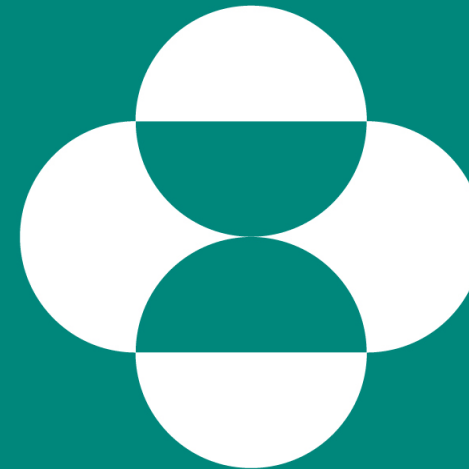


CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK: STATISTICAL PROGRAMMING CASE STUDY

PHUSE Single Day Event, Basel, 10th September 2020

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Agenda

1. Feedback Definition
2. Mindset
3. Constructive Feedback
4. Tips and Tricks
5. What Is Not constructive Feedback
6. Conclusions



Feedback Definition

The term feedback is used to describe the helpful information or criticism about prior action or behavior from an individual, communicated to another individual (or a group) who can use that information to adjust and improve current and future actions and behaviors.

At work, feedback is a dynamic communication process between two individuals, where there is a change of information regarding the performance of who is receiving the feedback.^[1]



Mindset

It is important to give effective feedback, but also the person who receives the feedback needs to have a prepared mindset, ready to receive feedback accurately and to obtain benefit from it.

The person who provides the feedback must have:

- ☐ Credibility^[1]
- ☐ Trust^[2]
- ☐ Be authoritative



[1] Ilgen D.R., Fisher C.D., Taylor M.S. (1979), Consequences of Individual Feedback on Behavior in Organizations, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 64, 349-371.

[2] Nyhan R.C. (2000), Changing the Paradigm: Trust and Its Role in Public Sector Organizations, *The American Review of Public Administration*, 87-109.



Constructive Feedback

- The purpose of constructive feedback is to give feedback to an individual in a way that will lead to improvements or corrections. This is important, as **it enhances personal and professional growth** in individuals.
- Constructive feedback should contain an **evaluation** and an **informative component**^[1] and it should be:
 - ☐ Specific
 - ☐ Accurate
 - ☐ Objective
 - ☐ Timely
 - ☐ Usable
 - ☐ Desired by the receiver
 - ☐ Checked for understanding
- Constructive feedback is vital to employees' ongoing development.



[1] Kulhavy R.W., Stock W.A. (1989), Feedback in Written Instruction: The Place of Response Certitude, *Educational Psychology Review*, 279-308.



Constructive Feedback - Tips and Tricks

Method 1: AEPA (analysis, environment, pattern, action)

Method 2: Corrective feedback

Method 3: Feedback sandwich

Method 4: Verbal communication and body language

Method 5: The more details the better!



Tips and Tricks: AEPA (Analysis, Environment, Pattern, Action)

‘**The Feedback Loop**’ (as it is often referred to) is divided into 4 steps:

- **Analysis:** study the data related to the behavior in question.
- **Environment:** connect the behavior to the person and to the environment.
- **Pattern:** draw a pattern to follow.
- **Action:** the person can change and renew themselves through action or choice; this action is the basement for the feedback loop.

***Analysis:** The director of Statistical Programming noticed a missed target for completing mandatory training on time.*

***Environment:** The Statistical Programming team seem to be more focused on working assignments, giving less priority to training.*

***Pattern:** The director decides to encourage the team to complete the training within a week of them being assigned.*

***Action:** After the director sends the reminder to the team, the training compliance has been achieved.*



Tips and Tricks: **Corrective Feedback**

- Directly relates to the assignment and the outcome of the assignment.
- More productive when applied to situations inherent in misinterpretation of information.
- Allows incorrect assumptions to be discarded and provides indications of the correct strategic and research direction^[1].
- Can be conceived of high or low complexity (simple performances are most beneficial)^[2].
- Can be used for individual or collective performance and can be given in both individual and group situations.

“Chiara, I can see you missed a few steps when developer testing of hazard ratio calculation macro.

I think the reason could be that you followed the old version of the SOP. Do you think that is the case?

I suggest you read the new SOP carefully and if you have any questions, we can discuss it together in the following meeting.”

[1] Harackiewicz J.M., Manderlink G., Sansone C. (1984), Rewarding Pinball Wizardry: Effects of Evaluation and Cue Value on Intrinsic Interest, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47, 287-300.

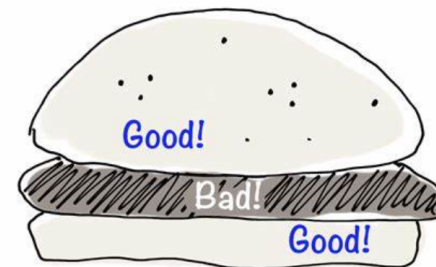
[2] Kulhavy R.W., White M.T., Topp B.V., Chan A.L., Adams J. (1985), Feedback Complexity and Corrective Efficiency, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 10, 285-291.



