

Scholarly Digital Storytelling
Fall 2019
HE792/HIST688

Advice for Giving and Receiving FeedForward

Giving and receiving feedback is a crucial skill for digital storytellers to develop, whether in the academic or professional world. And as with skill, it takes practice. Here are some tips and strategies that may be useful:

General Tips for Giving Good Feedback/FeedForward

- Remember that you're assessing a *scholarly digital story* and not the *storyteller* of that work: focus your feedback accordingly.
- Point out both strengths and weaknesses in the draft.
- Don't be mean-spirited or aggressive in your comments.
- At the same time, generous praise alone does not help. Digital storytellers need projects *improved*, not *approved*.
- Consider the assignment and whether the scholarly digital story is meeting the requirements.
- Look at all components of the scholarly digital story, including narrative, visuals, audio, and overall impact. Provide specific feedback as well as overall comments.

Specific Strategies for Giving Good Feedback/FeedForward

- Be as specific as you can and point to examples, including time stamp as relevant. The writer needs to be able to refer back to your comments and understand them when you're not around.
- Ask questions to make the writer think more about specific ideas or choices.
Example: "Are there any other reasons why this might be the case? Are there other ways to explain this concept?"
- Use I-language, wording that focuses on you as the reader, rather than on the writer.
Example: Instead of "This is not clear" or "You don't make sense here," try saying "I didn't follow the ideas here."
- Try the +/- method: Start with a comment of praise, then shift to related constructive criticism. **Example:** "This example is interesting and insightful, but I'm not sure I see how it connects to your thesis."

General Tips for Taking in Feedback

- The single most important thing you can do is listen. Don't be defensive. Don't try to explain what you really meant. Don't question every comment. *Just listen.*
- Pay attention to places in the digital story where colleagues are confused; that signals areas to work on.
- Pay attention to where colleagues see things you didn't intend or misinterpret your ideas. Examine that closely.
- Ask clarifying questions about any advice or feedback you don't understand.
- Ask follow-up questions to take specific advice further. **Example:** "You said that my introduction wasn't working. What if I started with this interview/clip/segment?"
- Seek extra feedback or clarification when you still need it. Sometimes a second or third opinion is very helpful!