



## Receiving Feedback

Your powers of self-perception only go so far. People around you notice things, both good and bad, which you don't and you might learn from their input. There is a "virtuous circle" of feedback whereby the more you actively seek it out, the more improvements you make and the better your feedback gets. Here are some key points to receive feedback graciously.

<b>1. Have an open mind</b>	Don't anticipate what is going to be said, and try to suspend judgment. After all, in learning the views of the feedback provider, you learn about yourself and how your actions are interpreted in the world.
<b>2. Listen actively</b>	Make eye contact with the speaker, and give them your full attention. Don't interrupt. Ask probing questions to clarify your understanding.
<b>3. Don't get defensive or try to justify your actions</b>	Telling the person why their feedback is wrong will not work. Arguing, justifying your position or denial are all powerful negative emotions, making the conversation more challenging than it need be. The only way for the conversation to go is downhill, with tempers flaring and insults flying.
<b>4. Focus on the facts</b>	Although the feedback might feel like a personal insult, challenging your whole identity, keep some perspective. The feedback relates to specific instances, in one part of your life AND now you know about it, you have the opportunity to do something about it.
<b>5. Respect the other person</b>	It has probably taken a lot of courage for someone to give you feedback, even if you have requested it. Remember, we all have different perspectives, and just because theirs does not match yours, doesn't mean it is invalid. Seek clarification if you disagree with some aspects.
<b>6. Don't over-react and get emotional</b>	Sulking, arguing or withdrawing from the person giving the feedback is childish. If need be, give yourself some space from the person, allowing you to calm down and deal with the feedback, and person, as a rational adult.
<b>7. Don't keep going over it</b>	Going over feedback again and again will not make it clearer or easier to understand, particularly if the feedback is less than glowing. Avoid the temptation to re-enact the conversation to a friend as this only makes you feel ten times worse. It's OK to talk about it with someone else, but make sure you're emotionally detached first.
<b>8. Put the feedback into context before responding</b>	Feedback sometimes tells you more about the person saying it than it does about you. For example, a person who says you never praise their work may be used to having daily feedback or might have difficulty evaluating their work themselves. Teaching this person to give themselves "marks out of ten" for their own work may be a better approach than simply praising them in an ad-hoc way. In the long run, you'll be giving them a more powerful boost to their self-esteem
<b>9. Thank the person for their feedback</b>	Even when you don't agree with everything that has been said, there will be some good ideas – accept them. This shows respect for the other person, and recognises the fact that they have been prepared to help you.
<b>10. Retain the right to use the feedback as you want to</b>	Feedback can be a gift allowing you to grow and develop as a person, in a job or in a relationship. But some feedback is downright useless and best ignored. It is ultimately your choice how to act, or not, upon feedback received.

*Note: Most of these tips have been sourced from various sites on the internet – Keystone Development does not take credit for formulating all of them.*