

THE ART OF GIVING AND RECEIVING THE FEEDBACK

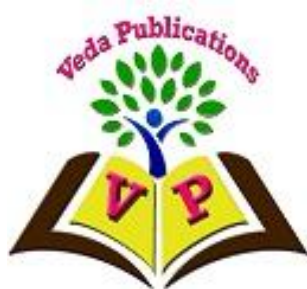
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ABSTRACT

Giving and receiving feedback is an inevitable part of communication in the workplace. This is where, we strain our relationships by failing to give the feedback in the diplomatic way and at the same time we fail to receive the feedback with the true spirit to take it personally. So in this paper, I would like to focus upon the areas we need to improve upon to give a constructive feedback and the aspects of the thought process that promotes our spirit to receive the feedback.

The first part of the paper focuses on the importance of giving and receiving feedback. In the second part of this paper, the major focus is on the skills which are required to offer the feedback. The next part of the paper throws light on the skills which are required to appreciate the feedback. It is also wise to discuss the importance of realizing whether the feedback is constructive or it is offered only for the sake of offering and it does not serve any purpose, hence in the last part of the paper, the ideas to filter the good feedback from the artificial feedback are given.



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INTRODUCTION

“Words and words are all I have to take your heart away” it a line the song “words” by Boyzone. Our words have greatest impact on our relationships. “The benefits and value of written and oral communication cannot be measured. The power of words has changed the nations; build civilizations, preserved traditions, freed masses and prevented destruction” (Robert 2009). Words of appreciation, words of small talk, words of sympathy, words of encouragement, words of love, words of care: we do not have a problem with such words. When we are to or rather have to talk something that points out something negative in the people to them earns us negativity and adversity. Feedback need not be negative; we all wish we could give only positive

feedback to the people. We bear with the people who are close to us by not letting them know how we are being affected by their words and actions in order to save our relationships. If the actions of the people affect the work and productivity of the company, it is our noble duty to let them know that their actions, which could be their inaction, negligence, indiscipline etc. are affecting the work. We cannot keep the prosperity of the company at stake for the sake of trying not to offend the people. Here comes the question, can we give feedback without offending or can we receive feedback without being offended? Yes, we can give feedback without offending people and at the same time we can receive feedback without getting offended, provided that we realize its



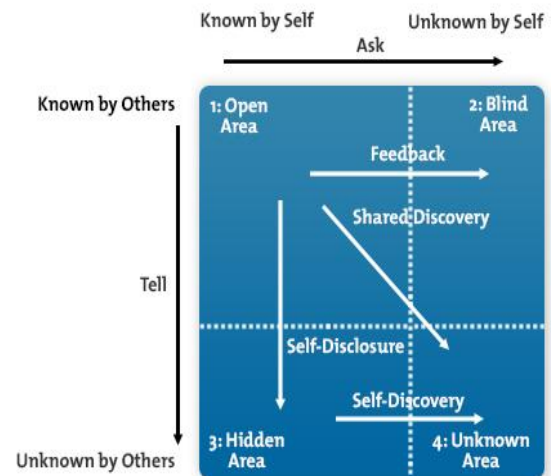
importance, and the right way of giving and receiving feedback.

IMPORTANCE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

"A survey of top executives who earned more than \$250,000 per year was conducted by a large executive search firm. The survey found that these executives believe that their communication skills were their number one factor that carried them here" (Robert 2009). As we know that many employees who leave the organization leave the manager but not the organization. As Robert (2009) stated the successful CEOs are good at communication. It is not about what we say rather it is about how we say it. Feedback is essential in both Upward and downward communication. Rizvi (2007) says that downward communication is essential for the functioning of any organization as it involves the transformation of information, instruction, advice, request, feedback and ideas to subordinate staff and the main purpose of upward communication is to provide feedback in several areas. Other examples of upward communication involve proposals, suggestion box, exit interviews, grievance committees and so forth.

These are unavoidable aspects of communication in day to day work environment. Every individual and every organization should be open to the feedback to progress themselves to the next level. We know about us more than anybody in the world, but at the same we have to realize the fact that we do not know completely about ourselves.

The Johari Window is a communication model that is designed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham. There are two key ideas behind the tool: That you can build trust with others by revealing information about yourself. That, with the help of feedback from others, you can learn about yourself and come to terms with personal issues. By explaining the idea of the Johari Window, you can help team members understand the value of self-disclosure, and you can encourage them to give, and accept, constructive feedback.



Source: *Mindtools.Com*

As we can see in the Johari window, if we are not open to the feedback, we the size of the blind gets bigger and bigger. Many times we see people get frustrated by not achieving their goals, failing to get a pay rise. They are often clueless of what exactly is going wrong with them. If they can seek the feedback from others and by disclosing themselves to build trust to accept the feedback, the journey of sharing ideas and concerns and receiving feedback from others will definitely lead to exploring the unknown and unconscious area. Hidden talents and potentialities of the people go unnoticed by the individuals by not exploring this unknown or the unconscious area.

Offering Feedback:

We are offering feedback to someone, it is for their benefit. If they do not change much, they are going to be fired. Hence we are doing a lot of favor to them by offering feedback. This is what we think and we don't give much of an importance to how it affects our relationship with the person. Some People to take a harsh way to strain their relationships and some take a passive way to bear with them. There is a middle path to the extreme ends to reach the objective of offering feedback and at the same to save our relationship. Using 4 simple steps, we can offer the feedback effectively

1. Specify
2. Describe
3. Impact
4. Request.



First, we need to be specific; generalizing is the first mistake that we normally commit. Few people try to generalize the issues or talk in the round about manner. Adding fire to the fuel, some people use sarcasm to put forward their ideas. Being specific saves time, energy and most importantly our relationships with the people. Once we are specific about the issue, we have to give a clear description of that specific issue and it should be followed by the impact of the behavior, action or inaction. And finally request them to do the necessary.

RECEIVING FEEDBACK

The biggest challenge in receiving feedback or soliciting feedback is not to take the things personally. We need to realize that human beings make mistakes. It is absolutely alright to make a mistake, or deviate from the objectives of our work, but what is not right is failing to check, whether we are in the right path or not. We need to have the right spirit to seek the feedback from the peers or superiors or at least open to the feedback when they offer it to us.

“There will be times when you will be criticized, sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly. The greatest people in the world have been criticized. Criticisms should be taken positively as feedback. The only way you will never be criticized is if you do nothing, say nothing or have nothing” (Khera 2008).

Instead of getting offended by the criticism one needs to be curious about it by asking questions. Like: what do I do? How do I adjust to it? How do I prepare for it? Etc.

DIFFERENTIATING GOOD FEEDBACK FROM THE ARTIFICIAL FEEDBACK

Some people give feedback out of jealousy, and some people give it out of ignorance for example: when someone is doing a project, a person, who does not have any awareness about it just passes lewd remarks to discourage you, it is either because they are jealous of you or ignorant of the noble objectives of the project.

“Don't take negative feedback personally. Don't blow specific negative feedback out of proportion and allow yourself to believe everything you do is bad. Always consider the credentials of the person giving you

feedback and give extra weight to the feedback from people whose backgrounds make them especially knowledgeable (and less weight to the feedback of those who aren't). On the other hand, embrace the notion that you can learn something from everyone” (Alex 2010).

By critically evaluating the negative feedback, we can arrive at the facts to realize whether it is a constructive feedback or negative feedback.

CONCLUSION

Whether we agree or not or prepared to agree or not, giving and receiving feedback is an essential element in the day to communication and we need to master the art of giving and receiving feedback to excel in our careers as the executives or the employees.

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