

Feedback

Giving and Receiving Feedback

The importance of feedback: “Am I heard?” “Do I matter?” “am I developing?” “does my people leader know what I need?” “Am I doing what is expected of me”?

Feedback is an intrinsic part of self-regulation and growth. Giving and receiving feedback is critical to positive and healthy organisational culture. Giving and receiving feedback supports the ability to improve performance and achieve goals. It is a two-way process. However, while it is important for a manager to provide feedback to employees regularly, it is equally important for the manager to be able to receive feedback from employees.

01 Feedback and Engagement

Employees want and need feedback from their managers and leaders. Knowing if they are doing well or need to adjust their development keeps them focused, motivated and confident. Giving constructive feedback builds confidence and self-efficacy and increases motivation.

02 Feedback and Motivation

If delivered constructively, feedback motivates employees, and motivation is a key function of success. Unmotivated employees are unlikely to be engaged, fulfilled, and interested in their work. Celebrate successes more.

03 Why feedback?

An intrinsic part of coaching and mentoring, and self-development is the concept of feedback. We all may not be as self-aware as we think, we may have blind spots, and our perception of self may be distorted; feedback it's a 2-way process; and multi-dimensional, both positive and developmental and up and down the organisation.

- Feedback comes from mentees, employees, line managers, mentors, and coaches.
- Feedback comes from mentors and coaches, and leaders to mentees, coachees and employee.
- Feedback can also be peer-to-peer.
- Feedback is designed for constructive development and increasing self-awareness.
- Healthy feedback increases team performance.
- Feedback is a part of growth and development.
- For feedback to be successful, we need an environment of psychological safety and trust.
- Creating an open environment of feedback assists us in creating a learning and development culture. Our ability to give and receive feedback contributes towards a collaborative work environment. We also learn how to accept self-perception versus how we are perceived.
- A much-overlooked and under-utilised leadership trait is positive reinforcement. We may not realise what others perceive we are doing well unless they point it out and provide positive feedback. Done well, this brings the best out of others and empowers them. This increases confidence and self-efficacy. We should celebrate success more.
- We need to be mindful of the impact of giving feedback. As it's a learning process and a skill we can develop, we must remember that we are all humans on both sides of the feedback conversation, and our self-awareness is key.

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04 Skills and actions

- Make employees feel heard and respected - listen and speak to them.
- Keep channels of communication open. Organise regular one-to-ones and performance reviews.
- Create a forum for the team to share ideas with one another.
- Update employees regularly on company news, strategy, key issues, or changes.
- Make time for individual, private conversations with members of your team.
- Get to know your team. Spend time observing how the team interact with one another and pay attention to how they respond to you.
- Involve employees in decision-making.
- Celebrate achievements. Bring the whole team together to share their successes.
- Confidence, consistency, and honesty are essential in tackling tricky feedback. Keep your feedback frequent, relevant, and timely.
- Constructive criticism should always be given in privacy and with some notice.
- Think 'Leader as Coach'. Discuss with the employee how they might find ways to improve this aspect of their performance and provide them with suggestions for improvement.
- Criticism without direction or discussion is simply de-motivating.

05 Giving feedback

- Feedback is a type of regulation.
- Be respectful.
- If unsolicited, ask permission.
- Be honest.
- Be factual.
- Have examples.
- Leave on a positive angle.
- This should not be a "negative comment" process.
- Talk about behaviour and action, do not personalise the conversation.
- The sole intention is to help someone improve or grow & develop.
- Give positive feedback.
- Be honest if you find it difficult to give "hard feedback" – this shows you are human and be authentic.

06 Receiving feedback

- Be gracious. Thank the person who probably found it difficult to deliver it
- Do not justify – this is not an argument or discussion.
- You may discover your blind spots
- A chance to grow, develop and be a better version of yourself.
- Build trust and embrace vulnerability.
- Listen without judgement.
- Be curious as to how you may be perceived.
- Take the time to process and reflect on what you have heard.

07 The Art of giving feedback.

Listen to the below short Ted Talk from Leann Renninger (5 mins). Giving feedback is about quality conversations – how to say difficult messages well. The Quality of the conversation determines the Quality of the relationship, which determines the Quality of the organisation. It's all about language and positioning. 3Q

Video link – How to give great feedback

https://www.ted.com/talks/leann_renninger_the_secret_to_giving_great_feedback?language=en

Leeann describes a simple 4-part formula to give feedback successfully – note Confucius. Make feedback 'brain friendly' that doesn't challenge the receiver; note the amygdala! Our unconscious reaction to the new feedback information. We need to be self-aware and compassionate giving and self-compassionate receiving; it's never easy we need to develop this skill.

