PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SERIES:

APPROACHING FEEDBACK

JUNE 2023
Take a moment to reflect on some helpful or impactful pieces of feedback you’ve received in your life.
WHY FEEDBACK

The power of perspective

The search for blind spots

The gift of feedback
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HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?v=NC3U_40tNJs
CRITICAL FEEDBACK SITS AT THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN TWO BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

The need to grow and learn

The need to feel accepted, respected, and valued
WHY DO WE RESIST OR REJECT FEEDBACK?

**Truth Triggers:**
We feel like the content of the feedback is wrong, unfair, or unhelpful.

**Relationship Triggers:**
The feedback is colored by what we believe about or how we feel treated by the giver.

**Identity Triggers:**
Inconsistent with or threatening to something we believe to be true about ourselves.
TRUTH TRIGGERS – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Feedback is vague, unclear, misunderstood
- The feedback giver and receiver have different stories due to
  - Different information,
  - Different interpretations, and
  - Different conclusions
- The feedback touches on a blind spot for the receiver
# Truth Triggers – How Can I Process?

We can almost always find something wrong with feedback – that’s easy. The challenge is to find what can be useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This doesn’t make sense</th>
<th>How does this make sense?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How could they think that</td>
<td>I wonder what information they have that I don’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s not true about me</td>
<td>Could that be true about me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s not how I see it</td>
<td>How might they see it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here’s why that’s wrong</td>
<td>Here’s how that might be right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRUTH TRIGGERS – HOW CAN I RESPOND?

• Ask clarifying questions
  • I think you’re saying X, am I understanding that correctly?
  • What do you mean by X?
• Ask about their story
  • Where is this coming from
  • Where is it leading to
• Share your perspective
• Try it on, see if any of it fits
• Ask for another opinion
Think of a time where you rejected feedback because of a truth trigger.

Did you fully engage or quickly dismiss?
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RELATIONSHIP TRIGGERS

Product of:
- Beliefs about the deliverer
  - Lack of trust
  - Lack of credibility
- How you feel treated by the deliverer
  - Lack of appreciation
  - Lack of autonomy
- The delivery method
  - When, Where, How

How to Process and Respond:
- Take a Step Back... or 3
  - Me/You Intersections
  - Role Intersection
  - Bigger Picture Intersections
- Separate the topics or tracks
- Separate Intent from Impact
Think of a time where you rejected feedback because of a relationship trigger.

Did you fully engage or quickly dismiss?

Think about your workplace relationships, can you identify some potential relationship triggers that might make you quick to dismiss feedback?
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IDENTITY TRIGGERS

- Cultivate complexity: all/nothing \(\rightarrow\) both/and
- Dismantle distortions
  - Always, everyone, everything
- Practice Mindfulness
  - Your sensitivity: Baseline, swing, and sustain
  - Your response footprint
- Cultivate growth mindset
  - Sort toward coaching rather than evaluation
  - Give yourself a “second score”
Think of a time where you rejected feedback because of an identity trigger.

Did you fully engage or quickly dismiss?

Take some time to consider your feedback footprint and sensitivity (baseline, swing, sustain) and how that impacts the way you receive feedback.
Remember

Responding well to feedback means that you engage with the feedback well – it doesn’t necessarily mean you agree with it or accept it.

Approach feedback with a posture of curiosity.

Relationships are complicated.

Different roles bring different challenges.

These are others’ perceptions, not absolute truth.

Try it on, “Rent before you own” the feedback.

Practice gratitude for the gift of perspective.
Productive questions to ask about feedback

- Why did this person score me the way they did?
- How do I make sense of this feedback?
- What might they have been thinking?
- Could that be true about me?
- How can I change perceptions?
- How do I go about making needed changes?
- Who can help me with all of this?
People who seek out critical feedback at work, adapt to new roles more quickly, report higher satisfaction, and they receive higher performance reviews.