Tough Phrasing

## Avoid the Evitable

* Never make remarks about age, race, gender, or disability
* Refrain from expressing personal likes or dislikes
* Avoid extreme words or phrases ("always," "never," "constantly")
* Avoid phrases that sound inflexible ("you're wrong," "I don't care")
* Avoid emphasizing failure without clarity on a good outcome
* Don't show negative emotions
* Don't rely on general statements
* Don't dominate the conversation
* Don’t sugarcoat issues and avoid discussing real problems.

## Improvements

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| Could Be Better | Why | Improved |
| Your communication skills can improve. | Vague, evasive | Your email etiquette can improve, particularly spelling and grammar. |
| You’re not very detail-oriented. | Negative, focuses on person rather than behavior | I’m confident you can increase the accuracy of your work. |
| Your productivity was way down the last 2 quarters. | No focus on good outcome | As you know, we’re always striving for 120 outbound calls per quarter. |
| You’re wrong about that. | Inflexible | I see this issue differently. |
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