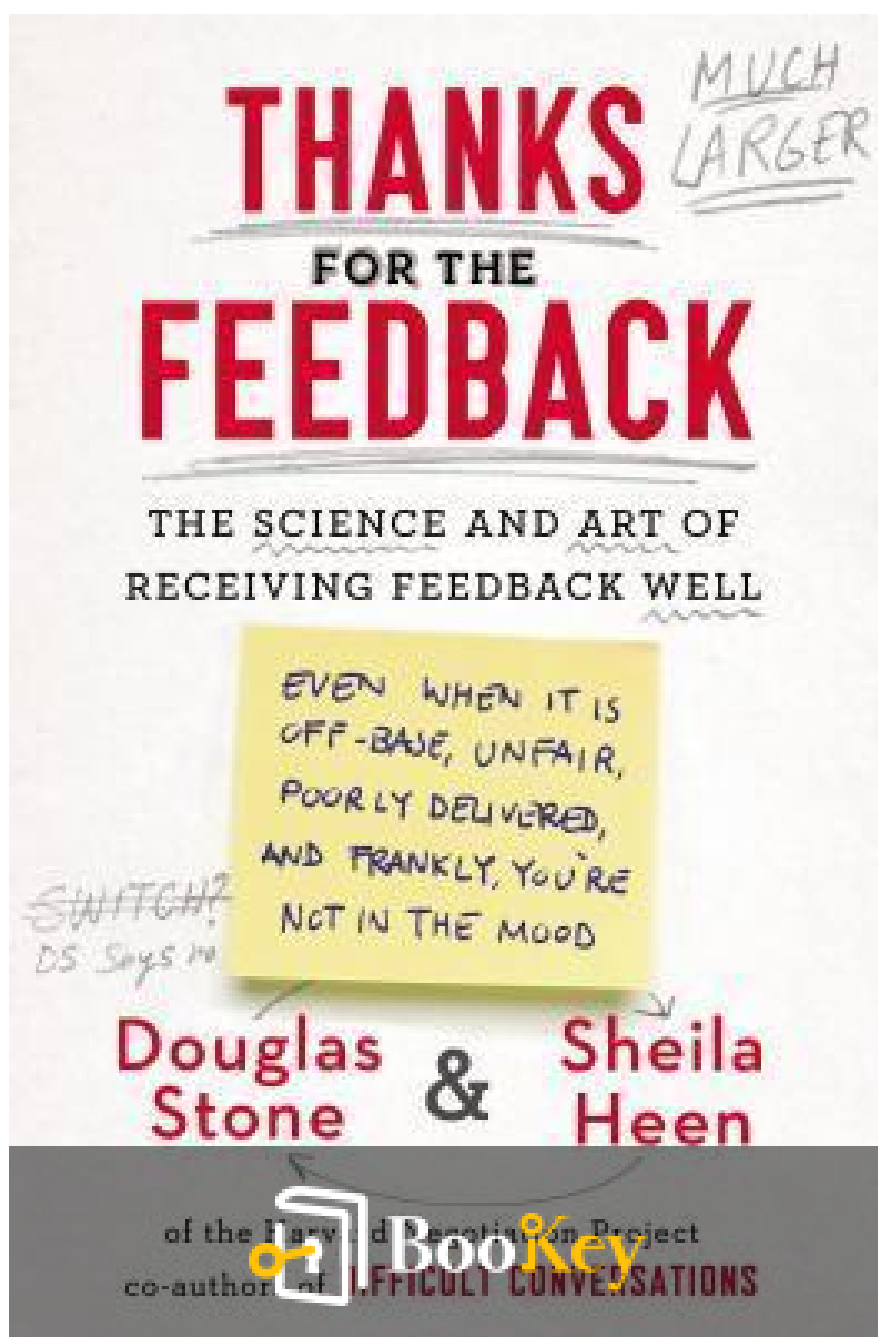


Thanks For The Feedback PDF (Limited Copy)

Douglas Stone



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Thanks For The Feedback Summary

Mastering the art of receiving feedback gracefully.

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About the book

In "Thanks for the Feedback," Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen delve into the intricate art of receiving feedback—an essential skill that profoundly shapes our personal and professional lives. Rather than viewing feedback as a mere critique or praise, the authors challenge us to embrace it as a powerful tool for growth and understanding, navigating the emotional landscape that comes with both positive and negative input. Through engaging anecdotes and practical strategies, Stone and Heen empower us to transform our relationship with feedback, encouraging a mindset that welcomes constructive criticism while enhancing our ability to communicate effectively. This insightful guide not only teaches us how to receive feedback gracefully but also how to give it thoughtfully, ultimately fostering deeper connections and facilitating success in our interactions. Whether you're a leader aiming to enhance team dynamics or an individual seeking personal development, this book offers invaluable insights that challenge the way we think about feedback itself.

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About the author

Douglas Stone is a renowned author, mediator, and co-founder of the Difficult Conversations Project at Harvard University, where he serves as a lecturer. With a profound expertise in the art of communication and conflict resolution, he has dedicated his career to helping individuals navigate challenging conversations and enhance their interpersonal skills. Stone's insightful work extends beyond academia into practical applications, as evidenced by his role as a consultant for various organizations, including Fortune 500 companies and non-profits. His writing, particularly in 'Thanks for the Feedback,' reflects his commitment to fostering constructive dialogue and personal growth through effective feedback mechanisms.

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Chapter 1 Summary: **THREE TRIGGERS • That Block Feedback**

In "Thanks for the Feedback," Chapter 1 delves into the complexities and challenges of giving and receiving feedback, particularly focusing on three distinct triggers that often obstruct productive feedback conversations: Truth Triggers, Relationship Triggers, and Identity Triggers. Understanding these triggers is essential for managing our reactions and fostering effective communication during feedback exchanges.

1. **Truth Triggers** arise when the content of the feedback feels inaccurate, unfair, or unhelpful. Experiences of truth triggers often lead to feelings of indignation or defensiveness, as individuals may react vehemently against what they perceive to be false criticism. The challenge lies in distinguishing the type of feedback received, which can be categorized into appreciation, coaching, or evaluation. By clarifying this distinction, individuals can better understand the intention behind the feedback. Additionally, it's crucial to genuinely comprehend the feedback before countering it, as miscommunications can stem from a lack of mutual understanding of each other's perspectives. This process might reveal blind spots we weren't aware of, thus enhancing our self-awareness and enabling growth.

2. **Relationship Triggers** are activated by the dynamics between the

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feedback giver and receiver. These triggers can create obstacles if past experiences, trust, or perceived treatment overshadow objective feedback. The tendency to engage in "switchtracking"—where one shifts the conversation from the actual feedback to relationship issues—must be avoided in order to effectively address both topics. Recognizing that feedback is often a collective issue rather than solely an individual fault encourages deeper insights and constructive dialogue. This awareness requires stepping back to analyze the relational dynamics at play, allowing both parties to understand their contributions to misunderstandings or conflicts.

