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| Approach: **Understanding Context and Identifying opportunities** |
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| Following a periodic review panel members received information from students about areas of the course they felt required some changes. We knew improvements were needed but the way we had responded to student feedback tended to be quite reactive. We didn’t really understand what was driving the feedback or what they really wanted - just what they said they didn’t like. I also felt that giving staff a long list of things students are not happy with was demoralising. You reach a point where you open an email expecting to read bad news. So I felt there had to be a better way. I didn’t want to ignore the issues but I did want to understand them better and wanted to keep the staff motivated too. Sometimes when you just focus on negative comments it can make people defensive and overly focused on the details rather than the underlying values.  ***In order to get under the surface, I met with students and asked them to describe when teaching is excellent rather than when it is bad.*** If they were to focus upon the bad examples I would encourage them to describe what good would look like.  I also asked everyone who taught on the course to send me written examples of positive feedback they had received from students. Pretty much everyone responded, the only non-responses were from 1 or 2 staff who were very modest. This allowed me to compile lists of examples of good practise.  Using basic content analysis and supported by positive data from the NSS results, I came up with a list of values which underpinned these examples of positive feedback on good teaching. So for example it became clear that students want to feel valued and their time is respected, they want the opportunity to speak their mind and test out ideas. Ultimately students want to feel valued as someone who is at a stage of learning. Quite often, when you learn what they want you can't always do it, it's not always your decision. They do, however, recognise you care and are trying and that makes the difference as you are paying attention to them. |