

USING FEEDBACK

Employers need staff who can take feedback on their work, learn from mistakes and improve under instruction. But how do we learn to accept feedback and also give feedback constructively to others? This Challenge will help you.

- 1** *We've all been there, someone gives us feedback on our work, either at school, at home, or on a work experience.*

"I think you are doing well but can I give you some feedback on how you can improve...."

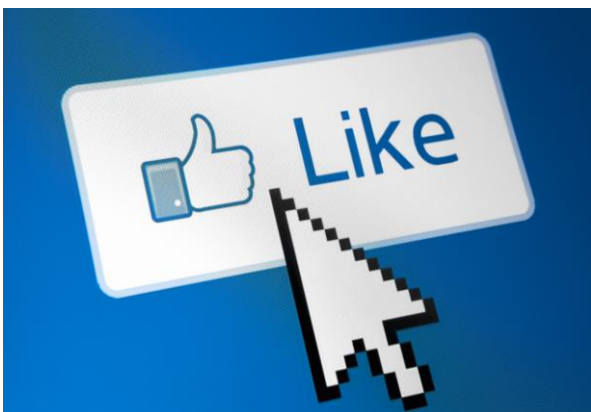


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It's easy when this feedback is positive but hard when it can be critical.

Why is this?

2 FEEDBACK ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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We can receive informal feedback on social media, e.g. 'likes' and 'shares'. These are some of the ways that people give us feedback and influence our choices and opinions about other people and services.

In pairs discuss the following:

What's the most amount of 'likes' you've ever had for a Social Media post?

3 FEEDBACK HELPS IMPROVE

When technology companies make a new product they often release a prototype* of the product so they can test it in the real world and ask customers to give feedback. The more critical and honest the feedback is the better, as designers can then use this advice to improve the product.

Have you ever been asked for your feedback on a product or service?

What feedback would you give to your mobile phone provider right now about the phone service you get?

.....

What would make your phone service better?

.....



We all need people who will give us feedback. That's how we improve.

Bill Gates

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4 A FEEDBACK FORM FOR AN IMAGINARY WORK PLACE

In pairs work out the questions you would include on a 'Feedback form' for a café.

- What do you hope to find out from the feedback form?
- What questions will you ask?
- How will you ensure you get honest feedback?
- Do you think simple tick boxes are easier for the customer?

Do you think designing the form so users don't have to give their names would result in more honest responses?

*The word prototype means an original product that is released as a trial product to be developed further'.



5 HOW CAN WE GET GOOD AT USING AND GIVING FEEDBACK?

HERE ARE 3 TIPS

1 RECEIVE IT WITHOUT BEING DEFENSIVE

When someone starts giving us feedback we can become defensive and only hear the critical and not the constructive parts.



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Action: Make sure your body language isn't defensive and listen carefully. Take notes if that helps.

Say to yourself. "I'm going to listen carefully and show I am receptive, even if I feel they are wrong"

If you feel angry try to listen calmly and carefully without saying anything immediately until you've heard exactly what is being said.

2 TRY NOT TO TAKE IT PERSONALLY



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Of course it feels personal because they are talking about you! But a good manager or teacher will be trying to help you improve at the task.

Action: Try to think objectively and remember there is always 2 sides to the story. Are you sure you have seen their side, and have they seen your side?

Say to yourself. "Is there some truth in what they are saying?"

3 SHOW YOU ARE ACTING ON THE FEEDBACK

Showing that you can take feedback constructively and put it into practice is vital as we get better at our work through honest feedback



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Action: Try to thank the person who gave you the feedback. And try to demonstrate that you are acting on their feedback.

Say to yourself "I will notice if my work gets better through the feedback I received."

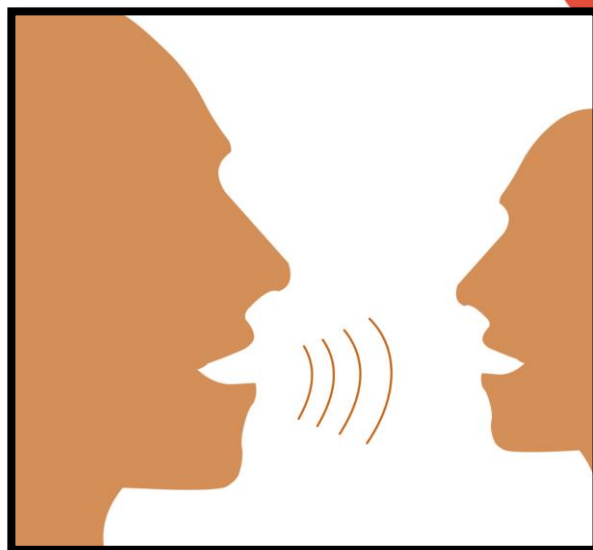
6 FEEDBACK EXERCISE

One of the ways we can learn about the power of positive feedback is to do a little role-play exercise in pairs.

Imagine you are the owner of a café and one of your customers has emailed you complaining at the level of service they received from one of your staff last week.

You write back to them to say you will pass on this feedback.

One of you should play the manager, the other the staff member.



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Take it in turns to swap roles and act out the following reactions.

A) The staff members **denies** the complaint and feels it is one sided and gets angry.

B) The staff members **accepts** that they had been at fault and is genuinely sorry.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT FROM THIS EXERCISE?

Staff member: How do you feel hearing about this complaint?

Manager: How did you react when the staff member denied it?

Staff member: Did the manager give you any positive feedback?

How did the feedback session end?

What could have gone better in this imaginary feedback session?

7 If you are giving feedback here are a few tips:

1) When you give feedback to others you strengthen your introduction by saying:

“May I give you some constructive feedback?”

2) If you have to give some feedback about negative behaviour or work, think about a positive sandwich – ie 2 positive things to one negative and always try to give a solution.

3) It’s important that you are specific and don’t generalise but give factual examples.

4) Remember your body language is a really important. Think where you should give this feedback – somewhere quiet and private.

5) Always give feedback which is honest and delivered with respect.