3. Identity Triggers focus on how feedback touches upon our self-concept and personal identity. Critical feedback can provoke intense emotional reactions, leading to feelings of threat and insecurity. Different individuals respond to feedback based on their wiring and temperament, which influences how they interpret criticism. For those who view feedback as a fixed assessment of their worth, the reactions can be magnified. It is essential to dismantle these distortions and cultivate a growth identity, wherein challenges and critiques are perceived as opportunities for development. Emphasizing that everyone is on a path of continual improvement allows us to embrace feedback as valuable information rather than a punitive judgment.

The chapter elucidates that while these triggered responses are



understandable, they can inhibit productive engagement with feedback.

Effective feedback interactions require individuals to learn to navigate their emotional responses, articulate their needs, and remain open to perspectives that may initially feel threatening. The key takeaway is that managing our reactions to feedback—through understanding its nature, recognizing relationship dynamics, and cultivating a growth-oriented identity—enhances our ability to benefit from even the most challenging critiques.

In summary, each of the three triggers provides insights into the feedback dynamics and suggests that thoughtful engagement with our triggers can foster both personal growth and relational clarity. This sets the foundation for exploring strategies to mitigate the impact of these triggers in subsequent chapters of the book.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Understanding and navigating your Truth Triggers can transform how you receive feedback.

Critical Interpretation: Imagine standing before a colleague or mentor who offers you feedback that initially feels harsh or unjust. Instead of allowing defensiveness to cloud your judgment, you take a deep breath and remember that this is an opportunity for self-exploration. By consciously assessing the type of feedback being presented—whether it's meant as appreciation, coaching, or evaluation—you begin to decode their intentions. This shift in perspective not only enhances your self-awareness but also opens the door to growth. Such moments encourage you to challenge your assumptions, embrace your blind spots, and ultimately evolve into a more resilient and adaptive version of yourself, making the act of receiving feedback an invaluable part of your personal journey and a catalyst for ongoing improvement.



Chapter 2 Summary: SEPARATE APPRECIATION, COACHING, AND EVALUATION

In this chapter, the complexities of feedback are explored through the contrasting experiences of two twin daughters, Annie and Elsie, during a batting practice session with their father. While Annie eagerly absorbs her father's coaching tips, Elsie feels criticized and retreats in frustration, illustrating how different individuals can interpret the same message in vastly different ways based on their perceptions and emotional states. This dynamic reveals that feedback often comprises three distinct types: appreciation, coaching, and evaluation, each serving unique purposes and addressing different needs.

1. Appreciation is fundamentally about acknowledging and valuing someone's efforts. Through a simple "thank you," it conveys recognition, fosters connection, and helps individuals feel seen and valued. The absence of appreciation can lead to feelings of invisibility in professional and personal relationships. Research supports that feelings of acknowledgment are crucial for motivation and job satisfaction.

2. Coaching's primary aim is to guide an individual towards improvement. It involves constructive guidance on skills, knowledge, and capabilities that can enable growth. However, coaching can sometimes unintentionally convey negative emotions or judgments that lead to misunderstandings. The



effectiveness of coaching is often contingent on the emotional context within which it is given and received.

3. Evaluation provides an assessment of performance, indicating where someone stands relative to set standards or peers. It helps to align expectations, clarify consequences, and inform decisions. However, evaluations can carry heavy implications and can be fraught with anxiety, especially if they come with judgments beyond the mere assessment itself.

The chapter emphasizes that each type of feedback plays a crucial role in fulfilling human needs and that we require a balanced approach to receiving feedback. Often, individuals do not recognize the distinct needs being met by different kinds of feedback, leading to miscommunications. For instance, a professional may seek coaching but receive evaluation, leaving them feeling frustrated and confused.

Challenges arise particularly from the fact that evaluations can overshadow other forms of feedback. During performance reviews, for example, the weight of evaluation can drown out coaching, making it difficult for individuals to absorb constructive advice. Therefore, the authors suggest clearly separating feedback types and communicating their purposes explicitly. This involves checking in with the receiver to ensure they are getting what they need, whether it be coaching, evaluation, or appreciation.



To avoid misinterpretations, individuals should engage in open discussions about the intended purpose of feedback conversations. Asking clarifying questions promotes understanding and ensures alignment in feedback sessions. Ultimately, by recognizing and articulating the type of feedback being provided or sought, individuals can navigate the complexities of feedback more effectively, enriching their relationships and professional development.

In conclusion, embracing the nuanced dynamics of appreciation, coaching, and evaluation fosters healthier communication and provides a stronger foundation for personal and professional growth. Each type of feedback not only fulfills specific needs but also contributes to a more effective and considerate interaction, reducing misunderstandings and enhancing relationships all around.

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Chapter 3: FIRST UNDERSTAND • Shift from “That’s Wrong” to “Tell Me More”

In this chapter, the author emphasizes the importance of understanding feedback rather than defaulting to dismissing it as wrong. The narrative begins with Holly, a public defender, receiving feedback from her supervisor Irwin, who warns her about becoming too emotionally involved with clients. Instead of considering the feedback, Holly is quick to defend her stance, demonstrating a common reaction to feedback: an inclination to identify what’s wrong with it.

1. The Psychology Behind Feedback Reception: The author highlights our tendency to be adept at finding fault in feedback due to its often vague and generalized nature. Types of “wrong spotting” include examples like “literal inaccuracies,” “contextual misunderstandings,” and even interpretations based on past experiences.

2. Understanding Feedback First: Before jumping to conclusions, understanding feedback involves breaking down the labels used by the

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Chapter 4 Summary: SEE YOUR BLIND SPOTS • Discover How You Come Across

In Chapter 4 of "Thanks for the Feedback," the author, Douglas Stone, explores the intricacies of self-perception versus others' perceptions, highlighting how blind spots can lead to disconnects in understanding ourselves and the impact we have on those around us. The narrative introduces Annabelle, a talented and well-meaning leader whose effort to be respectful is undermined by her unrecognized impatience and contempt, which manifests in her behavior under pressure. Despite her intentions, her colleagues feel disrespected, illustrating a common phenomenon: the gap between intended behavior and received feedback.

1. One of the key concepts introduced is the **Gap Map**, which illustrates the route from our thoughts and feelings, through our intentions, to our behaviors, and finally to others' perceptions. This framework shows how messages can become garbled over time, leading to a stark contrast between how we perceive ourselves and how others see us. Annabelle's experiences align with this model, demonstrating that even sincere intentions can misalign with actual impacts.

2. Stone also details the nature of **blind spots**, which are aspects of ourselves that we cannot see but others can. Common blind spots include the signals our facial expressions and tone of voice convey—elements we



often overlook in self-evaluation. For example, Annabelle's facial cues and tone leak her impatience, leading her team to feel dismissed despite her good intentions.

3. The chapter identifies **three amplifiers** that exacerbate the gap between self-perception and external perception:

- **Emotional Math:** People often unintentionally minimize their emotions while others perceive them as central to their identity.
- **Situation vs. Character:** When missteps occur, individuals tend to attribute their actions to the surrounding context, while others view them as reflections of character.
- **Impact vs. Intent:** We judge ourselves based on our intentions, while others assess us through the impact of our actions.

