



GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK



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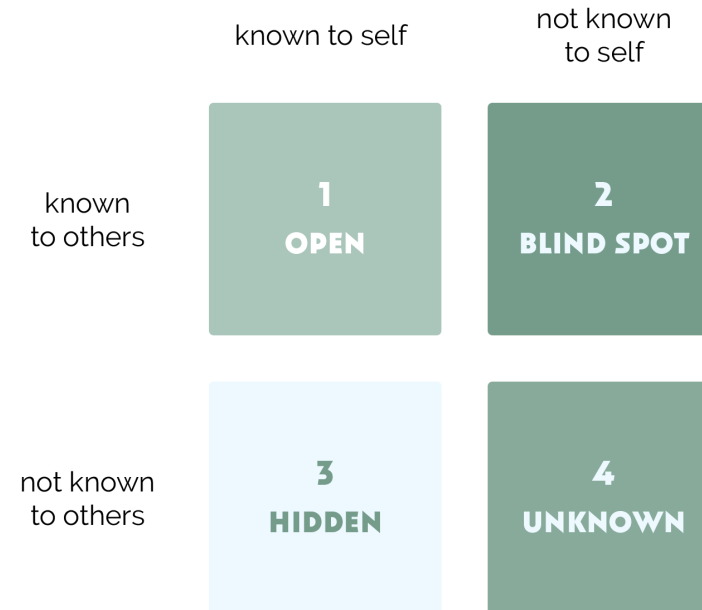
Hi!

Giving and receiving feedback is an important skill in leadership and thus also your personal leadership.

The process of giving and receiving feedback is represented using the so-called Johari window. This model was developed by Joseph Ingham and Harry Luft. It can be seen as a communication window. It shows that we need the other person to learn about ourselves.

When feedback is given in an effective way, it has 5 benefits:

1. Mental hygiene for the giver; you don't stick around with a nagging feeling or irritation for as long.
2. The giver takes a risk by giving feedback and invests in the (working) relationship; it deepens the contact
3. The giver does self-disclosure and teaches surroundings how to deal with him/her
4. The receiver learns about himself/herself and can adjust behaviour where necessary
5. Communication is more transparent and there is less burden of assumptions and 'thinking for the other'; this removes a lot of noise and chances of conflict decrease



The window is divided into four panes. The information in the square is not static but moves, from one pane to another, depending on the degree of mutual trust and feedback exchange. As a result of this movement, the size of the shape of the panes will vary.



Pane 1: known to self – known to others

The first window 'open' is also called 'Arena'. It contains things you know about your own functioning that the other person also knows. It is an area characterised by open and free exchange of information. Behaviour within this window is visible and accessible to all. The Arena expands as trust between individuals increases and more information, especially personal information, will be exchanged.

Pane 2: unknown to self – known to others

The second window is called 'the blind spot'. The Blind Spot contains information you do not know about your own functioning, but the other person does. For example, you may be told through feedback that the other person perceives you to be "gruff" when you are asked something, when you were previously unaware of this.

When you get feedback, this window is narrowed. And you get to decide whether the information then goes to window 1: everyone can know and see it from you. Or does the information go to window 2 and you prefer to keep the new information hidden and private.

Pane 3: known to self – unknown to others

The third window 'hidden' or 'private' contains things about yourself that the other person does not know and that you keep hidden for some reason. One reason could be that you are afraid of being called stupid. As a result of this fear, you withhold information, trying to pretend to be smarter than you are, for example. Another reason could be that you do not experience enough encouragement and therefore think the other person is not really interested in your feelings, doubts and insecurities.

Pane 4: unknown to self – unknown to others

The last window 'unknown' contains things you don't yet know about yourself. This is information so far below the surface that you may never become aware of it. Through new experiences and experiments, you can find out things about yourself that you never thought you would. For instance, you may come across 'hidden talents'. Exchange of feedback can also help uncover the unknown, but is certainly no guarantee of that.

Three times is a pattern

If you are hearing certain feedback for the first time, it could be a coincidence. It may also be due to the feedback giver's interpretation. But if you hear feedback for the second time, then it is remarkable. And if you hear it 3 times, you can speak of a pattern.

So you don't have to accept all feedback at once. A first step in receiving feedback can be to investigate whether you recognise this behaviour from other situations and whether you can name it.

The next step is to consider whether you want to change the behaviour in question. This will depend on how much it bothers you and how important the people giving you (constructive) feedback about it are to you.

Tips for receiving feedback:

1. Hear the feedback; listen without getting defensive
2. Ask what exactly the other person means
3. Confirm receipt by summarising
4. Reflect on feelings: of the other person and how you feel yourself
5. Thank the person giving feedback (the other person has made the effort to put feedback into words and is investing in the relationship!)
6. Rate the feedback. You decide whether you do something with it or not
7. If necessary, tell what you will do with the feedback



Giving feedback

In practice, giving feedback to others proves difficult. In our society, talking about someone's personal performance is still quickly taken as criticism. If you prepare and possibly write out your feedback using the steps below, you reduce the chance of the other person getting defensive. You remove your judgment from the communication and mainly tell what the other person's behaviour does to you. You keep it to yourself and name the other person's behaviour as objectively as possible. This reduces the chance that the other person will take it personally.

Tips before giving feedback:

1. Let your initial emotions subside so you can calmly weigh your words. Don't wait too long to give feedback, just make sure it is topical
2. Prepare the feedback and critically review what you want to give back and her your judgement to the other person out.
3. Take the other person aside and say that you want to give something back that you have noticed. This allows the other person to prepare for the news to come.
4. Give the feedback only from yourself, so not 'others also think that...'
5. Do not give feedback in front of others. That can come across as very unsafe.
6. Let the feedback 'land', if the other person does not have an immediate reaction. Ask if you can come back to it during the week.

Method: I-I-you-wish/agreement

'I See/I hear...' Describe the situation and behaviour as objectively as possible: what exactly did you hear or see? For example: 'In the last 3 weeks you have been late 5 times'.

'The effect on me is...' Name the effect of the other person's behaviour on your feelings. For example: 'I find that annoying because I am waiting every time and I get the feeling that my time is less important than your time'.

'Do you recognise...?' Ask if the other person can empathise with the situation and how this feels and feels. If the answer is 'yes', go straight to step 4. If 'no', repeat steps 2 and 3 again.

Ask for a different behaviour or make a suggestion. For example, 'can we agree that next time you will come on time? Or ask how do we solve this?'

Create an atmosphere, where the receiver of feedback is free to change the behaviour or not. Hastily giving or receiving feedback rarely leads to good results. A calm atmosphere that allows for reflection and contemplation is therefore desirable.





I am **Marijne van den Kieboom**, psychologist, executive coach and leadership trainer.

I help empower mission-driven organizations and leaders by examining their own habits or behaviors to achieve better results, for themselves, their teams and their organizations. My expertise is in the areas of executive coaching, performance coaching, work-life balance coaching.

Vision on coaching

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