

Great Feedback or...

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...Great, Feedback

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“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

George Bernard Shaw



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Showing Appreciation Activity

- Pair Up
- If possible, do so with an individual you have spent some time getting to know while you have been here
- Sit together and engage in the following



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Showing Appreciation Activity

- Turn to the person you've met here and give them open, honest, and positive feedback about some aspect of who they are and/or why you admire them for it.



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Showing Appreciation Activity Debrief

In your role as a Giver:

- What was your initial reaction to engaging in this task? And why?



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Showing Appreciation Activity Debrief

In your role as a Listener:

- How did you feel during and as an outcome of this activity?



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Showing Appreciation Activity Debrief

- Please share examples of what was said.
- Were the statements conclusions, behaviors, or both
- Were the emotions expressed or implied?
- Describe your physicality



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Setting the Stage

- Feedback is a gift
- We are wired to react to negatives
- Friend or foe?
- Our reactions are unique to who we are (MBTI)
- We need to know our blind spots and their contributions to our overall impression
- Feedback implies there were stated expectations
- Implicit verses explicit generations



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Feedback

Boomers

- Annual ritual
- Management by exception
- Competitive environment

Generation X

- Event related and timely
- High on facts, less on the superlatives

Millennials

- Frequent and proportionally appropriate
- Bias toward dialogue



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The Why of Feedback

The Four Stage Developmental Model:

1. Unconscious Incompetent
2. Conscious Incompetent
3. Conscious Competent
4. Unconscious Competent



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If I were you

- You can focus on fixing your weaknesses or developing your strengths
- If it ain't a fatal flaw then just be competent or delegate it
- It's your bundle of a few strengths that will determine your future success so they should be your focus



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Types of Feedback

- Coaching (here's a better way to do it)
- Appreciative (thanks)
- Evaluation (here's where we stand)



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Process for Coaching to Improve Performance

- Do your homework
- Introduce the issue
- Ask for input
- Agree on the situation
- Discuss root causes for performance
- Develop a specific plan
- Agree on a follow-up



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Expectations and Understanding Why

- **They understand your Why** (I love what I do because...)
- **They know and understand your Why for them** (My goal/job/desire is to make you a better lawyer)
- **You know and appreciate their Why** (who do they hope to be/do)
- **They know and appreciate the group's Why** (the vision and purpose of your team/specialty/firm)
- **They explore the How** (your responsibilities to each other)
- **They understand the What** (your expectations of others)



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Effective Feedback

- Best practices for giving feedback?



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Giving Effective Feedback

- Timely
- Balanced across performance because we have a whole impression bias
- Accurate, specific and relevant
- Tied to performance issues
- Use “I” statements
- Ask for their perspective, don’t interrupt
- Stay focused on one issue at a time
- Keep personality and motive out of it, discuss observable behaviors
- Do not get defensive
- Discuss the importance attached to the feedback



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Common Mistakes

- Giving feedback when upset or emotional
- Blaming
- Interpreting or making assumptions about motives
- Getting into their head
- Being too gentle or not direct
- Labeling without explaining what you mean



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Effective Feedback

- Best practices for receiving feedback?



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Receiving Effective Feedback

- Listen quietly and clarify
- Resist getting defensive or argumentative
- Understand their perspective
- Know it is one person’s opinion/perspective
- Summarize situation and discuss alternative behaviors as appropriate
- Remain calm
- Thank them
- Finally, determine if this is an action item



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Taking It In

How to React:

- First seek to understand
- Accept we have blind spots
- Separate the relationship from the feedback
- Fit feedback to actual size
- Determine if it is a strength or a weakness issue, if it is a pattern, and then decide if it is important to you to change
- Move from feedback to creating a plan



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Performance and Getting Feedback

- Poor Adequate Good Excellent
- Easy "You're Fine" Very Difficult Easy



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Query

- What's more effective: feedback that is rewarding or feedback that is punishing? Why?



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Appreciative Feedback

- 4 to 1 rule
- Do not sandwich or bury your positives
- Don't sand bag or close with required improvements
- Consider the temperament of the giver and receiver and its impact on frequency (MBTI)
- Reinforce positives makes improvement based feedback easier
- Public or private feedback, depends on the individual and the lesson
- Employ eye contact, your Duchenne smile, and say thank you



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A Thought Experiment

- Write down one “good” skill that if you were excellent in its execution, would make the most difference in the work that you either are doing or aspire to do.



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The Feedback Challenge Process

- Refine the skill into a concise, clear, and tangible statement of your desire to improve in this area
- Create a list of all the people at your firm/company with whom you have worked that has required you to engage in the chosen skill
- Send them an email indicating you would like specific feedback and invite them to answer the following



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The Feedback Challenge Process

Relative to this skill:

- What do I need to start doing more of?
- What do I need to stop doing?
- What would you have done differently?
- What did I miss?



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The Feedback Challenge Process

- Collect the feedback
- Synthesize it and look for patterns
- Send a thank you and a statement of what you will be attempting to do differently going forward
- Ask them to hold you to it
- A year later repeat with another skill development request
- If the overall impression of you is negative this is your shot at redemption



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Additional Tips

- NEVER send negative feedback by email.
- Instead of asking how you did, ask: "Going forward, what can I do better?"
- Or, "What are others saying to you about my work product?"
- Try using, "Let me share my perspective," rather than saying, "Let me give you some feedback."
- Share with others your mistakes.



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Before I Close

What can I answer or clarify?



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One More Tip: Dealing with Heated Objections

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The Path Forward

- It is easier to give and receive when we trust each other
- We should be looking for patterns, blind spots, and gifts
- This is about maximizing productivity through commitment, not compliance
- We are all at some point in life an unconscious incompetent, so be willing to enlighten and be enlightened
- Good is the enemy of great



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Thanks for Listening

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