4. To illuminate our blind spots, Stone provides strategies for seeking and receiving feedback effectively. Crucially, it's not about merely hearing feedback but understanding the underlying mechanisms of how we are perceived. He suggests that individuals use their reactions to feedback as a signal of potential blind spots and formulate specific questions to elicit honest responses, such as asking, "What do you see me doing, or not doing, that gets in my way?"

5. Awareness of consistent patterns in our behavior can help us identify blind spots. Instead of getting defensive about feedback, recognizing recurring



themes over time can guide personal development. Seeking a second opinion can also provide clarity, as trusted friends can offer an “honest mirror” to reflect our true selves through their perspective.

6. Stone emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between **supportive** and **honest mirrors** when seeking feedback. While supportive mirrors provide reassurance, honest mirrors reveal our true behaviors and patterns. To navigate this effectively, individuals should communicate their feedback preferences clearly to avoid misunderstandings.

7. Lastly, the chapter urges readers to work on internal changes rather than simply altering outward behavior. Awareness of true feelings and attitudes is crucial, as genuine respect and understanding will radiate through actions and create a more positive work environment.

In summary, effectively bridging the perceptual gap requires an awareness of personal blind spots, active engagement with feedback, and a commitment to reconciling intentions with impacts. This chapter highlights the systemic nature of feedback and the necessity of mutual understanding in interpersonal relationships. Understanding oneself is a journey that involves not just reflection, but a willingness to embrace and act upon the insights that others provide.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Bridging the Perceptual Gap

Critical Interpretation: Imagine walking into a room filled with colleagues, all witnessing you with a blend of admiration and confusion. You intend to inspire, yet they perceive impatience or disdain lurking beneath your words. This chapter reveals a profound truth—awareness of your own blind spots can transform these disconnects into genuine connections. By actively seeking feedback and learning to appreciate how your actions resonate with others, you embark on a journey of growth that enriches both your life and the lives of those around you. Embracing this awareness not only empowers you to refine your behaviors but also fosters deeper, more meaningful relationships, as you learn to align your intentions with the impact you create. The feedback you receive becomes a treasure map guiding you through the intricacies of human connection, allowing you to bridge the perceptual gap that often separates intent from reality.



Chapter 5 Summary: DON'T SWITCHTRACK • Disentangle What from Who

In the fifth chapter of "Thanks for the Feedback" by Douglas Stone, the intricacies of giving and receiving feedback within relationships are explored through the lens of a sitcom scenario featuring Louie and Kim. Their exchange over a seemingly innocuous gift of red roses spirals into a deeper conflict, highlighting how feedback can trigger emotional reactions based on past experiences and relationship dynamics.

The narrative illustrates what the author terms "switchtrack conversations," where the focus shifts from the original feedback to personal feelings and grievances, leading to misunderstandings. Louie's feelings of being unappreciated overshadow Kim's disappointment in the gift, resulting in a breakdown of communication that is emblematic of many interpersonal conflicts. Here are some crucial insights from this chapter:

1. Understanding Relationship Triggers Feedback interactions can trigger emotional responses that shift the focus away from the substantive issues. Louie's reaction to the roses wasn't a mere disagreement about the gift; it encapsulated deeper feelings of being unheard and unvalued in the relationship.

2. The Dynamics of Switchtracking: When one person switches the topic



due to emotional triggers, both parties ultimately end up speaking past each other. Instead of addressing each other's concerns, they enforce their own narratives, resulting in confusion and unresolved grievances.

3. Types of Relationship Triggers

- **Perceptions of the Giver:** How we view the person providing feedback significantly impacts our ability to accept it. This includes assessing their credibility, motives, and delivery.

- **Feelings About Treatment:** How we feel treated by the feedback giver also plays a crucial role. A lack of appreciation, autonomy, and acceptance can prompt defensiveness and hinder open dialogue.

4. **Feedback from Unexpected Sources:** Strangers and difficult individuals can often provide feedback that resonates more than that from friends or loved ones. Their unique and unbiased perspectives can shine a light on areas for improvement otherwise obscured by emotional attachments.

5. **Navigating Feedback Conversations:** It's essential to recognize when two topics are at play in a conversation. Recognizing this allows for clearer communication. Proposing to address each topic fully prevents misunderstandings and allows for a more meaningful exchange.



6. Signposting in Conversations: When confronting potential switchtracking scenarios, signposting—verbalizing that there are multiple topics to discuss—can help structure the dialogue. For instance, indicating, "I see we have two separate but important topics: your feedback on my performance and my feelings about feeling unappreciated" allows both parties to address their concerns without losing focus.

7. Decoding the Underlying Issues: Often what appears to be advice or feedback may be a veiled expression of the giver's emotional concerns. Recognizing the broader context behind feedback can lead to a more constructive dialogue and help address relational dynamics rather than surface issues.

8. Revising Conflict Scenarios: By approaching a situation with an awareness of relationship triggers and switching dynamics, individuals can recalibrate conversations to foster understanding and connection rather than conflict. As posited through the hypothetical scenario reimagined between Louie and Kim, a simple acknowledgment of feelings and intentions can redirect the conversation towards resolution.

Ultimately, the chapter emphasizes the significance of discerning the deeper emotional currents that influence feedback and the importance of addressing both the content and context of communication in maintaining healthy relationships. A thoughtful approach to feedback can transform potentially



triggering discussions into opportunities for growth and deeper mutual understanding.

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Chapter 6: IDENTIFY THE RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM

• Take Three Steps Back

In Chapter 6 of "Thanks for the Feedback" by Douglas Stone, the author discusses the importance of understanding feedback through the lens of relationship systems, emphasizing how our interactions contribute to problems and how addressing these systems can lead to more effective solutions.

To begin, we often receive feedback framed as personal blame, causing defensiveness. For instance, a person might hear "You need to stop snoring" not as constructive feedback but as a judgment of character. This disconnect arises because individuals perceive different parts of a problem, leading us to blame others for the issues while being oblivious to our contributions.

To navigate feedback better, it's essential to see the relationship system as a whole. A relationship system is defined as a complex web of interactions where changing one component can significantly impact the entire system. Understanding this system is crucial because when something goes

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Chapter 7 Summary: LEARN HOW WIRING AND TEMPERAMENT AFFECT YOUR STORY

Chapter 7 of "Thanks for the Feedback" by Douglas Stone explores how individual wiring and temperament significantly affect our reactions to feedback. Through the contrasting stories of Krista and Alita, the chapter illustrates the profound impact of our emotional wiring on how we process both positive and negative feedback. Krista embodies a resilient temperament, seemingly immune to negative criticism, while Alita, despite her competence and positive feedback from patients, grapples deeply with criticism that affects her self-perception and emotional well-being.

