

Meyer's Management Models

55. Duty of Care Feedback Model

How can I effectively give someone feedback?

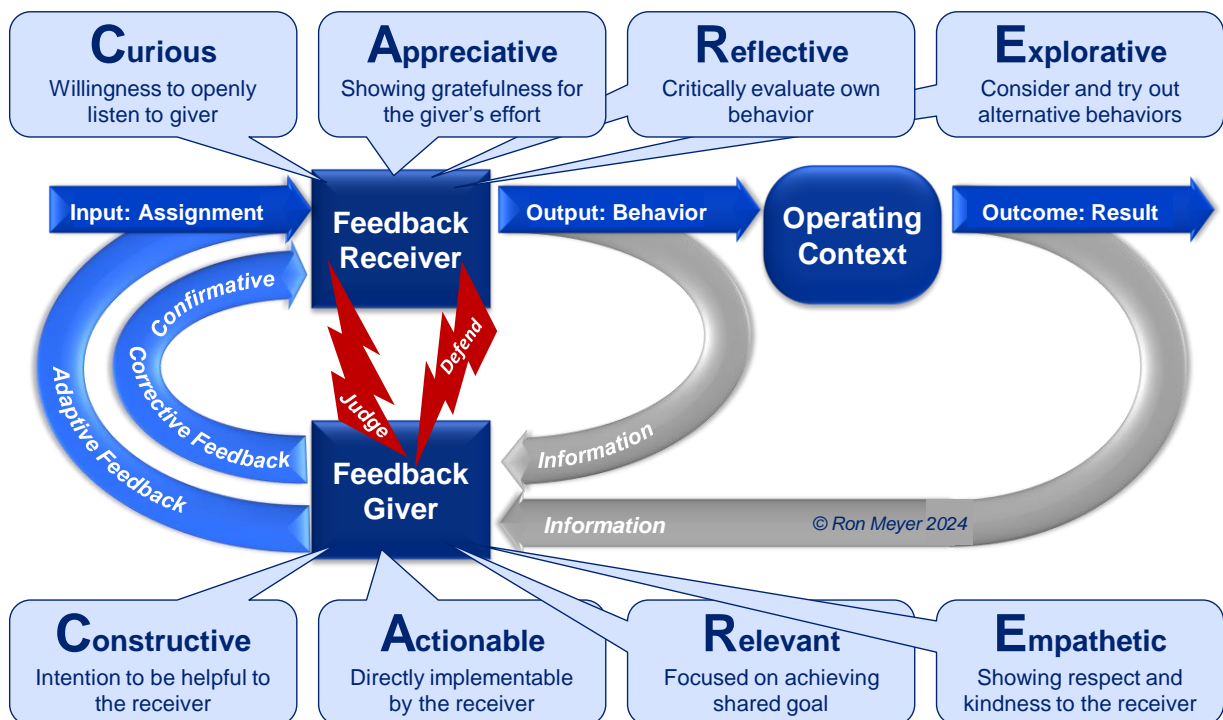
Key Definitions

In common parlance, feedback is any type of information given back to a person – evaluations, opinions, frustrations, complaints, or suggestions. Feedback is anything the giver wants to communicate. But this is a confusing misuse of the term that originally comes from *cybernetics* (control theory), where it refers to the signal looped back to a controlled system with the *intention of steering it in a certain direction*.

So, feedback is not what the giver wants to communicate, but what the receiver needs to hear in order to change behavior to achieve an intended result. Feedback is a signal targeted to influence the receiver and trigger particular behavior. Feedback is a steering mechanism.

Conceptual Model

The *Duty of Care Feedback Model* illustrates how feedback works and specifies how both the giver and receiver should behave to achieve an effective outcome. Key to the model is the understanding that giving feedback should NOT be about the giver wanting to communicate information to the receiver (“how do I package my criticism?”), but about the giver wanting to influence the receiver (“how do I get the behavior I want?”). Normally a person will be given an assignment as input (also called *feedforward*), leading to a certain behavior as output, which in the operating context will result in a particular outcome (the dark blue arrows). Information about the behavior and results needs to flow to the feedback giver (gray arrows), who should then avoid communicating a judgment, triggering a defense, but rather needs to think about effective signals to steer the receiver (light blue arrows). The feedback can be *confirmative/corrective* (intended to only adjust behavior) or *adaptive* (also adjusting the assignment).



