

GIVING FEEDBACK EFFECTIVELY



ThirdSIGMA
INTERNATIONAL

Giving Feedback

Feedback is the sharing of observations about job performance or work-related behaviours.

The goal of feedback is to achieve work objectives by reinforcing or changing behaviour.

Depending upon the situation, you can give feedback based on short-term or long-term goals. You can also give feedback in different directions: upward, downward, or laterally, that is, to a colleague.

Effective feedback can improve three aspects of your work:

- relationships—how well you interact with people
- process—how you get the work done
- results—your measurable on-the-job achievements

Effective feedback helps

- redirect a behaviour or point out a more productive path of action
- reinforce or encourage an effective way of working
- coach better performance.

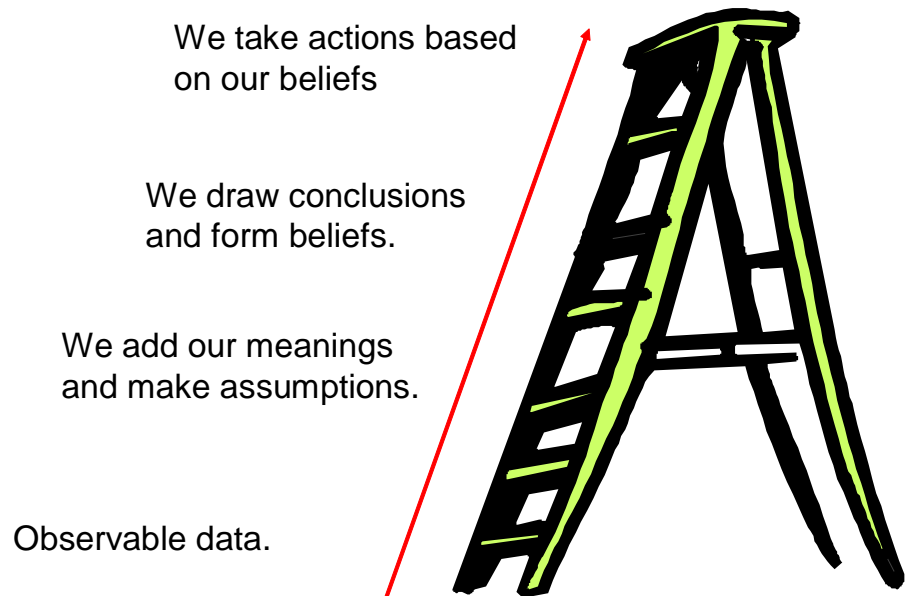
Inference

In the absence of real and open communication the Ladder of Inference takes hold of our thinking.

Many conclusions can be drawn from observed situations. Without checking these can be interpreted according to our values, beliefs and cultural norms.

Before giving feedback we **MUST** check the facts and focus on our desired outcomes

The Ladder of Inference



Straight Talking

P : Prepare

Straight Talking

Prepare



Advocate



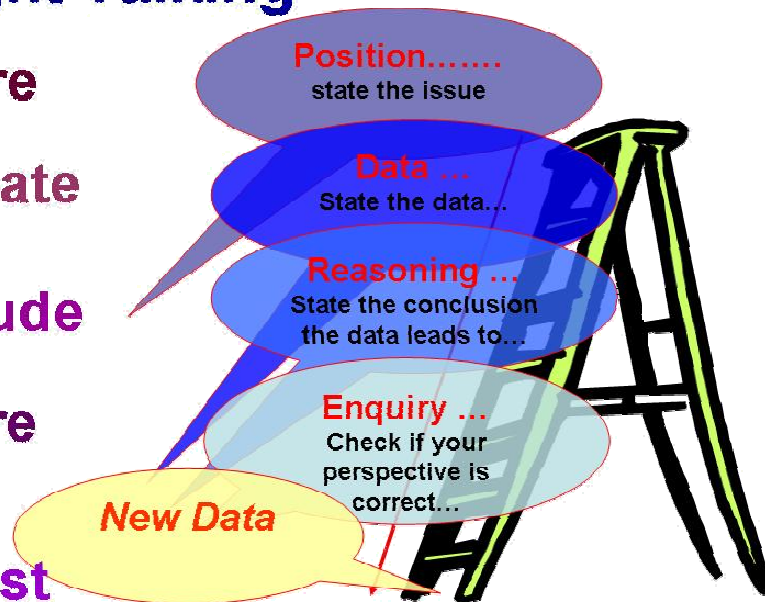
Conclude



Enquire



Request



Prepare for the feedback - fools rush in but wise men prepare.