1. The "micro yes" pacing tool that creates the buy-in – creates autonomy.
2. Data points – being specific.
3. Show the impact to suggestion – the power of change.
4. A question to close – be curious – this makes the process collaborative.

08 The Art of receiving feedback.

At the bottom of this section, you will find a link to a short (8-minute) video introducing the opportunity and how to embrace receiving feedback. Note how we feel receiving feedback and observe the ability and opportunity to grow. It's always a challenge to hear the difference between how we perceive ourselves and others. Think as Joe Hirsch alludes to think "Feed-forward", not Feedback."

How we receive feedback is critical – note Joe's comments – and take a moment to reflect.

- Ashamed of our shortcomings – when spelt out.
- Upset by others' perception.
- We sometimes dread the way feedback makes us feel.
- We feel exposed and uncovered.
- Sometimes there is a version of self we don't know and choose to ignore.

We need to understand that, on receiving feedback, we may come across as:

- Too arrogant
- Too proud
- As too good
- Defensive
- Trying to alter the perception of context- the return serve.

Video Link – How to embrace receiving feedback

https://www.ted.com/talks/joe_hirsch_the_joy_of_getting_feedback

09 Different models of feedback

Giving powerful feedback is more than just telling someone to do something differently. The way you frame and phrase your feedback is extremely important. And that's where feedback models come in.

Following a feedback model to structure your feedback allows you to deliver feedback more clearly and effectively. It ensures you get your message across and your recipient understands what you're saying and what's expected of them.

New feedback models and techniques have emerged in recent years, with management and coaching specialists creating a wide range of feedback models, methods, and tools to implement feedback.

Below are a few examples; you will need to find one that resonates with you, is authentic to you, and dovetails with your organisation's values and culture.; you may find a particular blend works. The important thing to observe is creating a structure. Feedback models help you formulate and deliver your feedback more effectively. It helps you structure what you want to say and how you will say it.

9(i)

The SBI feedback model

Situation-Behaviour-
Impact (SBI)

(The model does not include a recommendation for future action. Therefore, we recommend using the SBI feedback model for positive rather than negative feedback.)

This way of providing feedback aims to help the receiver better understand what impact their actions have had.

Here's how one would structure feedback with this model.

- **Situation:** Describe the specific situation in which the occurrence that you're referring to happened.
- **Behaviour:** Explain the specific behaviour that you observed and would like to comment on.
- **Impact:** Describe the impact of this behaviour on you, the team, a client, etc.

Phrasing feedback according to this model ensures you clearly outline both the context and the content of your feedback.

9(ii)

The STAR feedback model

The Situation/Task-Action-Result (STAR) feedback model is practically the same as the previous feedback structure yet uses slightly different terms.

(This method of feedback delivery is incredibly popular, but just like with the SBI model, it lacks focus on improvement and change.)

The STAR method:

- **Situation:** Describe the situation (or context) in which something happened.
- **Task:** Zoom in on the specific task in question that you would like to provide feedback on.
- **Action:** Explain what action the recipient took in the specified situation.
- **Result:** What was the outcome of the actions of the recipient, and how did it affect others?

By delivering your feedback with the STAR technique, you explain the entire scope of the situation and its context, rather than just mentioning if a task went well or not. This method of feedback delivery is incredibly popular, but just like with the SBI model, it lacks focus on improvement and change

9(iii)

The EEC feedback model

Effect-Change/Continue (EEC)

(Does address future actions)

The EEC method:

- **Example:** Start by giving an example of a certain behaviour or action.
- **Effect:** Explain the effect this action had.
- **Change/Continue:** Depending on whether the feedback is positive or negative, you mention whether the recipient should continue what they are doing or whether they should change their behaviour in a certain way.

Rather than just explaining the past, this feedback model also focuses on the future. What should the recipient change to improve their behaviour, output, or work methods? Or perhaps they did a great job, and you want to let them know to keep working this way.

Since you can use this model for both change and continuation, it is suited for both positive and negative feedback.