Tips and Tricks: Feedback Sandwich

- Include critical feedback along with other positive feedback, such as in a sandwich^[1].
- It is a more balanced approach and the criticism will only be a small part of the assessment, reducing the anxiety and discomfort of the recipient.
- It is based on Praise-Improve-Praise (PIP) model:
 - **Start:** focus on strength.
 - **Middle:** provide criticism - areas of improvement.
 - **End:** Reiterate positive results that can be expected if the criticism is acted upon.

“Tom, you did exceptionally well last year, in particular your technical skills and self-development. Next year, it would be good to focus more on team working skills. In the last few projects I noticed that you avoided collaborating with other statistical programmers and preferred to work independently keeping the tasks for yourself and working extra hours. While your dedication to the project is much appreciated, you will notice the benefits of splitting the workload and I will help you in this.”



[1] The Hamburger Method of Constructive Criticism (2007), <http://n8tip.com/the-hamburger-method-of-constructive-criticism-works-for-vegetarians-too>.

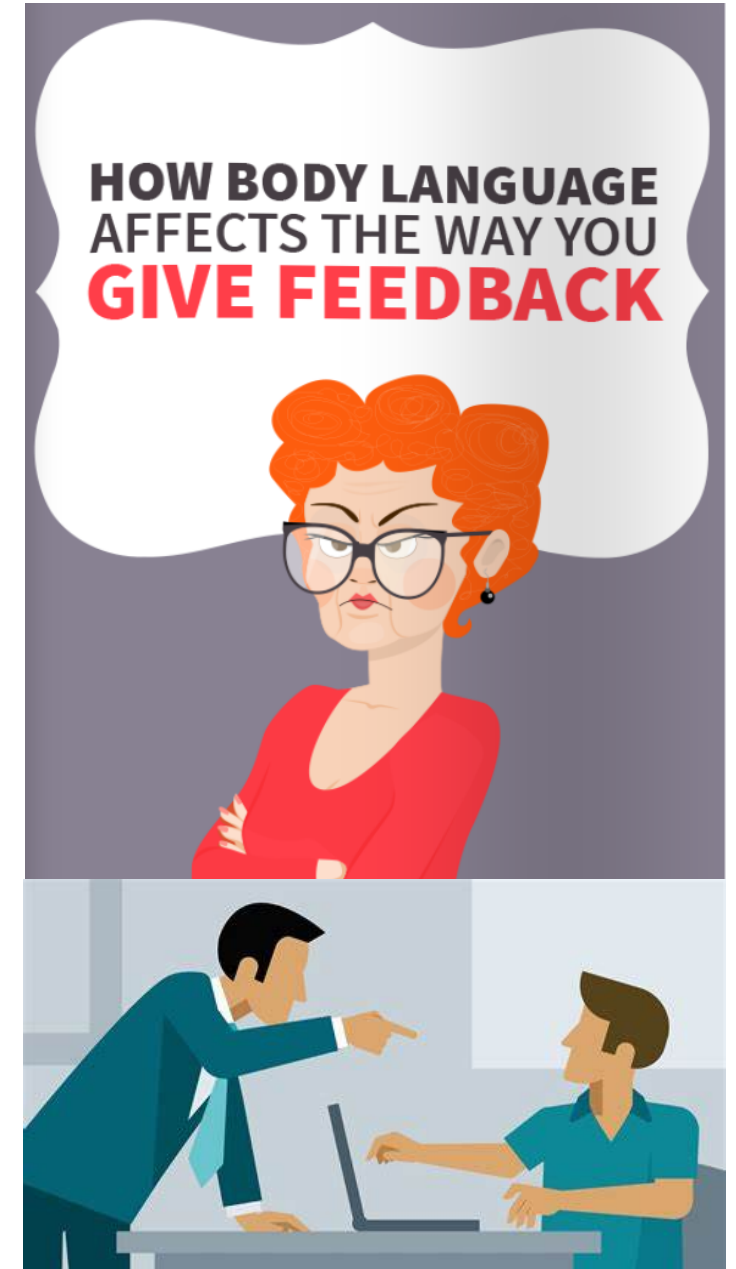


Tips and Tricks:

Verbal Communication and Body Language

- Body language is a process of communicating through non-verbal signals.
- When giving critical feedback, **focus on your non-verbal cues**:
 - Facial expression
 - Eye contact
 - Voice
 - Posture
 - Breath
 - Attention

https://hbr.org/2017/01/when-giving-critical-feedback-focus-on-your-nonverbal-cues?referral=00203&utm_source=newsletter_management_tip&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tip_date



Tips and Tricks: The More Details the Better!

