

Becoming a Leader: Receiving and Giving Painful, Wonderful Feedback ©

The Roles of the Leader:

- To establish and effectively communicate clear direction.
- To find, develop and grow the right people to achieve the direction.
- To build and sustain an ecology in which people can and will succeed.

An Approach to Feedback:

- Find a coach, or a facilitator. Make sure they are someone you can trust, and that they are able to coach effectively with a focus on you and the portfolio of you, not on the standards of others.
- Use an effective process to assess and describe your values, style, and strengths as well as the key needs of the setting in which you are leading.
- Then characterize your potential upsides and growth opportunities.
- Focus on your sweet spot, not weaknesses except to mitigate them.
- Choose an assessment instrument that suits you well.
- Select participants carefully. You need the best possible viewpoints.
- Regardless of the source or nature of the feedback, a reflective practice takes the information and helps us learn. We must use an approach that allows us to move information from head to heart.
- From the feedback, create an action plan with three to five objectives that are measurable and accountable. Without deliberate application, feedback cannot be put to use.
- Discuss the action plans with those who provided the feedback, and ask them to enhance your objectives. Some of the best guidance comes from those who know and experience us.
- Revise the action plan, return to one of your trusted confidantes, and ask them to push you toward maximum benefit so that you create real and meaningful payoff for yourself. Then we can be motivated.
- Establish accountability for yourself with milestones, check ins with a trusted partner, and periodic evaluations of progress. Second loop feedback increases the likelihood of results.

Three Essential Principles:

- Learning how to take advantage of feedback requires that you find at least one, and preferably several people, who will tell you the truth about yourself in a way in which you can hear it. And they must be someone you trust enough to listen to them.
- “Lean into the sharp points.” Pema Chodron
“No great things will come to you in your comfort zone.” Ron Chapman
- Research shows the most beneficial feedback is positive and supportive in a ratio of 7 to 1 versus feedback that is not. This does not argue for a whitewash. Rather for the kind of valuing of others that calls them up, not calling them out.

Resources for Feedback:

- **Articles with Guidance for Feedback**
 - *6 Steps Leaders Can Take to Get the Most Out of Feedback* by Jennifer Porter
 - *Thanks for the Feedback: The Science and Art of Receiving Feedback Well* by Douglas Stone & Sheila Heen
 - *The Feedback Fallacy* by Marcus Buckingham & Ashley Goodall
 - **Leadership Frameworks**
 - *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* by Jim Collins
 - *The Advantage: Why Organization Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* by Patrick Lencioni
 - **Communications for Conflict**
 - *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, et al.
 - *Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior* by Kerry Patterson, Ron Switzler, and Joseph Grenny
 - **Tools for Building Trust**
 - *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni
 - *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen M.R. Covey
 - **Other Useful Resources**
 - *How the Mighty Fall* by Jim Collins
 - *Transcendent Leadership* by Ron Chapman at District 44 TLI
<https://www.seeingtrue.com/blog/what-does-it-mean-to-be-an-effective-leader>
 - *Change Leadership* (The Elephant in the Room at District 44 TLI
<https://www.seeingtrue.com/blog/tli-keynote-2018>
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“Leaders fail or fall because humility is replaced by hubris. They forget the principles that led to their success. Then decisions and actions proceed down a slippery slope that leads to one’s demise.”

-Paraphrased from Jim Collins

“Get Over Your Self: The Secret is in the Leading, Not the Leader.”

-Ronald Chapman