

THE FEEDBACK MYTH

PEOPLE DON'T NEED YOUR FEEDBACK
THEY NEED YOUR ATTENTION



WHAT THE SCIENCE SAYS

- Feedback is **not** always useful.
- Most feedback is **negative**. It usually focuses on shortcomings and **impairs** learning.
- Feedback activates the *fight or flight* part of the brain. In this state, we become more concerned with **surviving** the feedback event than we do **learning** from it.
- Humans are **unreliable** raters of other humans and here's why...
- Feedback is *always* **subjective, biased**, and tends to say more about the rater's **preferences** than it does about the actual performance.
- The only thing humans can reliably rate is how another person's performance causes them to **think** and **feel**. Instead of giving feedback, share your **observations** and **reactions**.
- Merely **telling** others what we think about their performance doesn't necessarily **identify** what causes them to excel or thrive.
- We can't tell people where they stand, but we can tell them **where they stand with us**.
- Learning happens when we **see** how we might do something better. This happens when someone adds a new insight that expands our own current level of understanding.

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Pay Attention



Adapted from *Buckingham & Goodall, 2019*

INSTEAD OF

I want to give you some feedback or Can I give you some feedback?

Good job!

Here's what you should do.

Here's where you need to improve.

That didn't really work.

You need to be more responsive.

You lack strategic thinking.

You should do X [in response to a request for advice]

TRY

Do you mind if I share with you some of my reactions?

Here are 3 specific things that really worked for me. So, what was going through your mind when you did them? How were you feeling?

Here is something that's worked for me in the past.

Here is what worked best for me and why.

When you did X, I felt Y. Or I didn't get that.

When I don't hear from you, I worry we're not on the same page.

I'm struggling to understand your plan.

What do you feel you're struggling with, and what have you done in the past that's worked in a similar situation?

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