

It is Up to You to Learn from Feedback

Last week, I held a two-day training class called The Coaching Clinic. The class teaches coaching skills that can be implemented in one's organization and life. Some of the skills the attendees learned were to effectively develop and retain valuable organizational members and improve communications skills. When asked to give situational examples in the class, feedback is almost always a component because no matter the position, we all struggle with receiving feedback. This month's catalyst focuses on how to use the feedback you receive to learn and grow.

In the book, *Thanks for the Feedback*, Sheila Heen and Douglas Stone explain why you should focus on how to receive feedback well and not just how to deliver feedback to others. Communication is the basis for feedback which means active listening on the giving and receiving end is key. No matter how well the feedback is delivered, it is ultimately up to the receiver to listen, process the information and react to it.

The authors say that, "the real leverage is creating pull." Someone who has a curious, growth mindset will be more open to listening to feedback. Letting go of your ego is part of receiving feedback. Even if 90% of the feedback you get you feel is wrong, there is still probably 10% of it that you need to hear to grow. The authors place receiving feedback at the intersection of our drive to learn and grow and our longing for acceptance and respect the way we are currently. The authors believe that receiving feedback is a skill that can be learned.

There is a commonly quoted happiness model that says that 50% is determined by your genes; 40% is determined by the story you tell yourself; and 10% is determined by the circumstances in which you live. The 40% is where feedback is the biggest factor. You need to

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. *It is Up to You to Learn from Feedback*
2. *5 Ways to Improve Receiving Feedback*
3. *5 Ways In Which You Can Benefit From A 360-Degree Feedback*
4. *Public Courses*

cultivate the way you manage the triggers to your actions, your attitude and the way you handle situations in the wake of feedback. The way you respond to feedback is influenced by your emotional reaction and the story you tell yourself about who you are.

The authors identified three kinds of triggers that challenge your ability to receive feedback. Everyone has some degree of the triggers, so the goal should be to recognize them to minimize their impact, not eliminate them. The first is Truth Triggers, which are set off by the content of the feedback. You perceive the feedback as untrue or unhelpful and your reaction shows your feelings of being wronged or exasperated by the feedback. The feedback might be true, you might be blind to it. The

second are Relationship Triggers, which are set off by who is giving the feedback. Your opinion or history with that person clouds your ability to hear what is being said. The third are Identity Triggers, which are set off by your own self. We all have varying degrees of sensitivity to feedback. You are unique in how much the feedback changes your emotional state and how long it takes you to return to normal. Below are ways you can improve receiving feedback.

5 Ways to Improve Receiving Feedback

1. **Prepare ahead** – Take a moment before a tough situation to ground yourself. Remember to focus on your breathing and physical reaction to stay in a neutral position and not swing to your natural reaction. Visualize the conversation and imagine a worst-case scenario so you will be able to imagine whatever is thrown at you.
2. **Be an active listener** – Listen to what is being said and do not concentrate on your response. Remember you do not always have to respond or comment. It is ok to give yourself a pause to process what is said.

Some experts suggest you follow the 80/20 rule when receiving feedback where you listen 80% of the time and talk 20%

3. **Look for a pattern** - Ask yourself if you have a blind spot or recall if you have heard similar feedback before. Ask yourself if there is a difference between the feedback and the story you are telling yourself about the feedback. Heen and Stone say, "The goal of untangling everything is to see what you've woven in that does and doesn't belong."
4. **Clarify the feedback** – Ask for more information to make sure you understand where the feedback is coming from and make sure you heard the feedback correctly. If the feedback is unclear, ask clarifying questions without changing your tone.
5. **Take a step back** – Look at the differences in the way you see yourself and how others see you. Heen and Stone say, "their views are input, not imprint." Remember that you can only control yourself and sometimes you need to accept that you can't change how others see you to.

I have found that as with most skills, practice is the best way for it to grow stronger. It is best not to go around and ask for general feedback on everything you do. Instead, start small and solicit feedback on one specific thing. For example, ask what is the one thing I could change about the way I run the team's weekly meeting to make it run smoother. I have found that when our awareness is raised about the need for feedback to grow, we solicit it more frequently. Think back over the last few days and count the number of times your tried to find value in the feedback. Did you use it as a growth opportunity when the feedback was negative and positive?

As an organization, creating 360-degree feedback systems can have a significant impact on employee engagement and professional development. Gathering insights from multiple sources gives employees a more objective view of their performance and behaviors. Below are ways you can benefit from 360-feedback.

5 Ways In Which You Can Benefit From A 360-Degree Feedback

1. 360-Degree Feedback provides answers to the vital self-management question, "How am I doing?" As leaders rise in the hierarchy, they receive less and less honest information about themselves, 360

assessments can provide them with the information they need to take action.

2. Asking for 360-Degree Feedback is a mechanism for continuous improvement. For leaders to apply that notion to themselves, and serve as models for others, they must have reliable, valid, and timely information on how they are perceived.
3. The use of 360-Degree Feedback can help leaders validate their self-perceptions. They need honest feedback from others to test their own understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. It allows leaders to see themselves as others see them.
4. It has been observed that people are the only animals capable of self-deception. We need 360-Degree Feedback from trusted others in order to ensure that we are viewing ourselves realistically.
5. Perhaps most important, 360-Degree Feedback gets organizations to invest in the effectiveness of leaders. Soliciting feedback from bosses, peers, subordinates, customers, and others actively involves them in a process of improvement, and they are more likely to support leaders who ask for feedback, act on it, and follow through with them afterwards.

One of the areas I have built my business around is using 360 feedback assessments to grow and learn. HARMONY offers a host of some of the most prominent and provocative individual and organizational assessments on the market. These assessments can be used to identify individual and organizational strengths and development opportunities, identify individual motivations, communication styles, and provide career guidance, all with the goal of individual, group and organizational performance improvement. If you're interested in learning more about the range of assessments we offer, one-on-one executive coaching, or in-house training we can do for your company, contact Bill Burtch at Harmony for a consultation at 901-272-7390 or bburtch@harmonycc.net

Bill Burtch
PCC, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

1650 Faxon Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112
Tel: 901-272-7390
bburtch@harmonycc.net
www.harmonycc.net

Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
<i>The Coaching Clinic</i>	<i>Spring 2020</i>	<i>tbd</i>	