Both the feedback giver and receiver have a *duty of care* – they have a responsibility to be attentive to what is needed to achieve a beneficial outcome. For both parties the required mindset and behaviors are summarized with the abbreviation CARE.

Key Elements

As feedback is about *influencing*, not *judging*, for feedback givers it is key to get receivers to *want to accept* the feedback. This can be achieved by sticking to the following four guidelines:

1. **Constructive.** Feedback should never feel like a complaint or reprimand the giver needs to vent, but rather as a well-intended attempt to assist the receiver.
2. **Actionable.** Feedback should never leave the receiver wondering what to do but rather suggest tangible behaviors that can directly be put into practice.
3. **Relevant.** Feedback should never consist of general reflections, but rather of pertinent suggestions to the receiver on how the shared goal can be achieved more effectively.
4. **Empathetic.** Feedback should never exude arrogance or contempt towards the receiver but rather understanding, well-willingness and appreciation.

At the same time, if the feedback giver is seeking to help with care, the feedback receiver needs to *open up to being helped*. This can be achieved by sticking to the following guidelines:

1. **Curious.** Feedback shouldn't be approached defensively, but requires the receiver to exhibit a growth mindset, with a high level of open-mindedness to potentially useful inputs.
2. **Appreciative.** Feedback shouldn't be seen as inflicted by the giver but requires the receiver to be openly grateful for the time and energy the giver is willing spend helping.
3. **Reflective.** Feedback shouldn't be superficially listened to and then meekly accepted but requires receivers to show the courage to critically examine their own behavior.
4. **Explorative.** Feedback shouldn't be seen as orders to be blindly implemented but requires the receiver to take ownership of the process of searching for and trying out new behaviors.

Key Insights

- **Feedback is about steering people's behavior.** Feedback is the signal given to someone with the intention of redirecting them in a preferred direction. The feedback giver will use information about someone's current behavior (output) and results (outcome) to determine what type of influence is required to keep them on, or get them back on, track.
- **Feedback is NOT about judging people's behavior.** To most people, "giving feedback" is about expressing their opinion about someone else. It is about judging others and telling them what they are doing wrong. But that is assessment, not feedback. Feedback is not about what the observer thinks and feels, but what the person in question needs to change – it is not about sharing critical judgment but sharing help and suggestions.
- **There are three types of feedback.** When the feedback giver senses the receiver is on track, *confirmative feedback* can be given ("keep up the good work"), while *corrective feedback* will be needed when off track ("do a bit more of that"). Where the initial assignment was unclear or unrealistic *adaptive feedback* will be needed ("change goals").
- **Effective feedback requires the giver's care.** Instead of being self-involved and judging, feedback givers need to be empathetic towards receivers and constructively suggest improvement or sustaining actions that are immediately relevant and applicable.
- **Effective feedback requires the receiver's care.** Instead of being closed and defensive, feedback receivers need to appreciate the constructive help, curiously listening to and reflecting on the suggestions, while showing a willingness to explore new behaviors.

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Insightful Tools to Kickstart Your Thinking