What is your Intention in giving the feedback? To praise, to reinforce or to correct a behaviour? Write it down.

- How do you want the receiver to FEEL afterwards – Devastated(!)? Encouraged? Chastened? Proud? Hopeful? Grateful?
- What is the best environment to give the feedback without others overhearing? What facts do you have?
- What organisation values are you reinforcing?
- What are the precise circumstances?
- What is the behaviour in question? Take notes of the time/behaviours/ incident.
- Review job description, memos, and documented conversations of expectations that relate to the specific behaviour.

- Are you coming from a position of personal opinion or evidence based behaviours?
- Can you describe what is appropriate vs. in-appropriate? Outline what behaviour you want changed and the time frame.
- Determine how you can support the change.
- Clearly identify primary and secondary issues, get as much information as possible and, if needed, canvas others to get clarity and a different perspective on what is going on.
- Set up a conversation that will include the other person's input.
 - Give the person advance notice that you want to give feedback. For example, *"I'd like to speak with you later about the accuracy of your reports"*
 - Let the person know whether the solutions are open to discussion or whether you have specific requests that you need addressed. For example, *"Please come prepared to discuss how we can have more accurate reporting."*

A: Advocate

Advocate – Tell the receiver what was observed, or what your data position is.

Keep strictly to the issues at hand without personal bias or opinion. Be clear and careful to keep only to observed behaviours or data. Opinions have no place here.

- Describe the behaviour and its impact on you and others.
- Referring to the context, state who, what, and when. For example, *"When we compiled our departmental numbers for this year, the numbers you gave us were unsubstantiated. We had agreed that we needed backup data for all figures."*
- State the concrete effect on you and others of the behaviour. For example, *"We needed those cost numbers for our presentation, and three of us stayed back on Wednesday night to do extra to get your part ready."*

C: Conclude

Conclude – Give the receiver your preliminary conclusion based on the data and facts.

“At this point I am concluding that you are not contributing to the project and the results of the teams’ efforts”

E: Enquire

Enquire – Ask for clarification on your observations / conclusions and invite a response, keeping clearly and squarely to the issue.

At this point you will have let the receiver know where you (the organisations leadership representative) stand in respect to their behaviour and you have opened the door to invite their input to provide more data, and a different viewpoint.

Whilst many get to this stage easily; the focus is now to keep to the issues at hand and to keep the other person in a receptive frame of mind. Defensiveness can creep (*rush*) in at this point.

Where the feedback is of the “behaviour correcting” type, then it is crucial to stay detached from the other person’s emotions.

- Listen actively to each response.
- Ask open-ended questions. For example, *“What’s your reaction? What am I missing?”*
- Check for the receiver’s understanding to see if your perceptions are accurate. For example, *“What questions do you have that could help you understand what I am suggesting?”*

- Check for agreement/disagreement. Encourage the other person to question, challenge, or make an alternate suggestion. For example, "Is there anything about the *suggestion that seems incorrect?*"
- Inquire about the root causes, if appropriate. For example, "*What was it that led you not to provide the costs information?*" Or, "*What were you trying to achieve by leaving the information out?*"

R: Request

Make a suggestion or **R**request, and then check for understanding.

