IDEALS Script for use in giving constructive feedback
(Adapted from Leadership IQ webinar presented at Capital Health, March 22, 2013)

Step 1: Invite them to partner
“Would you be willing to have a conversation with me about… [_________].”
• Keep third-person (avoid the word “you”)
• Avoid any attacks or judgments (“Would you be willing to have a conversation with me about why you’re such an idiot?”)

Step 2: Disarm yourself
“I’d like to just review things to make sure I’m on the same page as you.”
• You’re taking responsibility for getting on the same page as them and truly understanding their perspective
• You’re not blaming them for not being on the same page as you

Step 3: Eliminate blame
“And if we have different perspectives, we can discuss those and develop a plan for moving forward.”
• You’re not presuming there’s a fight coming
• You’re not presuming that they’re going to be wrong
• You’re telling them that you’re not going to attack them for being wrong
• It’s a blame-free way of saying “we see things differently”

Step 4: Affirm their choices
“Does that sound ok? I can talk now or if necessary I have time later?”
• You’re testing to make sure they’re feeling ok and that their walls are still down
• You’re giving them some control and thus easing their anxiety
• You’re offering a choice about when to talk
• But you’re still gently insisting on having this conversation because this is a forced choice

Step 5: List corrective feedback
“In last week’s department meeting, there were 3 times [Dr. So and so] didn’t react well, each following a comment you made.”
• Facts are Candid, Objective, Specific, Timely, Unemotional

“Do you know what comments I mean?” <nodding, yes> “What do you think happened there?”
• Test whether they “get it” or not

“Not sure? OK. Let me share what I saw. Two of those times [Dr. So and so] reacted anxiously and one time she reacted angrily. Specifically, the comments you made that preceded those reactions were… [_______].”

“Here’s why I think she reacted that way…”
• Interpretations are useable but only when focused on somebody else, not the recipient of the feedback

Step 6: Synchronize your understanding
“Tell me how you think we can work together to build on this and make things even more effective next time.”