

# Skilling Up To Receive Feedback

Erich O'Connor  
User Services  
University of Illinois Springfield

Pt 1  
Information

Pt 2  
The Practice

# What is Feedback?

Feedback is the information we receive about ourselves from others and from the outside world.

Examples: annual performance review, touching a hot stove, praise for doing good work, that meow when your cat wants food

# Push

Expected of Managers

Half the equation

Unsolicited unwanted,  
pointless, damaging

Desire to hear feedback

Openness & Learning

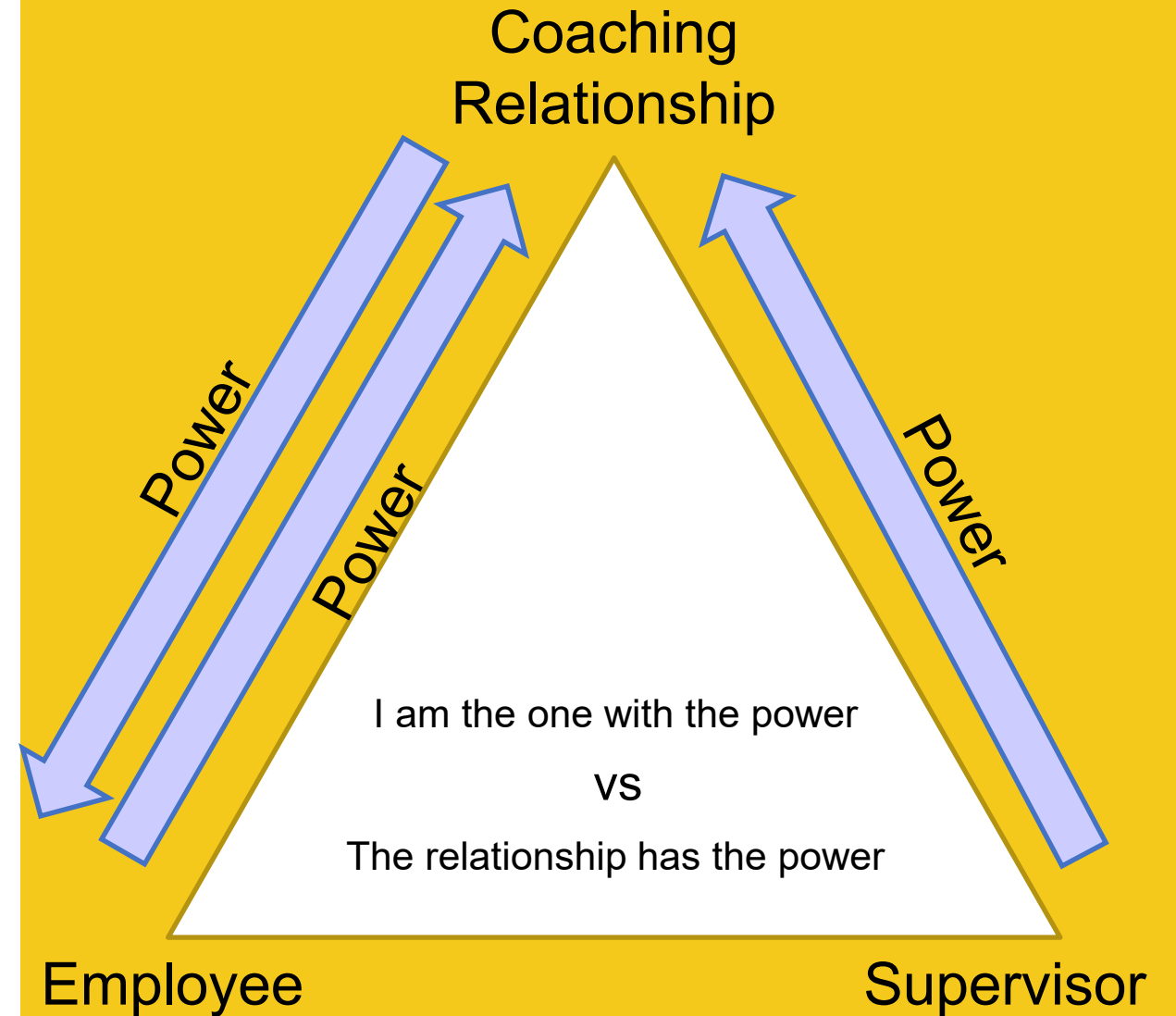
Skilling up Employees

# Pull

The Receiver is in charge

Meet your employees on equal ground

Collaborate on growth areas



# Three Types of Feedback

## Appreciation

Angela is generous and kind.

Dan has a great sense of humor and brightens the office.

## Evaluation

Dan has a great sense of humor but sometimes he can get a little carried away.

When Diana is training someone she's always attentive to the person's needs.

## Coaching

Dan needs to be more careful about when he is joking. He could accidentally offend someone by taking the joke too far. Some people have a hard time reading sarcasm. We'd like Dan to pay attention to his jokes and their potential impact.

# Feedback Triggers

**Truth  
Triggers**

**Relationship  
Triggers**

**Identity  
Triggers**

## Truth Triggers

Triggered by the feedback and the message in the feedback

We find it unhelpful, insulting, or that it's totally off base

### What does this look like?

Dan is shocked to hear his boss say that his jokes at the staff meeting were offensive. That's just ridiculous. People were laughing.

### What's the skillful action Dan can take?

When did I receive the feedback?

Is the content of the feedback helpful? Fair? Reliable?

Could this be in my blindspot?

## Relationship Triggers

Less about the feedback, more about the person providing feedback

We react to what we believe about the giver, and how we feel treated by the giver.

### What does this look like?

Dan: People thought my joke was funny. You're just too sensitive. You need to lighten up more.

### What skillfull action can Dan take?

Who gave the feedback?

What are his beliefs about the person who delivered the feedback? Does he have an issue with them?

