



In a way, we have made feedback into a much bigger deal than it is. We've gotten it into our heads that it's scary and we want to avoid it at all costs.

It sets us up to not support our teams in the way that they need and deserve.

On the other hand, it's good to recognize that feedback is a big deal and it's important. It's important to the work that we do to support our teams. The key is finding that balance between really giving it the respect it deserves, but not letting it overwhelm you.

Feedback is important for lots of reasons and some of the biggest ones are that

1) when people don't receive the feedback that they want and need they check out and when they check out, they either leave the organization or perhaps worse they stick around but they're already mentally checked out.

The good news is that staff is telling us that they want feedback.

Whether they react the way that we hope or would prefer is maybe a story for another day.

But what they're telling us is they want feedback, they want a lot of it, and they're not getting nearly as much as they would prefer.

People need to know where they stand whether they're doing a great job or a terrible job or a medium job. It's important that they understand what they need to do and whether or not they're doing it.

Too many managers wait until the end of the year review, or they go ahead and fire someone and they never even have the chance to correct what was going wrong because they didn't even know anything was going wrong.

Be equally upfront when someone's doing a great job and when they're doing not such a great job.

If you do have some fear around giving and receiving feedback, it will be helpful for you to dig through and do some of the work. Recognize what that fear is and where it's coming from. It's likely showing up in other places in your life.

Take the steps to work through that which takes time.

While you continue to have those feelings of discomfort, you just simply have to push through them and allow yourself to be uncomfortable in the beginning as you start to have these feedback conversations.

I promise you the more you have them the more comfortable they become.



To take away the fear, break it down to its core which is the purpose of feedback.

Essentially it is to start or continue meeting expectations. You want to let your staff know that they are already meeting expectations and keep up the great work or they're not meeting expectations and here's how they can start.

This becomes much easier when you establish a feedback culture where feedback just isn't these one-off conversations between supervisor and staff.

Where it's up, down, and all around.

It starts from the very beginning from when you first start being a leader and when every new staff walks through your door. The message is loud and clear- this is a feedback team. Get ready and get prepared to give a lot of it and receive a lot of it.

Having said that, make sure you're respecting the fact that it takes time. A lot of people have been burned in the past by supervisors who say things like, 'I just want you to be honest. Just tell me how you really feel' and next thing they know they're fired. They're demoted. They don't get the raise they expected or who knows.

You have to show them over time that you can be trusted and give them that time.

Think of that toe in the pool.

I'm a toe in the pool person.

Other people dive right in, but I'm one of the toe in the pool people where I like to just ease myself in. Think of it that way.

Help them out and be specific. Let them know ahead of time what you want feedback on and give them notice. For example, if you're working on doing better team building activities, let them know that next week you'll be doing a new activity and you want to see how enjoyable it was and you're going to ask them for feedback the next time you sit down together.

It gives them time to come up with a good response. You're not just springing it on them.

In the same way, you can start to ask your staff what they would like feedback on so they can choose the areas where they're really trying to grow.

Always show gratitude. Giving feedback is hard. It's especially hard if you're asking someone that you supervise to give you feedback. Acknowledge that and really be sincere in your gratitude. You don't have to agree with everything anybody says just like your staff doesn't have to agree with everything you say. You can be a good model for how to disagree in a respectful, productive way.



If there is a really strong negative reaction don't pretend it's not happening for yourself or for your staff. Acknowledge it and work through it. Either talk through it and say, 'you know, I'm feeling some type of way right now. Can we take five minutes?'

If it's the other person having a reaction, you can say, 'you know, you seem to be really upset by this. Do you want to talk about it? Do you want to meet again tomorrow?' Or whatever.

Don't just try to plow through and pretend it's not happening.

Make sure that when it comes to feedback, you're getting personal because the way we see the world is so completely personal to our own beliefs and thoughts and values and we need to present feedback as such.

That it's not this objective truth, but that this is the way you're seeing it as the leader. You can say things like, 'here's what I thought or saw or experienced. What did you see or think or experience?' or 'here's how I go about doing this. Would you be willing to try it this way?' or 'have you tried it this way?'

And in those moments when you really just want something done your way, it's okay. Sometimes you don't want it to be the way all the time. But when you really want something done a particular way, articulate that.

Let them know that this is your preference. Be specific about what you're looking for. Articulate why you want it done a certain way and then make sure that you're really clear.

You can also get personal by finding out the preferences of your team when it comes to feedback. They're not allowed to say they don't want any but accommodate them where you can and give them an opportunity to say whether they like feedback really directly or maybe they like that old-fashioned compliment sandwich.

Or if they like to get feedback in the moment or they prefer to wait until your one-on-one time.

Remember that not all feedback is bad. So, include in this conversation how they like to be praised so that you can praise them in a way that feels good to them.

Whether or not you're discussing a performance issue or giving praise, the principles are really the same.

Be specific.

We bring it back to the expectation and why that's an expectation, how that's going to get you to the mission and vision.



Focus on going forward. You're not there to be right or try and make people feel guilty if they messed up.

They messed up. Everybody will. Focus on how to make it better going forward.

This is kind of the traditional feedback formula just presented a little bit of a different way where you have the action, the result, the expectations going forward, and next steps. You can use this in an infraction or when somebody makes a mistake, but you can also use this for praise.

If someone does something good, you mention the action, the concept, the positive consequence of the action, the expectation going forward, and the steps that they can take to get there.

Do give feedback the respect it deserves because it is an important, really helpful tool for you to support your team and their growth and for you to be supported in your own growth.

Don't make it into a bigger deal than it needs to be.

You can do this.

I promise.

Gather up your courage and start to create that really impactful, feedback culture on your team, so you and your team members can become their best professional selves.

So, the most important question for you is, how will you create a feedback culture on your team?