

Starting Reflection

Think of a piece of feedback you received that you didn't know what to do with. Write it below. You won't be asked to share it unless you choose to. Hold onto it — you'll use it again at the end of the session.

THE THREE TYPES OF FEEDBACK

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	WHAT IT MEANS	YOUR MOVE
A	Specific Behavior Direct Next Step is Obvious	Giver was there. Named it. Clear next step.	Act
B	Vague Behavior Undelivered Next Step is Buried	Giver has the specifics. Didn't say them.	Bridge
C	Perception Based Secondhand Next Step is a Decision	May not fully resolve even with good questions.	Choose

Now look at the feedback you wrote above. What type do you think it is? (It's okay if you're not sure yet.)	A B C
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Common Feedback Failures & What to Do Instead

THE THREE FAILURE MODES

FAILURE MODE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT IT COSTS
Getting Defensive	Explains the context. Makes their case. Pushes back professionally.	Manager closes down. Feedback doesn't change. A reputation for not being able to hear it.
Shutting Down	Goes quiet. Says thank you. Leaves without asking anything.	Looks like composure. Isn't. You leave without anything to act on and the manager thinks it landed.
Over-Accepting	Agrees immediately. Maybe apologizes. Conversation ends warmly.	You committed to fixing something without knowing what to change. You left with less than the feedback contained.

THE THREE MOVES

MOVE	WHAT IT DOES	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
Pause	Before you respond to the feedback, respond to the fact that you received it.	<p>"Let me make sure I understand that."</p> <p>"That's helpful — give me a second."</p> <p>"I want to make sure I'm hearing this right."</p>
Acknowledge	Reflect back what you heard. Signals the message landed — not agreement.	<p>"So what I'm hearing is..."</p> <p>"If I'm understanding you correctly..."</p> <p>"It sounds like what you observed was..."</p>
Clarify	One question. Separates what you know from what you're assuming.	<p>"Can you give me a specific example?"</p> <p>"What would you want to see instead?"</p> <p>"Help me understand what specifically came across that way."</p>

**Receiving feedback well does not mean agreeing with it.
It means staying in control of the conversation.**

Broad Feedback – Roleplay Scenarios

Broad feedback is solvable. The giver has specific information; they just didn't deliver it. The receiver's job is to bridge until they find it.

Giver	Receiver	Observer
Deliver the opening script. Release details only if the receiver asks.	Pause. Acknowledge. Clarify. Leave with something specific enough to act on.	Watch for the three moves. Share one specific moment after the round.

SCENARIO B1 — EXECUTIVE PRESENCE

GIVER OPENING LINE	GIVER KNOWS — release only if asked
“I wanted to share some feedback from Tuesday’s leadership meeting. I think there’s an opportunity for you to show up with more executive presence in those rooms.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receiver delivered a strong point but said it quietly and didn’t hold eye contact with senior leaders.• Point was good but didn’t land. People moved on before they’d heard it.• Wants receiver to slow down, make the point directly, and hold the room for a beat.• Next leadership meeting is in two weeks, and is a concrete opportunity.

Receiver: This feedback is unclear and a little unsettling. You don't know what 'executive presence' means to these stakeholders or which meetings they're referring to. Practice pausing, acknowledging without agreeing, and asking one specific clarifying question.

SCENARIO B2 — TOO INTENSE

GIVER OPENING LINE	GIVER KNOWS — release only if asked
“I want to give you some feedback from last week’s project debrief. There were a couple of moments where your style came across as intense — in a way that I think got in the way of the conversation.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receiver restated recommendation without acknowledging two colleagues’ concerns about the timeline.• Interrupted once before Alex had finished speaking.• Wants receiver to acknowledge concerns before restating position.• Suggests practicing ‘acknowledge the concern first’ in the next team meeting.

Receiver: This feedback is vague and potentially unfair. You're not sure if 'intense' means passionate, direct, or something else. Practice pausing, acknowledging without accepting the label, and asking what behavior is being described.

SCENARIO B3 — BUILD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

<p>GIVER OPENING LINE</p> <p>“I want to raise something with you about how you’re coming across to the broader team. I think there’s an opportunity to build stronger relationships. I say that because I think it matters for where you’re headed.”</p>	<p>GIVER KNOWS — release only if asked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiver tends to leave right after team meetings rather than staying for informal conversation. Has declined most optional team lunches. Two colleagues mentioned they find receiver hard to read. Small things: staying ten minutes after a meeting, grabbing lunch occasionally.
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Receiver: This feedback is frustrating because it’s vague and you don’t know who said it or what specific behavior prompted it. Practice pausing, acknowledging without dismissing or over-accepting, and asking one specific question.

OBSERVER SHEET

Watch for these four things. After the round, share one specific moment — not general impressions.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR	YES	NOTES
Did the receiver take a visible beat before responding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did they acknowledge without immediately agreeing,	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did they ask one specific question — not a vague ‘what do you	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Did they leave with something specific enough to act on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sam's Situation

THE SITUATION

Three years with the firm. Strong performance reviews. Name surfaced for a project lead role. Never made the formal list. Two weeks later, someone else gets the job.

THE FEEDBACK

“Some of the senior stakeholders have mentioned that in larger meetings, your communication style can come across as a little understated. We want to see you show up with more confidence before we put you in front of clients at that level.”

APPLY GROW TO SAM'S SITUATION

Work through all four questions together. Land on one specific way forward before time is called.

G — Goal What does Sam actually want? Not what just got taken away — what do they want in the next 90 days within their control?

R — Reality What does Sam actually know — versus what are they assuming? Separate the two.

O — Options What are all of Sam’s choices? Name at least three before discussing any. Include the uncomfortable ones.

W — Way Forward What is one specific thing Sam will do this week? Specific enough to put on a calendar.

Peer Sharing

This session surfaces a lot of wisdom. Use this space to capture what lands.

What strategies have you used or seen for recovering from a setback?

How have you created opportunities to get feedback?

One thing I want to try

Your GROW

Go back to the feedback you wrote on page 1. Use these four questions to decide what to do with it. You don't need anyone else in the room — just fifteen minutes and a situation worth thinking through.

THE FEEDBACK (from page 1)

Write a short version here so you can refer to it as you work through the four questions:

G — Goal What do I actually want? Not what I'm wishing had happened — what do I want in the next 90 days that is within my control?

R — Reality What do I actually know — versus what am I assuming? Spend time here. Don't rush to options.

O — Options What are all my choices? Name at least three. Include the uncomfortable ones. Include leaving.

W — Way Forward What is one specific thing I will do this week? Concrete enough to put on a calendar.

**The goal is not to get perfect feedback.
The goal is to decide what to do with what you actually got.**