Understanding the underlying mechanisms of how our brains are wired offers both insight and empowerment. Our neural structures dictate emotional reactions, influencing how high we can soar or how low we can fall, as well as how quickly we can recover from setbacks. This understanding can be liberating, allowing us to see that our reactions to feedback are not merely personal failings but are part of our intrinsic wiring. This wiring includes three key components, which can vary significantly among individuals:

1. The first component is **Baseline**, which refers to the default emotional state we gravitate toward following positive or negative experiences. This baseline affects how we perceive and respond to feedback. Individuals with

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a higher happiness baseline tend to respond more positively to praise and are less deeply affected by criticism, while those with a lower baseline may amplify negative feedback and struggle to feel uplifted by positive remarks.

2. The second component is **Swing**, which measures how dramatically one's emotions fluctuate in response to feedback. Some individuals are highly reactive and experience intense emotional swings, while others maintain a steadier emotional response. This aspect often stems from early temperament, with research indicating that infants who are more sensitive are likely to grow into adults with similar tendencies, which can complicate their adult responses to feedback.

3. The third element, **Sustain and Recovery**, captures the duration of our emotional responses—how long we hold onto positive feelings versus how long we take to recover from negative ones. This concept illustrates significant variance between individuals; some may bask in positive feedback for days, while others may quickly return to a neutral state or find themselves stuck in negative emotions for extended periods. Moreover, our brain's composition can influence whether we are more resilient or more sensitive, with different brain regions mediating responses to positive and negative stimuli.

The chapter elucidates that despite the biological foundations of our emotional responses, there is inherent hope in the notion of



neuroplasticity—our ability to adapt and change over time. Understanding that our temperament is not entirely fixed can empower individuals to seek growth opportunities through practices like mindfulness, exercise, and shifting perceptions.

The emotional narratives we construct based on feedback are also discussed in detail, emphasizing how feelings can distort our perceptions of feedback. The interplay between thoughts and emotions can create a skewed interpretation of experiences, often leading us to over-generalize criticisms or glories. It showcases how a minor critique can spiral into catastrophic thinking—transforming it from a simple observation into a sweeping judgment of worth, thereby severely affecting our self-image.

In conclusion, wiring plays a crucial role in shaping our emotional landscapes, influencing how we interpret and respond to feedback. By recognizing our unique baselines, swings, and recovery patterns, we can begin to manage our responses more effectively and reconstruct our narratives around feedback, mitigating the detrimental impacts of our emotional distortions. Understanding these principles may ultimately help individuals cultivate resilience and effectively process feedback for personal growth.

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Chapter 8 Summary: DISMANTLE DISTORTIONS • See Feedback at “Actual Size”

In Chapter 8 of "Thanks for the Feedback" by Douglas Stone, the focus is on dismantling the distortions that hinder our ability to receive feedback effectively. This distortion often leads to exaggeration fueled by our emotions, making the feedback feel far more overwhelming than it truly is.

The narrative opens with Seth, a counselor who grapples with an emotionally charged situation at work. During a discussion about his supervisee's organizational issues, his boss makes a comment that inadvertently triggers Seth's long-standing worries about his own disorganization. This comment clouds his judgment and amplifies feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy, contributing to a spiral of negative emotions. Seth's knee-jerk reaction leads him to consider canceling an important trip planned for his father's birthday, revealing how deeply personal feedback can resonate in ways that impact both professional and personal life.

To address such distortions and derive meaning from the feedback we receive, five strategies can be employed:

1. Be Prepared, Be Mindful: Anticipating feedback allows us to assess beforehand how we might respond to criticism. Understanding our "feedback footprint"—the patterns of our emotional reactions—enables us to



better manage our responses. Becoming cognizant of these ingrained patterns empowers us to recognize and control our immediate reactions.

2. Separate the Strands: It's crucial to distinguish between our feelings, the stories we tell ourselves about feedback, and the actual content of the feedback itself. By identifying what we feel, the narrative we construct around those feelings, and the actual criticism provided, we can disentangle our emotional reactions from the feedback itself.

3. Contain the Story: Our interpretations of feedback can often expand beyond reason when we forget the basic rules of perspective, such as the present not altering the past and that one person's opinion does not represent everyone's view. By actively containing the feedback and reevaluating what it pertains to versus what it doesn't, we can maintain perspective and avoid overgeneralizing from singular experiences.

4. Change Your Vantage Point Shifting perspectives helps depersonalize feedback, allowing us to reflect as if we were an observer instead of an insider. Imagining how we would perceive similar feedback if directed at a friend provides insight that can alleviate the emotional weight of the message. Additionally, invoking humor can diffuse tension, promoting a healthier emotional state and openness to learn from the feedback received.

5. Accept That You Can't Control How Others See You Our self-image

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and identity can become entangled with how others perceive us. Embracing the reality that we cannot dictate their views can liberate us from excessive concern over their opinions. Reminding ourselves that their assessments are often more about them than us helps mitigate the emotional toll of unwarranted feedback.

The chapter closes with an acknowledgment of the emotional challenges associated with feedback. When emotional responses become overwhelming, seeking support from friends or trusted individuals can provide an essential buffer, helping us gain balanced perspectives on our feelings and experiences. While feedback can sometimes seem insurmountable, these strategies allow us to reclaim our narrative and foster growth through understanding rather than defensiveness.

By systematically applying these strategies, we can effectively dismantle the distortions around feedback, leading to more constructive learning experiences that enhance personal and professional development.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Separate the Strands

Critical Interpretation: Imagine standing on the precipice of a critical moment, when feedback lands like a punch, the emotional waves threatening to pull you under. But what if you learned to separate that moment, to dissect the overwhelming tide of feelings from the actual content being offered? In doing so, you could reclaim your power and control, allowing the feedback to serve as a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block. Picture this: as you sift through your emotions—recognizing exhilaration, fear, and doubt—you draw out the essence of the critique itself, discovering insights that equip you for growth. By reframing the narrative, you cultivate resilience and the courage to face rather than flee from constructive criticism, transforming each piece of feedback into a catalyst for your evolution.



Chapter 9: CULTIVATE A GROWTH IDENTITY • Sort Toward Coaching

In Chapter 9 of "Thanks for the Feedback," Douglas Stone discusses the importance of cultivating a growth identity to better handle feedback. The emotional impact of feedback, whether positive or negative, can significantly affect our self-perception and identity. The chapter outlines how feedback can destabilize our sense of self and offers strategies to build a more resilient identity. The following key points summarize the insights provided in this chapter.

1. Identity as a Self-Story: Our identity is shaped by the narratives we tell ourselves about who we are—our strengths, values, and capabilities. When feedback challenges these narratives, it can leave us feeling lost and questioning our self-worth. For example, being denied tenure can prompt an individual to reevaluate their identity as a competent academic.

2. Brittle vs. Robust Identity: Not all identities respond to feedback equally. Some individuals possess a fragile, brittle identity that perceives

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Chapter 10 Summary: HOW GOOD DO I HAVE TO BE? Draw Boundaries When Enough Is Enough

In Chapter 10 of "Thanks for the Feedback" by Douglas Stone, the author delves into the vital aspect of setting boundaries regarding feedback in our personal and professional lives. The concept of personal boundaries is paramount as it allows individuals to determine what feedback they wish to accept or reject, ensuring their emotional well-being and maintaining healthy relationships. The chapter illustrates these boundaries through the metaphor of an emotional acre, wherein each individual possesses their personal space, marked by a fence that needs to be safeguarded.