Was the environment a factor? Where was the feedback delivered?



## Relationship Triggers

**Switch Tracking** is a common behavior for relationship triggers. Feedback is given, and the receiver responds with a completely different topic. It has four steps:

1. Someone gives us feedback.
2. We experience a relationship trigger.
3. We change the topic to how we feel.
4. We talk past each other.

## Relationship Triggers

### Switch Tracking

1. Someone gives us feedback.
2. We experience a relationship trigger.
3. We change the topic to how we feel.
4. We talk past each other.

What does this look like?

Daughter: Mom, you never let me go out. You treat me like a child. Don't you trust me?  
Mom: You should be more grateful you have a mother who cares.

New Supervisor: Hey I noticed that lately you've been running late pretty frequently.  
Employee: Listen, I've been working here for longer than you've been alive.

Partner 1: You gave me roses for my birthday. I hate roses.  
Partner 2: You should be more appreciative.  
Partner 1: You never listen to me.

## Relationship Triggers

### Switch Tracking

1. Someone gives us feedback.
2. We experience a relationship trigger.
3. We change the topic to how we feel.
4. We talk past each other.

**What skillful action can we take when we recognize a switch track?**

Practice recognizing when a switch track has occurred.

Acknowledge the switch track and ask them to acknowledge your first statement, then promise to return to theirs.

New Supervisor: Hey I noticed that lately you've been running late pretty frequently.

Employee: Listen, I've been working here for longer than you've been alive.

New Supervisor: That doesn't seem to address why you've been running late. I mentioned it because it's been very frequent, and I'm concerned about your wellbeing. First I'd like to ask you about what's been going on, then let's talk about what you mean by that statement.

## Identity Triggers

Not about the feedback, not about the giver. We are the center.

The sense of self becomes rattled and undone.

Fight, flight, or freeze response triggered. Feedback becomes useless

### **What skillful action can the receiver take in this moment?**

What's happening in my body right now?