For example, "*What I'd request in the future is that if you believe you have a valid reason for not including the data, make it clear and check to see that others see it the same way.*"

Next, request that the receiver do one or more of the following:

- **Stop** a behaviour you find disruptive
- **Act** in a way you think would be helpful
- **Acknowledge** the behaviour and its impact
- Check for the receiver's understanding of the suggestion/request. For example, "What questions do you have *about my concern or what I'm requesting?*"
- Get agreement/commitment on the next steps.
- If you intend to have the person help you determine follow-up action, state it at this time. For example, "*We have another project deadline next month. How can we approach this so that we have the final accurate cost numbers in time?*"
- Describe how you can support the corrected behaviour. For example, "*I can be available for consultation about the costs numbers next Thursday.*"

- **Keep a record** of what was said and any agreement made.
- Keep track of milestones and check on their completion. If they are not met, consider a follow-up feedback session.

An Example

You ordered a piece of software from the internal IT Support person, John, and it has turned up late.

Your interview with John may go along the lines of;

Prepare - You invite John to your office. You turn off your mobile, close the door and take the internal phone off the hook – you won't be disturbed. (*John just got the message that you are about to have a serious conversation.*)

Advocate

“John I ordered an upgrade from you on Monday, you promised it to me on Wednesday, and we are now 7 days behind schedule without you letting me know what is going on”

Conclude

“This leads me to believe that you are not on top of what is happening in your area and that your feedback to internal clients is lacking”

Enquire

“John, Can you shed some light on what is going on with the software delivery and also your internal management and communication of this situation?”

Request

“John I am asking that you keep me informed of any delays in software ordered in future and that you give me an update on what changes you are making as a result of this situation by Friday next week

Can you confirm you will do that?”

In this example there are 2 issues,

1. The software is late and
2. John’s internal client service is below expectations.

Tips

The following general guidelines assist successful giving and receiving of feedback. You can customise them to accommodate the direction of the feedback, as well as the preferred work and communication styles of the people involved.

- Establish a *receptive work environment*. This will vary for each
- Adopt the attitude that feedback is a *mutually beneficial exchange*.
- Base feedback on *clear work/relationship expectations*.
- *Establish a mutual commitment* to work on areas that need improvement and to acknowledge positive performance.
- Frame the feedback as part of an *ongoing process*—not as a one-time event.
- *Do your homework BEFORE* the feedback session
- When giving feedback, *keep the receiver's perspective in mind* as you plan what to say. For example, "I'm concerned about the missing details in your records and believe that it could affect safety when we do future maintenance"
- Match your method of giving the feedback to the *communication style most comfortable for the receiver*.
- Be alert to ways in which differences in gender, race, and age may lead to crucial differences in perspective between the giver and receiver.
- *Give the person advance notice* that you want to give feedback
- *Let the person know* whether the solutions are open to discussion or whether you have specific requests that you need addressed.
- Use **PACER**

So who is Third Sigma International...?

Pioneered by Brisbane business-woman Liz Cassidy, Third Sigma International is the culmination of 40 years collective professional experience in Business Management, Recruitment and Performance & Executive Coaching.

Third Sigma International is the natural consequence of an on-going passion to assist individuals, teams and businesses toward the realisation of their goals and dreams.

"We all have the capacity to achieve greatness in our lives - whatever that means to each individual - to live a life beyond the norm. Some of us just want it more than others.

Third Sigma International is committed to those who are committed to themselves. It takes courage to ask for help but it's a necessary prerequisite for change."

Third Sigma coaches have broad personal, professional and business experience combined with a comprehensive study of the art and science of human transformation.

When **you're ready for change**, we get you there - faster.

What's in a name?

We do occasionally get asked where the name comes from and does it have any significance?

Well yes it does.....

Remember your statistics studies? The 'third sigma' relates to three standard deviations to the right of average on a statistical bell curve - 99.7% of a population falls within three standard deviations of 'average'.

We work with those aiming for the top 0.15%. Our clients plan to be in the third sigma level of performance...beyond the norm.

When you are aiming for performance excellence you find it in the Third Sigma. That's us!



...beyond the norm

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- **Outcome Achievement**
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- **Personal and Business Change**
- **Results**

...beyond the norm