1. Establishing boundaries is crucial. The ability to turn down or avoid feedback is not merely an ancillary skill; it is central to personal growth and relationship dynamics. The power of saying "no" to feedback is highlighted as an essential component of self-determination. For example, the narrative introduces Martin, who, after decades of experience in the oil industry, whimsically asserts his goal of simply wanting to be left alone about new goals.

2. Three types of boundaries are introduced to manage feedback effectively: First, the soft boundary of "I may not take your advice" allows for listening while retaining the liberty not to act on the feedback. Second, the firmer "I don't want feedback about that subject, not right now" facilitates protection



from unwanted discussion on sensitive topics. Third, the most assertive "stop, or I will leave the relationship" signifies a clear stance about the ramifications of unsolicited judgments.

3. Identifying when to impose these boundaries involves self-reflection. Feelings of overwhelm or inadequacy signal a need for boundaries. Questions regarding the nature of the feedback, including its relevance, persistence, and the relationship dynamics at play, help discern whether a boundary is necessary. If feedback continually devalues one's character or consistently compels unwanted change, it's time to establish clearer boundaries.

4. Common unhealthy relationship dynamics such as constant criticism, hate-love patterns, and renovation relationships provide concrete contexts for boundary-setting. The chapter explores how relationships, whether familial or professional, can degrade autonomy and personal well-being through relentless feedback. For instance, Hunyee faces criticism from her mother, illustrating how incessant evaluation can cultivate emotional distress and the necessity to reshape those interactions.

5. Effectively communicating boundaries requires clarity. When rejecting feedback graciously, it is essential to be transparent about one's needs while showing appreciation for the giver's intentions. For example, PJ articulates her anxiety holistically, conveying how well-meaning advice exacerbates her



nervousness before lectures. By framing her requests with kindness and specificity, she can assert her boundaries without diminishing the relationship's value.

6. Offering specific requests, outlining timeframes for these boundaries, and delineating potential consequences are vital to ensure mutual understanding. Requests should be precise, avoiding vague terms that may provoke defensiveness. Further, articulating the implications of ignoring such boundaries prompts accountability on both sides, fostering healthier interactions.

7. Finally, Stone emphasizes the importance of diligence in mitigating the impact one's decisions have on others. While asserting boundaries, one must acknowledge the effects on surrounding individuals—be it co-workers or family. Engaging in collaborative problem-solving can ease relational tensions, ensuring that mutual respect and understanding are maintained even in the face of non-change.

In summary, adeptly navigating the landscape of feedback through established boundaries empowers individuals to maintain integrity and self-esteem. By practicing mindful rejection of unhelpful feedback, fostering open communication, and recognizing the responsibilities that come with personal choices, one can cultivate healthier relationships and a more authentic self.



Chapter 11 Summary: NAVIGATE THE CONVERSATION

In "Navigate the Conversation," Douglas Stone outlines how to approach feedback discussions effectively. He likens feedback conversations to the process of creating animated films, where key moments, or "keyframes," guide the narrative. These keyframes can help structure our conversations, ensuring we navigate through the complex dynamics of feedback exchange. The chapter emphasizes the importance of handling interactions with awareness and skill, proposing a structured approach in three main parts: the opening, body, and close of the conversation.

To effectively open a feedback conversation, it is essential to first align with the giver on the purpose of the discussion. This involves asking three critical questions to clarify the feedback: Is this feedback? Who decides what to do with it? Is it final or negotiable? Establishing this groundwork helps both parties understand each other better and sets the stage for a more productive discussion.

Once aligned, the body of the conversation involves four essential skills: listening, asserting, managing the conversation process (referred to as "process moves"), and problem-solving. Listening is about genuinely understanding the other person's perspective, which can be challenging when triggered by feedback that feels unwarranted. Asserting involves articulating



one's viewpoint while being careful to present opinions rather than absolute truths. Process moves help steer the conversation towards more productive paths, ensuring that both parties feel heard and understood. Finally, problem-solving addresses the core issues raised by the feedback and helps participants decide on actionable next steps.

Throughout the conversation, it is crucial to listen for underlying interests rather than getting caught up in positions. This shift encourages creative problem-solving, as participants can explore various ways to satisfy mutual interests instead of clinging to rigid solutions. For example, understanding the motivation behind feedback can lead to innovative ways of addressing concerns without compromising on fundamental values.

To bring the conversation to a close, both parties should clarify their commitments, including action steps and timelines. This closure ensures everyone understands what was discussed, what will change, and what follow-up actions are expected. However, the process doesn't end here—effective feedback conversations are ongoing and require continuous reflection and adjustment to maintain healthy dialogue.

Stone's insights emphasize that mastering the art of navigating feedback conversations involves blending these skills with emotional awareness and curiosity. By honing these abilities, individuals can foster more constructive interactions that lead to personal growth and improved relationships, be they



professional or personal. In summary, feedback conversations, when approached thoughtfully, can unleash powerful opportunities for learning and collaboration.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Importance of Aligning on Purpose

Critical Interpretation: As you step into your next feedback conversation, think about how aligning with the other person on the purpose of the discussion can transform the interaction. By asking clear, pointed questions about the feedback at hand, you can foster an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation. Imagine how much more productive your conversations with colleagues, friends, or even family can become when both of you are on the same page. Instead of feeling defensive or misunderstood, you may find that clarity unlocks a deeper dialogue. This foundational alignment not only paves the way for more fruitful conversations but also empowers you to engage in meaningful exchanges that contribute to your growth and the strengthening of your relationships.

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Chapter 12: GET GOING • Five Ways to Take Action

In Chapter 12 of "Thanks for the Feedback," Douglas Stone presents five actionable strategies to help individuals effectively take action based on feedback and improve their personal and professional development. These strategies emphasize the importance of simplifying feedback, focusing on specific changes, and embracing a mindset of experimentation.

1. **Name One Thing:** When overwhelmed with feedback, identifying a single actionable change can streamline the process. It's essential to simplify the choice of focus, allowing for more deliberate improvements rather than getting bogged down by an exhaustive list of potential changes. Leaders can gain clarity by asking for a single key area to work on. For instance, rather than being overwhelmed by ten different concerns, focusing on one meaningful aspect provides a clear starting point.

2. **Listen for Themes:** Instead of getting lost in a multitude of vague suggestions, seeking feedback from multiple sources helps identify recurring themes. This method provides a clearer understanding of one's

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Chapter 13 Summary: PULL TOGETHER • Feedback in Organizations

In Chapter 13 of "Thanks for the Feedback," Douglas Stone explores the complexities of feedback systems within organizations, drawing on the experiences of two contrasting managers, Everett and Pierre. Everett, a supply chain manager, initially resisted the insightful perspectives provided by a 360-degree feedback system but later recognized its value in driving self-awareness and personal growth. In contrast, Pierre, the president of a retail clothing chain, concluded that their existing performance management system absorbed too much time and left employees demoralized, ultimately eliminating formal performance reviews altogether.