Publication Schedule

<i>July 2019</i>	<i>Mind the Gap Model</i>	<i>Change Management</i>
<i>August 2019</i>	<i>Digital Platform Map</i>	<i>Digital Strategy</i>
<i>September 2019</i>	<i>Interaction Pressure Gauge</i>	<i>Interpersonal Interaction</i>
<i>October 2019</i>	<i>Revenue Model Framework</i>	<i>Revenue Model Typology</i>
<i>November 2019</i>	<i>House of Engagement</i>	<i>Organizational Engagement</i>
<i>December 2019</i>	<i>Confidence Quotient</i>	<i>Trust Building</i>
<i>January 2020</i>	<i>Competition Tornado</i>	<i>Competitive Strategy</i>
<i>February 2020</i>	<i>11C Synergy Model</i>	<i>Corporate Synergy Management</i>
<i>March 2020</i>	<i>Leadership Fairness Model</i>	<i>Leader-Follower Interaction</i>
<i>April 2020</i>	<i>Strategic Agility Model</i>	<i>Strategy Process Approach</i>
<i>May 2020</i>	<i>Control Panel</i>	<i>Corporate Control Dimensions</i>
<i>June 2020</i>	<i>Rising Star Framework</i>	<i>Talent Management</i>
<i>July 2020</i>	<i>Strategy Development Cycle</i>	<i>Strategy Process Steps</i>
<i>August 2020</i>	<i>7I Corporate Center Model</i>	<i>Corporate Organization</i>
<i>September 2020</i>	<i>Storytelling Scripts</i>	<i>Leadership Communication</i>
<i>October 2020</i>	<i>Strategic Bets Framework</i>	<i>Strategic Decision-Making</i>
<i>November 2020</i>	<i>Rebound Model of Resilience</i>	<i>Organizational Resilience</i>
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<i>January 2021</i>	<i>Digital Product Model Dial</i>	<i>Digital Strategy</i>
<i>February 2021</i>	<i>Digital Distribution Model Dial</i>	<i>Digital Strategy</i>
<i>March 2021</i>	<i>Empowerment Cycle</i>	<i>Employee Empowerment</i>
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<i>May 2021</i>	<i>Knowledge Sharing Bridges</i>	<i>Best Practice Sharing</i>
<i>June 2021</i>	<i>Followership Cycle</i>	<i>Leader-Follower Interaction</i>
<i>July 2021</i>	<i>Everest Model of Change</i>	<i>Change Management</i>
<i>August 2021</i>	<i>Fruits & Nuts Matrix</i>	<i>Priority-Setting</i>
<i>September 2021</i>	<i>Powerhouse Framework</i>	<i>People & Organization Strategy</i>
<i>October 2021</i>	<i>Strategy Hourglass</i>	<i>Strategy-Making Steps</i>
<i>November 2021</i>	<i>Disciplined Dialogue Model</i>	<i>Interpersonal Communication</i>
<i>December 2021</i>	<i>Team Building Cycle</i>	<i>Team Building Process</i>
<i>January 2022</i>	<i>Market System Map</i>	<i>External Analysis Framework</i>
<i>February 2022</i>	<i>Strategic Alignment Model</i>	<i>Business Level Strategy</i>
<i>March 2022</i>	<i>Creativity X-Factor</i>	<i>Creativity Enhancement</i>
<i>April 2022</i>	<i>Organizational System Map</i>	<i>Organizational Analysis</i>
<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Corporate Value Creation Model</i>	<i>Corporate Level Strategy</i>
<i>June 2022</i>	<i>Change Manager's Toolbox</i>	<i>Change Methodologies</i>

July 2022	Sustainable You Model	Personal Sustainability
August 2022	Value Proposition Dial	Business Level Strategy
September 2022	The Tree of Power	Organizational Power
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December 2022	Corporate Management Styles	HQ Management
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March 2023	Resistance to Change Typology	Change Management
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June 2023	Cultural Fabric Model	Organizational Culture
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December 2023	Best Practice Sharing Modes	Sharing Methods
January 2024	Duty of Care Feedback Model	Feedback Method
February 2024	BOLD Vision Framework	Organizational Vision
March 2024	Meaningful Mission Framework	Organizational Mission
April 2024	Interpersonal Interaction Levels	Communication Approaches
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June 2024	Embedded Identity Model	Personal Awareness
July 2024	New Learning Curve	Personal Learning
August 2024	Dynamic Business Paradigm	Competitive Advantage
September 2024	Dynamic Organization Paradigm	Human-centered Organization
October 2024	Leadership Circle	Leadership Skills
November 2024	Performance Assignment Matrix	Corporate Strategy
December 2024	Self-Centered Thinking Framework	Thinking Styles
January 2025	Time Management Funnel	Personal Time Management