- Those who provide feedback must be attentive to the details; there is no need to leave room for incorrect interpretations by the receiver^[1].
- It is action-centered feedback, with accurate information^[2].
- Give more details:
 - What happened?
 - When and where it happened?
 - Who?
 - How it impacted others?

“Ligia, you have done a really good job of meeting the timelines for the latest submission. Can you please make sure to pay more attention to the compliance and quality of the outputs in the future?”

Vs

“Ligia, you have done a really good job with the latest submission. In the future, can you please make sure to pay more attention to the program log files and make sure they are clean, (for example they do not contain any warning or error messages) and that all titles and footnotes in your tables are coded up according to the specifications?”

[1] Ilgen D.R., Fisher C.D., Taylor M.S. (1979), Consequences of Individual Feedback on Behavior in Organizations, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 64, 349-371.

[2] Archer J.C. (2010), State of the Science in Health Professional Education: Effective Feedback, *Medical Education*, 44, 101-108.



What Is **Not** Constructive Feedback

1. Generic feedback
2. Destructive feedback
3. Praise & critics
4. PARENT effect



What Is Not Constructive Feedback: **Generic Feedback**

- It risks appearing obscure to the recipient, by reducing the degree of learning^[1].
- If a colleague doesn't have a clear understanding of what they are doing wrong, how can they be expected to fix it?

“The layout of the output doesn't match the specifications”

“You need to be more compliant”

[1] Roper W.J. (1977), Feedback in Computer Assisted Instruction, *Innovations in Educ. Teaching Int. RIIIE Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 43-49.



What Is Not Constructive Feedback: **Destructive Feedback**

“This Survival Analysis is for sure not correct”

“You are not managing the team in an efficient way!”

- Points out faults and directly attacks the individual.
- No practical advice or supportive feedback is given.
- Hurt people's feelings.
- Does not provide any evidence to support the assessments.
- Employees exit such conversations feeling defeated^[1].



[1] <https://www.tinypulse.com/blog/difference-between-constructive-destructive-performance-reviews>

What Is Not Constructive Feedback: Praise & Critics

- Praise and critics, if not handled properly, can produce effects opposite to the reason that generated them^[1].
- Critics can frustrate and demoralize the recipient^[2].
- Praise does not allow the recipient to understand the reasons for their success.
- Not contextualizing praise and criticism, generates an increase in levels of stress and lack of understanding of the feedback process in the recipient.

“You have to find a solution; you can’t go on like this”

“How did you come up with a similar idea?”

“You were great, keep it up!”

“Great job, I hope there are other occasions like that”

**PRAISE
MAKES YOU
FEEL GOOD
CRITIQUE
MAKES YOU
BETTER**

[1] Gravina N.E., Siers B.P. (2011), Square Pegs and Round Holes: Ruminations on the Relationship between Performance Appraisal and Performance Management, Journal of Organizational Behavior Management, 31, 277-287.

[2] Murder R.H. (2013), Exploring Feedback Incidents, Their Characteristics and the Informal Learning Activities that Emanate from Them, European Journal of Training and Development, 37, 49-71.



What Is Not Constructive Feedback: **PARENT Effect**

- It is the reluctance and failure to effectively share negative information^[1], suggesting a similarity with the behavior of a parent with her/his baby.
- It can manifest in three different ways^[2]:
 1. Release of information processed by making negative feedback as positive as possible.
 2. Use of courtesy to increase support and emotional closeness to the recipient.
 3. The omission of all or part of the information.
- The recipient, will not be able to regulate the behavior.

John and Michael are statistical programmers and they have to work together on a project.

1. *“I noticed there was not a lot of communication between Michael and you. It is fine, but please, if you can, try to communicate a bit more with him. It will help you both to work better.”*
2. *“I know it is hard to work with Michael sometimes, but please could you try to have better communication with him?”*

[1] Cox S.S., Marler L.E., Simmering M.J., Totten J.W. (2011), Giving Feedback: Development of Scales for the Mum Effect, Discomfort Giving Feedback, and Feedback Medium Preference, *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 49-69.

[2] Tesser A., Rosen S. (1975), The Reluctance to Transmit Bad News, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 8, 193-232.



Conclusions

Remember, the aims of **constructive feedback** are to:

- ☐ Empower and guarantee the professional growth of the collaborators.
- ☐ Define and communicate what is expected from employees, in terms of goals, results and behaviours.
- ☐ Promote the development of a “management culture” based on goals and results.
- ☐ Positively impact an individual’s behavior.
- ☐ Provide a new perspective and give valuable insight into the person receiving feedback.

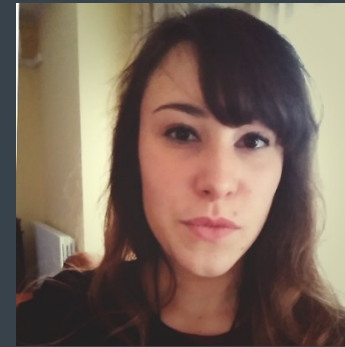


THANK YOU



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