1. The central theme emphasizes the imperfections of feedback systems in organizations, acknowledging that neither individuals nor systems are flawless. While systems can be evaluated for effectiveness, they must contend with varied temperaments and individual differences in the workforce. For example, the consistent quality of evaluations is challenged by management styles that vary in effectiveness, which can foster complacency among team members relying on feedback.
2. There is an inherent tension between wanting to provide constructive criticism and fearing the consequences that may arise—both for the provider and the receiver. Managers often give inflated reviews to avoid



confrontations, leading to a performance appraisal system that lacks credibility. The inability to effectively communicate both praise and criticism undermines the entire feedback process, resulting in disengaged teams and unaddressed performance issues.

3. Recognition of the need for clearer communication within performance management systems is paramount. Human Resources (HR) and organizational leaders should not shy away from discussing the negatives of feedback systems along with their benefits, as this transparency fosters a culture where employees feel heard and understood. Just as Jane, the new head of HR in the chapter, successfully presents both benefits and drawbacks to her management team, all leaders must create an environment where continuous discussion is encouraged.

4. It is critical to delineate between appreciation, coaching, and evaluation. Each of these aspects of feedback serves a unique purpose and should not be conflated. Evaluations should maintain fairness and clarity; coaching should provide ongoing support for development; and appreciation must be frequent and genuine to nurture a responsive workplace culture. This balance empowers employees to embrace feedback rather than retreat from it due to fear or insecurity.

5. Cultivating a learning culture involves recognizing that feedback is a two-way street. Managers must model a commitment to personal growth



while inviting their teams to engage in mutual learning experiences. Sharing stories of mistakes and successes fosters an environment where errors become learning opportunities rather than reasons for humiliation. By openly discussing personal challenges and modeling a growth mindset, leaders can encourage their teams to pursue learning proactively.

6. For feedback to be effective, it is essential to recognize the varied reactions to it and consider the individual differences among team members. Feedback givers should account for the emotional sensitivities of receivers and adapt their approaches accordingly. This alignment can mitigate misunderstandings and enhance the effectiveness of performance discussions.

7. Finally, feedback receivers bear responsibility for their learning journey. They should actively seek out guidance, question their performance, and implement suggestions from coworkers. This proactive attitude can break the cycle of dependency on formal evaluations, allowing individuals to learn continuously from each interaction they have.

In summary, effective feedback in organizations is inherently complex, characterized by the imperfect nature of human interaction and the varied needs of team members. Emphasizing communication, transparency, and a commitment to mutual growth offers a path to managing these challenges, ultimately creating environments where both individuals and organizations



thrive collectively.

Key Aspect	Description
Feedback System Complexity	Explores the imperfections and challenges of organizational feedback systems through contrasting examples of managers, Everett and Pierre.
Individual and System Imperfections	Acknowledges the flaws of both individuals and feedback systems, emphasizing the need for evaluations that account for varying management styles and team dynamics.
Tension in Providing Feedback	Details the conflict between delivering honest criticism and avoiding confrontation, leading to inflated reviews that compromise appraisal credibility.
Need for Clear Communication	Stresses the importance of HR and leaders discussing both the positives and negatives of feedback to foster a transparent and understanding work culture.
Differentiating Feedback Types	Clarifies the distinct roles of appreciation, coaching, and evaluation in feedback, promoting fairness and support while nurturing workplace culture.
Learning Culture	Advocates for mutual learning, where managers and employees share experiences to turn mistakes into learning opportunities, encouraging proactive development.
Adapting Feedback Approaches	Emphasizes the importance of recognizing individual differences and emotional sensitivities in feedback, tailoring approaches for better effectiveness.
Receiver Responsibility	Encourages feedback receivers to take charge of their learning by proactively seeking guidance and applying feedback from coworkers.
Overall Summary	Effective organizational feedback is complex, demanding attention to communication, transparency, and growth to create thriving environments for individuals and organizations.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Cultivating a learning culture through feedback.

Critical Interpretation: Imagine stepping into a world where feedback is not just a ritual, but a powerful tool for growth and connection.

When you embrace the idea that feedback is a two-way street, you unlock the potential for transformation—not just in yourself, but within your entire team. This chapter inspires you to foster openness by sharing your own experiences, mistakes, and lessons learned, creating an environment where vulnerability is met with support and collective learning. You begin to realize that every piece of feedback is an opportunity, not a threat; it's a chance to engage in meaningful discussions that drive both personal and organizational improvement. Driven by this commitment to growth, you start inviting feedback into your daily interactions, seeing it as a chance to refine your skills and contribute more effectively to your team. Ultimately, this mindset shift transforms feedback from a feared evaluation into a celebrated dialogue, paving the way for enriching experiences and continuous evolution in your personal and professional life.



Best Quotes from Thanks For The Feedback by Douglas Stone with Page Numbers

Chapter 1 | Quotes from pages 27-37

1. Feedback that leaves us confused or enraged, flustered or flattened, is a challenge we all face.
2. Understanding our triggers and sorting out what set them off are the keys to managing our reactions.
3. Triggers are not just obstacles; they can also serve as information—a kind of map.
4. Receiving feedback well is a process of sorting and filtering.
5. Managing truth triggers is not about pretending there's something to learn... It's about recognizing that it's always more complicated than it appears.
6. Feedback in relationships is rarely the story of you or me. It's more often the story of you and me.
7. Our identity is under attack when critical feedback is incoming; our security alarm sounds.
8. Understanding the common wiring patterns as well as your own temperament gives you insight into why you react as you do.
9. Learn to keep feedback in perspective, even when doing so doesn't come naturally.
10. Those who handle feedback more fruitfully have an identity story with a different assumption at its core.

Chapter 2 | Quotes from pages 38-49

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1. Being seen, feeling understood by others, matters deeply.
2. Appreciation motivates us—it gives us a bounce in our step and the energy to redouble our efforts.
3. Coaching is aimed at trying to help someone learn, grow, or change.
4. We need evaluation to know where we stand, to set expectations, to feel reassured or secure.
5. When feedback is offered as coaching, it can be heard as evaluation.
6. Explicit disagreement is better than implicit misunderstanding.
7. Without appreciation, your coaching isn't going to get through, because I'm listening for something else.
8. The main purpose is to entertain the TV audience.
9. The worst thing that could happen? It already did, and I survived.
10. Understanding whether we are getting appreciation, coaching, or evaluation is a first step.

Chapter 3 | Quotes from pages 50-75

1. Before we determine whether feedback is right or wrong, we first have to understand it.
2. Feedback often arrives packaged like generic items in the supermarket labeled 'soup' or 'cola.'
3. The label is not the meal.
4. It's easy to forget that when we convey the label to someone else, the movie is not attached.
5. The surest way of doing that is to spot the label in the first place.