Does the feedback change what you think of yourself?

What's the cost or consequence of the feedback?

Ask the feedback giver to pause for a break.

# Baseline & Swing

We all have a baseline of contentment

We swing from it based on:

- How we react to stress

- Type of stress

- Level of stress

Generally we always return to it

## HYPERAROUSAL

Excessive activation/energy in the form of fight/flight responses



## HYPOAROUSAL

Freeze response, emotionally flat, lack of energy and response

- SMOOTH SAILING
- DYSREGULATION
- FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE

# In Practice

# Skilling Up

Breaking Up With Perfectionism

by Adam Grant

Living Into Our Values

by Brené Brown

Plus the Values Worksheet



# What's the practice?

## Before the meeting

Student Reflection Worksheet

Supervisor Feedback Worksheet

## During the meeting

Students take the lead

We read our feedback

We create a plan of action

## After the meeting:

Both parties complete a post-feedback form

# Tips for Nonviolent Communication

Write the feedback from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Point of View

Avoid accusatory phrases like “You are...” “You do...”

Avoid the words “should” and “must” change it to “I want you to...because I need...”

Don't sit across from someone, sit next to them

Have others review your feedback before sharing



<https://go.uis.edu/FeedbackForms>

# Feedback Forms

- *Thanks for the Feedback* by Sheila Heen & Douglas Stone
- *Dare to Lead* by Brené Brown
- *Atomic Habits* by James Clear
- *The Mindful Way Workbook* by Teasdale, Williams, & Segal
- “The RAIN of Self Compassion” by Tara Brach

# Student Reflection: Recognition

Prompts	My Responses
<p><b>Complete the prompt in the box to the right to set your intentions for the meeting.</b></p>	<p>My name is _____.</p> <p>My top two values are</p> <p>1. _____.</p> <p>2. _____.</p> <p>I will live into my values in this meeting by giving myself the space and permission to _____.</p>
<p><b>Where do I find the value in the work that I do for the library?</b></p>	<p>3 sentences minimum</p>
<p><b>What do I do well? What strengths or skills do I bring to the team?</b></p>	<p>3 sentences minimum</p>
<p><b>What areas about myself would I like to grow and develop?</b></p>	<p>3 sentences minimum</p>

THIS WORKSHEET IS DOUBLE SIDED

<p><b>If your direct supervisor gave you feedback about your performance at work, what would they say about your performance?</b></p>	<p>3 sentences minimum</p>
<p><b>How do I usually respond when someone is correcting my behavior or correcting me?</b></p>	<p>3 sentences minimum</p>
<p><b>What habit or habits would you like to cultivate? Complete the prompt(s). You only need to complete one, but you can choose two habits.</b></p>	<p>1. The habit I want to cultivate is _____.</p> <p>I want to cultivate this habit because _____.</p> <hr/> <p>2. The habit I want to cultivate is _____.</p> <p>I want to cultivate this habit because _____.</p> <hr/>
<p><b>How are you going to cultivate at least one of the habits you wrote above? Complete the prompt</b></p>	<p>I want to do this habit when I... _____ (select a time and/or location).</p> <p>This will help me cultivate this habit by _____.</p> <hr/>

# Student Reflection: Mindful Moment

<p>What was it like completing this form? Describe the experience.</p>	
<p>As I completed this form, what sensations did I feel in my body?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• My heart was beating fast.</li><li>• I didn't notice anything.</li></ul>	
<p>As I completed this form, what moods or feelings did I notice?</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I felt happy.</li><li>• I felt anxious.</li></ul>	
<p>As I completed this form, what thoughts went through my mind?</p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I was worried I was in trouble.</li><li>• I was looking forward to hearing feedback.</li></ul>	
<p>What are my thoughts right now?</p>	
<p>What words or messages do I need to hear that are nourishing for my well-being?</p>	