Note that this model is sometimes also called the [AID feedback](#) model:

- Action
- Impact
- Desired behaviour in the future

9(iv)

The IDEA feedback model

Identify-Describe-Encourage-Action (IDEA) feedback model.

(With this technique, you actively try to incite change and outline future steps.

The IDEA method:

- **Identify:** You start by determining what it is you want to comment on.
- **Describe:** Now describe the situation/behaviour in detail to explain what happened and why you're commenting on this.
- **Encourage:** This step is meant to show the recipient that you're here to help, not to tell them off, by encouraging and convincing them to change their past behaviour.
- **Action:** You close your feedback with a clear action and next step(s) for the recipient to take moving forward.

If you struggle with giving constructive/negative feedback, then the IDEA feedback model might work wonders for you!

9(v)

The DESC feedback model

Describe-Express-Specify-Consequences (DESC)

(This model because it not only includes the part about future action (just like the EEC and IDEA models) but also takes it one step further.)

The DESC method:

- **Describe:** As with most feedback tools on this list, you start by explaining the situation.
- **Express:** Next, express what impact the described situation has had on you, the team, or the wider organisation.
- **Specify:** Now explain in detail how the recipient should change their behaviour with a clear description of specific actions.
- **Consequences:** Lastly, show the recipient how these suggested actions will affect you, the team, or the organisation moving forward.

The final step in this feedback method focusses on showing the recipient just what impact they might have if they do it differently. By giving such a practical explanation, you will more easily convince them of the need to change.

It also makes it more difficult for the recipient to refute your feedback as you clearly explain its benefits.

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The Pendleton feedback model

The Pendleton feedback model aims to create a two-way feedback system, rather than one person just giving another person feedback.

The original steps from Pendleton's model

1. Ask the recipient what went well.

2. Tell the recipient what went well.

3. Ask the recipient what didn't go so well or could be improved.

4. Tell the recipient what didn't go so well or could be improved.

Although these are the basic steps, the model has since been further expanded and refined. A more elaborate format of Pendleton's model includes seven steps rather than four.

These seven steps of the feedback process are:

1. Ensure the recipient is ready to receive feedback.

2. Ask the recipient how they feel the situation went or how their behaviour was.

3. Ask the recipient what went well.

4. Tell the recipient what went well.

5. Ask the recipient what could be improved.

6. Tell the recipient what could be improved.

7. Together, form an action plan to ensure the discussed improvements are implemented/actioned.

This updated version of the Pendleton model still has the four original steps at its core but includes two introductory steps and the final step to ensure action. Especially the seventh step is useful as it means your feedback will have a clear impact.

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The 360-degree feedback model

The 360-degree feedback model aims to collect feedback from a variety of sources and collates that information to provide someone with a highly detailed performance evaluation.

In general, this is how the 360-degree feedback model works:

1. Collect feedback on someone's performance from as many sources as possible, generally done through a survey. Sources can include their colleagues, line managers, C-suite management, subordinates, external clients, or even customers.

2. Always include a self-evaluation (self-feedback) as part of the process as well.

3. The recipient's direct manager organises a meeting with the recipient to go through the provided feedback.

4. The recipient's performance is assessed based on this 360-degree feedback, and together with the manager a plan for future development is outlined based on the feedback provided.

Although in reality most companies have their own unique take on the 360-degree review process, the basic format follows these four points.

Also note that the survey questions that are asked in step one are often tailored to a specific company and industry. Therefore, the 360-degree feedback model might look very different depending on the company you work for.

The great part about multi-rater feedback is that it's not just your boss being the one who evaluates you (as traditionally done in business). Instead, your performance is assessed based on what multiple stakeholders, who might know you in different roles and capacities, have observed.

This produces a much more holistic view of your performance, rather than just one person's opinion. And that's beneficial for multiple reasons.

Perhaps you and your direct manager don't get along that well. Perhaps your manager isn't actively involved in all the projects you work on, meaning they can't really assess your performance because they simply can't keep track of everything you do.

Instead, with the 360-degree review model, you know the full scope of your activities at work is assessed by a variety of sources and from different angles.

Note that this feedback process isn't a standalone process. Note in these two manuals how these tools and frameworks come to light when combined, and they are influential in helping us develop and grow. Using some below will help you be effective in your feedback style.

- Effective language
- Understand strengths.
- Listening
- Fixed growth mindset
- Unconscious bias
- Emotional intelligence
- Listening test