6. Understanding their views doesn't mean we pretend we don't have life experiences or opinions.
7. If you do want to follow the advice, would you know how to do so?
8. Your goal here is not to ignore or dismiss the interpretation.
9. Life would be a lot easier if we routinely asked that question about different data.
10. Giving up wrong spotting isn't easy, and you don't have to give it up altogether.

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Chapter 4 | Quotes from pages 76-94

1. There is always a gap between the self we think we present and the way others see us.
2. By the time others are describing you—to you—the figure they're describing may bear only vague resemblance to the "you" you know.
3. We judge ourselves by our intentions, while others judge us by our impacts.
4. When we are angry, we are focused on the provocation, the threat.
5. Our blind spots are their hot spots.
6. Our tendency to subtract certain emotions from our self-description adds up.
7. To find out, we have to get specific.
8. Thoughts about feedback can serve as a blind-spot alert.
9. Emotions play a huge role in the gap between how others see us and how we assume we are seen.
10. Consciously or unconsciously, we often ask the people closest to us to be supportive mirrors.

Chapter 5 | Quotes from pages 95-111

1. When I tell you things and you don't listen, it's a huge insult to me. It makes me feel like I don't matter.
2. The dynamic that Louie and Kim have fallen into is so common that we've given it a name: a switchtrack conversation.
3. Switchtracking defeats feedback.
4. We often have the most room to grow when we are under stress or in conflict.

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5. If they're coaching you on how to deceive your spouse or how to embezzle from the pension fund, by all means, proceed with caution.
6. Often when we feel hurt, frustrated, ignored, offended, or anxious, we try to keep feelings out of the picture.
7. What is wrong with you?!
8. Understand that it's not just about accepting who you are, but also about recognizing others' worries for you.
9. I see two related but separate topics for us to discuss. They are both important.
10. The giver might be jealous or mean-spirited or totally nuts, and yet their feedback might be dead right.

Chapter 6 | Quotes from pages 112-130

1. When something goes wrong in a system, we each see some things the other doesn't.
2. It takes the two of you being the way you are to create the problem. That's how systems work.
3. Instead of focusing on what the other person is doing wrong, notice what you are each doing in reaction to the other.
4. Understanding what's going on often necessitates looking at the broader team, department, or cross-functional dynamics.
5. Seeing my own contribution to my circumstances makes me stronger, not weaker.
6. If we're going to have better conversations about feedback, we need a better handle on the ways that giver and receiver... are contributing to the problem under discussion.
7. Continual pestering, which you thought was the "following through" solution, is



actually reinforcing the problem.

8. If the employee wasn't aware of a policy because you didn't tell them about it, perhaps you correct the ignorance and issue a warning.

9. What you pour in matters, but so does the shape of the tray.

10. If one of you changes, the whole system improves.

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Chapter 7 | Quotes from pages 131-144

1. Learning that how you are in the world is due in part to your wiring might feel discouraging—but it can be freeing, as well.
2. Your reactions are not due to a lack of courage or surplus of self-pity.
3. Responses to threats and unpleasantness are faster, stronger, and harder to inhibit than responses to opportunities and pleasures.
4. Bad is stronger than good.
5. Your emotional reactions to feedback can be thought of as containing three key variables: Baseline, Swing, and Sustain or Recovery.
6. We adapt—to new information and events both good and bad—and gravitate back to our personal default level of well-being.
7. This growing understanding of neuroplasticity is a thrilling reminder that even wiring changes over time in response to our environment and experiences.
8. While aspects of our temperament are inherited, there is ample evidence that they are not fixed.
9. About 50 percent of our happiness is wired in. Another 40 percent can be attributed to how we interpret and respond to what happens to us.
10. Our interpretations and responses to what happens to us—and to the feedback we get—can help turn upsetting feedback and even failure into learning.

Chapter 8 | Quotes from pages 145-158

1. In order to understand and assess the feedback, we first have to dismantle the distortions.

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2. It means finding ways to turn down the volume on that ominous soundtrack playing in our minds.
3. We can manage our own tendencies by imagining that the news is bad.
4. Self-observation awakens your left prefrontal cortex—which is where the pleasures associated with learning are located.
5. The goal in untangling the strands of emotion, story, and feedback is to see what you've woven in that does and doesn't belong there.
6. The present does not change the past. The present influences, but does not determine, the future.
7. You can illustrate balance as a drawing, a pie chart, or a macaroni sculpture.
8. When we think about the consequences of feedback, the goal is not to dismiss them or pretend they don't matter.
9. The good news is that others aren't actually spending as much time thinking about you as you might imagine.
10. Ask those around you to be supportive mirrors.

Chapter 9 | Quotes from pages 159-175

1. Identity is the story we tell ourselves about ourselves.
2. Learning profitably from feedback is not only about how we interpret the feedback; it's also about how we hold our identity.
3. Our ability to metabolize challenging feedback is driven by the particular way we tell our identity story.
4. We can all learn to hold our identity in ways that make us more resilient.



5. As long as you tell your self-story in these black-and-white terms, you will find no peace.
6. You are someone who cares deeply about being trustworthy or fair or responsible, and there are a thousand examples of your being each of these.
7. Accepting the fact that you will make mistakes takes some of the pressure off.
8. Your capabilities are always evolving. Effort and hard work pay off.
9. How we tell the story matters.
10. The initial evaluation is not the end of the story. It's the start of the second story about the meaning you'll make of the experience in your life.

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Chapter 10 | Quotes from pages 176-190

1. Being able to say no is not a skill that runs parallel to the skill of receiving feedback well; it's right at the heart of it.
2. You need to make your own mistakes and find your own learning curve.
3. Every single one of us at birth is given an emotional acre all our own.
4. You can plant fruit trees or flowers or alphabetized rows of vegetables, or nothing at all.
5. If you can't keep your judgments to yourself, if you can't accept me the way I am now, then I will leave the relationship.
6. Unhelpful feedback is useless; relentless unhelpful feedback is destructive.
7. No matter what growing you have to do, and regardless of how right (or not) the feedback may be, if the person giving you the feedback is not listening to you and doesn't care about its impact on you, something is wrong.
8. You are worthy of love, acceptance, and compassion—right now, as you are, full stop.
9. Using 'and' to describe our feelings isn't just about word choice. It gets at a deeper truth about our thoughts and feelings: They are often complex and sometimes confused.
10. The clarity of Steve's boundary has made it easier for the brothers to spend time together.

Chapter 11 | Quotes from pages 191-211

1. If you can identify the conversation keyframes, you can do your own 'tweening.
2. Listening may be the most challenging skill involved in receiving feedback, but it



also has the biggest payoff.

3. You can't just passively receive feedback; you're building a puzzle together.
4. You should both know where things stand.
5. You need to know what the sales numbers are before you can decide what they mean.
6. You aren't listening to be polite. You're listening to understand.
7. Understanding doesn't equal agreeing.
8. If understanding is purpose one, letting the giver know you understand is purpose two.
9. Good conversations are often a series of conversations over time.
10. When you're at an impasse, ask about the underlying interests behind the suggestion.

