

Career Headlines



Good People Receive Criticism

You're having a great day when someone who's important—a boss, a teacher or a parent—says something that stings with what you believe is criticism. You can't put it out of your mind and think about what was said over and over.

When you go into the workplace and start receiving evaluations, you'll find "Ability to accept criticism" on the evaluation form. If the evaluator, usually your boss, indicates you don't handle criticism well, that's a negative in your record.

Many people look at criticism as a bad thing, but it can be a very good thing, if it helps you make better choices in the future or improves your work. If you react inappropriately to criticism, however, you'll lose respect.

Here are three things to know about criticism:

- It's inevitable. Everyone gets criticized sometime, with both constructive and destructive criticism.
- Constructive criticism teaches you how to improve, overcome a mistake, or find a better solution. Destructive criticism is something to shake off and move on from.
- When you react defensively to criticism, it comes across as immature and becomes a negative against you.

These are immature responses to criticism:

- Making excuses
- Becoming angry
- Blaming others
- Arguing
- Trying to explain or convince
- Turning to self-pity

Professionals see criticism as a way to learn and grow. They are able to say, "Thank you for pointing that mistake out," or "I appreciate your feedback." It proves they have high self-esteem and confidence. Boxers go to the ropes to regroup when they are hurt. You need to do the same with criticism.



Action: Look at the above list of immature responses to criticism. Do you recognize yourself in the examples? List each one that is a way you respond to criticism and describe how you can react differently.

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