to discuss the feedback. Without being defensive, discuss the input. Explain your reaction, problems you might have with changing, and the impact you see changing might have.

- Build a plan of action. It may be helpful to involve the person giving you feedback in making a plan to change. If you do not feel comfortable with all of the feedback, you may wish to take some time to evaluate what you feel is important to change, and then return to discuss a plan of action with the person giving the feedback.
- Remember that even if you don't agree with everything, some portion of the feedback may be accurate.

Based upon:

Baughman, S. The Learning Curriculum: Giving and Receiving Feedback [training material on the Internet]. Available at:

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/groups/learning/lmarticles/GivingandReceivingFeedback.pdf> Accessed 8 November 2005. Tips on Giving and Receiving Feedback [information page on the Internet]. Available at: <http://www.pao.gov.ab.ca/toolkit/coaching/giving-and-receiving.pdf>. Accessed 8 November 2005. McNamara C. Basic Guidelines for Giving Feedback [information page on the Internet]. Available at: http://www.managementhelp.org/commskls/feedback/basc_gde.htm.

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>. We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

For more information contact:

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