

The Art of Improvement



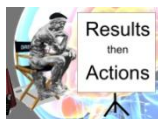
Goals of today's session: To further develop your ability to create rapid, positive improvement. We'll practice influencing people's "inner movies" in a way that motivates greater productivity in a sustainable way. We'll look at when feedback is the best option, and the many times when *Feedforward* is better. We'll deepen your ability to energize peoples' "Cavemen" and focus their "Thinkers".



Feedforward¹: The purpose of "Feedforward" is to provide you with ideas for the future and to help you achieve positive change in behaviors and processes. Instead of rehashing a past that cannot be changed "feedforward" focuses on creating a more successful future. This also creates the most helpful "inner movies" about what to do. Top athletes are often trained using techniques like this. Basketball players are taught to envision the ball going in the hoop and to imagine the perfect shot. By giving you ideas on how you can be even more successful, this method can increase your chances of achieving this success in the future.



Feedback: Feedback is a gift when it is essential to growth. It's very powerful to discuss what made past ventures successful ("positive" feedback). There are also times to speak the hard truths ("negative" feedback). Research has shown that high performance teams speak about positives far more than negatives.



Giving Feedback: We recommend balancing² each piece of "negative" feedback with at least nine pieces of positive feedback or positive *feedforward* ideas for the future. This keeps a process moving forward. Too much negative can get a process stuck in the blame game and other results of F Responses.

The most effective feedback describes the *Results* of what happened, and the *Actions* (or lack of action) that we think led to those results. Results can include gains, losses, feelings, and other impact. We recommend thinking clearly about feedback before giving it. Then ensure the receiver is ready to receive the feedback. Then giving it in a concise manner, with specific examples to make it usable. Then, move the topic to what *can* be done to move the process forward.



Receiving Feedback: It is sometimes very helpful to know how our actions are affecting others, and the results that we seek. To gain the most from feedback ask people what their desired results were. Ask them what actions helped towards those results. Then ask them what actions might have gotten in the way of those desired results. Ask for specific example of these actions, and what actions might have worked in their mind. End by clarifying, with a concise summary to ensure you understand, and that they feel heard. (This is a backwards-looking version of the Thinker's Positive Change Questions^{3&4}.)



Yes and: We're all highly skilled and practiced at critiquing, judging and defining. We're trained at saying no. We have great muscles for that. Strengthen your affirmation muscles. The "yes and" approach gives us the ability to respond to potentially stressful situations in a more relaxed, productive and relationship-building way. These two words have a powerful effect in all relationships, motivation, conflict-management and creativity⁵.

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Bibliography

1. Marshall Goldsmith, "FeedForward"
<http://www.marshallgoldsmithfeedforward.com/html/FeedForward-Tool.htm>
2. Losada, M. & E. D. Heaphy, "The Role of Positivity and Connectivity in the Performance of Business Teams: A Nonlinear Dynamics Model." (2004) American Behavioral Scientist, Feb 2004; vol. 47: pp. 740 - 765. <http://losada.socialpsychology.org>
3. Faw, Bob, "An Old Sea Dog Can Learn New Tricks." (2008) Seasonings, Organizational Development Network online. <http://matchboxgroup.com/inspiring-tools/inspiring-tools>
4. Faw, Bob, "Staying Positive in Negative Times." (2009) New Hampshire Business Review. <http://matchboxgroup.com/inspiring-tools/inspiring-tools>
5. Faw, Bob, "Improvisational Leadership: Greater Buy-in and Morale on the Fly". (2011) white paper. <http://matchboxgroup.com/inspiring-tools/inspiring-tools>

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1. Best DNA questions / comments:

- Name at least three different emotions you felt while doing this Best DNA process.
- What did I already know?
- Where do I already live my best DNA?
- What surprises did I have?
- How does the Best DNA discovery change the way I see myself?
- What did I gain from doing this?
- What percent of my life is spent in the center - the overlap of my strengths, core purpose and principles and the value others see in me?
- How will I use this to be a better leader?

2. During Best DNA mingling, share personal learnings from the questions above.

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7. Where else can I use Best DNA to be helpful?

8. List your key lessons on the GRIP model (if applicable)

9. List your key lessons about the strengths exercise (if applicable)

10. Personal goals for today

11. How will I ensure that I hit my personal goal for today?

12. *Feedforward*: One behavior that I would like to get better at that would have a significant, positive impact on my life.

13. Ideas from others on how I can get better at that behavior.

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17. If I had a supportive inner circle working with me on my own development, what are some behaviors of mine that I would be interested in working on?

18. Who would I want in my inner circle?

- People above me in the hierarchy

- My peers both in my department and other departments

- Customers both internal and external

- My partner/spouse/significant other

- Who else

19. What is one topic from today that I want to take away?

20. What is my most important take away from the Leadership University to date?