

Thanks for the Feedback by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen

When we use the word feedback, we may be referring to any of 3 different kinds of information: appreciation, coaching, and evaluation. Each serves an important purpose, satisfies different needs, and comes with its own sets of challenges.

We need to cultivate a growth mindset so that feedback is received well.

Type of Feedback	Giver's Purpose	Related Issues
Appreciation	To see, acknowledge, connect, motivate, thank	The absence of appreciation can leave a gaping hole in a relationship- personal or professional. Without it, your coaching isn't going to get through because I'm listening for something else. Appreciation needs to be specific, it has to come in a form the receiver values and hears clearly, and it has to be authentic
Coaching	To help receiver expand knowledge, sharpen skill or improve capability We coach to help people grow and improve, preparing them for greater success on that next rung up	When coaching works, it can be almost magically uncomplicated and deeply gratifying and impactful for both people. It can also be stressful confusing and ineffective. Coaching shortfalls mean that learning, productivity, morale, and relationships all suffer. Needs frequent close-to-real-time suggestions, and the chance to make small corrections along the way. Needs to be honest and supportive
Evaluation	To rate or rank against a set of standards, to align expectations We evaluate employees to ensure they receive fair promotion and pay, that they are clear about incentives and standings, that their work is done effectively and well	It's smart to avoid evaluation when your purpose is coaching. But doing away with it altogether leaves a conspicuous silence. There is always coaching in evaluation Needs to be fair, consistent, clear, and predictable.

We need all 3 types of feedback.

We need to beware Cross Transactions, those where I might want a different type of feedback than you gave me or you may have intended to give me one type, and I interpreted it as another.

It is good to separate evaluation from coaching and feedback.

We need to see feedback within a relationship system (a system of dynamics between sender and receiver, between the roles they play, and set in an entire landscape of other players, processes, policies and structures)

Your goal is not to erect barriers in the delivery of challenging or inconvenient feedback; in fact, it's just the opposite. Your aim is to find ways that you and your coach can collaborate so that communication is clear and efficient and you learn what's most important to learn as quickly as you can. The goal is to work together to minimize the interference.

Feedback isn't just about the quality of the advice or the accuracy of the assessments. It's about the quality of the relationship, your willingness to show that you don't have it all figured out, and to bring your whole self- flaws, uncertainties and all- into the relationship

Systems (of feedback) will always be imperfect. We should work to improve them. The greatest leverage is helping the people inside the system communicate more effectively.

It's about having a cultural norm of appreciation that encourages everyone to notice 1- the genuine and unique positives in the work of others and 2- how each team member hears appreciation and encouragement so that it can be best expressed to each individual