# Supervisor Form

What we've noticed about	
Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A valued member of our team.</li></ul>
Evaluation	Observation:
What our evaluation is not saying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What request do you have of the student?</li></ul>
What goals can we set, or what habits can we cultivate to help X overcome some of these obstacles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>

How can we measure these goals, or habits to ensure our success? What does success look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>
What feelings or moods did we notice in drafting this feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>
What well wishes do we have for the student?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li></ul>



# Student Post Feedback Form

Prompt	Response
Did the Feedback Conversation go as I had anticipated?	
What did I hear when I was having the feedback conversation?	
What is my assessment of the feedback that I received?	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Some was accurate, some was inaccurate <input type="checkbox"/> Completely inaccurate  What additional comments do you have?
How do you think you received the feedback? How did you handle yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly  What additional comments do you have?
What can I do with the feedback that I received?	
What new questions or thoughts do I have?	
Were my feelings and my needs heard by my supervisors?	

As we were having the conversation, how did I feel in my body? What feelings or moods did I notice?	
As we were having the conversation, what thoughts went through my mind?	
What are my thoughts right now?	
What do I need to hear right now? What thoughts or messages would be nourishing for my wellbeing?	



<https://go.uis.edu/FeedbackForms>

# Supervisor Post Feedback Form

Prompt	Response
Who did I give feedback to?	
Did the feedback conversation go as I anticipated?	
How did they receive the feedback?	
What did I hear when I was having the feedback conversation?	
What do I think they heard when I was having the feedback conversation?	
What do I want to do with the feedback that I received?	
As we were having the feedback conversation, what was it like? Describe the experience.	
As we were having the conversation, how did I feel in my body? What sensations did I notice? What moods or feelings did I notice?	

As we were having the conversation, what thoughts went through my mind?	
What are my thoughts right now?	
What new questions do I have?	
What well wishes do I have for the person who gave me feedback and who I gave feedback to?	



<https://go.uis.edu/FeedbackForms>



# Sources



<https://go.uis.edu/FeedbackForms>

- *Atomic Habits: An Easy and Proven Way to Build Good Habits and Break Bad Ones.* (2018). Penguin Random House.
- Brach, T. (2020). *Radical compassion: Learning to love yourself and your world with the practice of RAIN.* Rider.
- *Breaking Up with Perfectionism.* (2022, May 3). <https://open.spotify.com/episode/3ohEu8zArUuGk2hT5aoluW>
- *Brené and Barrett on Living Into Our Values.* (n.d.). Brené Brown. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from <https://brenebrown.com/podcast/living-into-our-values/>
- *Co-Active Coaching, 3rd Edition: Changing Business, Transforming Lives - The Book That Helped Define the Field of Professional Coaching.* (2013). Gildan Audio.
- *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.* (2018). Penguin Random House.
- *Dare to Lead List of Values.* (n.d.). Brené Brown. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from <https://brenebrown.com/resources/dare-to-lead-list-of-values/>
- *How to Recognize Your Window of Tolerance.* (n.d.). Mind My Peelings. Retrieved July 1, 2022, from <https://www.mindmypeelings.com/blog/window-of-tolerance>
- Janet. (2021, February 9). *Blog: The RAIN of Self-Compassion.* Tara Brach. <https://www.tarabrach.com/selfcompassion1/>
- Rosenberg, M. B. (2015). *Nonviolent communication: A language of life* (3rd edition.). PuddleDancer Press.
- Stone, D. (2010). *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most* (Tenth Anniversary edition, [2nd ed.]). Penguin Books.
- Stone, D. (2014). *Thanks for the feedback: The science and art of receiving feedback well (even when it is off base, unfair, poorly delivered, and frankly, you're not in the mood).* Viking.
- Teasdale, J. D. (2013). *The Mindful Way Workbook an 8-Week Program to Free Yourself from Depression and Emotional Distress.* Guilford Publications.