Chapter 12 | Quotes from pages 212-237

1. "Just a useful thing. A place to start."
2. "What's one thing you see me doing that gets in my own way?"
3. "In aiming for one, you're setting expectations: Let's focus."
4. "You may not be able to work on ten concerns... Work to understand and validate them."
5. "Sometimes we fall somewhere in the middle, unsure if it's a good idea or not."
6. "Try the feedback out, especially when the stakes are low and the potential upside is great."
7. "It's a sad story, but it makes sense... if, that is, our projection that we are going to



continue to go down is correct."

8. "Every choice can be seen as an experiment. What if we're at the bottom of the curve and are about to head up the happiness slope?"

9. "It's not all-and-always. Just some-and-sometimes."

10. "By seeing the choice in a new light, or by actually changing the choice, you can change your behavior, and that very often sets in motion a virtuous cycle."

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Chapter 13 | Quotes from pages 238-252

1. The greatest leverage is helping the people inside the system communicate more effectively.
2. We need to equip receivers to create pull—to drive their own learning, to seek honest mirrors as well as supportive mirrors.
3. No system can make you learn, but no system can keep you from learning either.
4. When we are asked to make a choice about a subject we're worried about, and we are presented only with the benefits, we supply the potential drawbacks on our own.
5. Every system has its drawbacks. The plan we're looking at now has the fewest drawbacks, and also the most important benefits, given our goals and what we're up against.
6. Ismail's honesty helped people to see that this was not an administrative problem, but a human problem.
7. When we ourselves are screwing up or shooting ourselves in the foot, we want someone to tell us.
8. Teachers and leaders should bring the challenge of learning into everyday conversations.
9. What kind of learner do I want to be, and what kind of mentor do I want to be?
10. The responsibility to get the balance right on all three kinds of feedback ultimately lies with both givers and receivers.

Thanks For The Feedback Discussion Questions

Chapter 1 | THREE TRIGGERS • That Block Feedback | Q&A

1.Question:

What are the three types of triggers discussed in Chapter 1, and how do they affect our response to feedback?

The three types of triggers discussed in Chapter 1 are Truth Triggers, Relationship Triggers, and Identity Triggers.

1. **Truth Triggers** occur when the feedback we receive feels wrong, unhelpful, or untrue. This can provoke feelings of indignation and exasperation, causing us to dismiss the feedback outright.
2. **Relationship Triggers** are influenced by our perception of the giver of the feedback. Issues such as the giver's credibility, how they treat us, and our past experiences with them can color our reception of the feedback, leading to defensiveness or resentment.
3. **Identity Triggers** happen when feedback threatens our sense of self or identity. This reaction can lead to feelings of shame or destabilization, making it difficult for us to process the feedback constructively.

Each of these triggers can block our ability to engage in meaningful conversations about feedback, making it crucial to identify and manage them.

2.Question:

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How can individuals effectively manage their Truth Triggers according to the chapter?

To effectively manage Truth Triggers, individuals should follow several strategies:

1. ****Separate Feedback Types****: Understand the difference between appreciation, coaching, and evaluation. Recognizing what type of feedback is being given can help clarify its intended purpose and lessen the likelihood of misinterpretation.
2. ****First Understand****: Before reacting defensively, strive to fully understand the feedback being given. Engage with the giver to clarify the intent and details of their observations. This involves asking questions and ensuring that you grasp their perspective.
3. ****See Your Blind Spots****: Acknowledge that you may have blind spots—areas where you may not have self-awareness about how you come across to others. Actively seek feedback from different sources to gain a broader understanding of your behaviors and their impacts.

3.Question:

What role do Relationship Triggers play in feedback conversations, and how can they be addressed?

Relationship Triggers play a significant role in how we perceive and respond to feedback based on our feelings towards the person giving it. These triggers arise from feelings of hurt, distrust, or past grievances.



To address Relationship Triggers, one should:

1. ****Don't Switchtrack****: Avoid changing the topic from the feedback being given to the relationship issues it provokes. Instead, focus on separating the feedback from personal grievances. Discuss the feedback and relationship issues in separate conversations.
2. ****Identify the Relationship System****: Acknowledge that feedback dynamics are often more about the interplay between the giver and receiver than about individual behaviors. Understand how both parties contribute to the feedback process and the relationship's overall dynamic.

4.Question:

Explain how Identity Triggers can hinder our ability to receive feedback and provide strategies to mitigate their effects.

Identity Triggers can hinder our ability to receive feedback by making us feel defensive, ashamed, or overwhelmed, which can lead to negative emotional responses instead of constructive engagement.

To mitigate the effects of Identity Triggers, consider these strategies:

1. ****Learn How Wiring and Temperament Affect Your Story****: Recognize that different individuals respond uniquely to feedback based on their temperament and past experiences. Understanding these differences can help contextualize your own reactions and those of others.
2. ****Dismantle Distortions****: Become aware of the tendency to exaggerate or distort feedback. Work on recognizing these patterns in your thinking,



which can help in regaining balance and subsequently responding to feedback with a more open mindset.

3. ****Cultivate a Growth Identity****: Shift your perspective to view feedback as an opportunity for growth rather than a definitive judgment of your abilities. By adopting a mindset that embraces learning and development, you can view feedback as beneficial information.

5.Question:

What benefits can arise from effectively managing feedback triggers as described in Chapter 1?

Effectively managing feedback triggers can lead to several benefits:

1. ****Improved Communication****: When individuals recognize and handle their triggers, they can engage more constructively in feedback conversations, leading to healthier communication dynamics.
2. ****Enhanced Learning****: By filtering feedback through a clearer lens, individuals are more likely to extract valuable insights that contribute to personal and professional growth.
3. ****Better Relationships****: Understanding how triggers affect feedback reception can help clarify misunderstandings and strengthen relationships through more respectful and rational discussions.
4. ****Increased Resilience****: Managing emotional responses to feedback enhances one's resilience in the face of criticism, allowing for ongoing development without the fear of personal attacks.

Chapter 2 | SEPARATE APPRECIATION, COACHING, AND

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1.Question:

What are the three types of feedback discussed in Chapter 2, and what is the primary purpose of each?

The three types of feedback discussed in Chapter 2 are Appreciation, Coaching, and Evaluation.

1. ****Appreciation****: The primary purpose is to acknowledge and motivate. It communicates recognition and value, emphasizing human connection. It reassures individuals that their efforts are seen and appreciated.
2. ****Coaching****: Its main aim is to aid in learning and improvement. Coaching focuses on developing skills or addressing relationship dynamics, helping individuals grow in their roles or address specific issues.
3. ****Evaluation****: This feedback type assesses performance by providing a ranking or rating. Evaluation informs individuals about where they stand compared to expectations or others, and it aligns organizational goals with personal performance.

2.Question:

How do differing perceptions of feedback manifest in the story of the twin daughters, Annie and Elsie?

Annie and Elsie's reactions to their father's feedback illustrate how individual perceptions can drastically affect the reception of the same feedback. Annie perceives her father's coaching as constructive and motivating, feeling supported and encouraged, which enhances her performance and confidence. Conversely, Elsie feels criticized and unappreciated; she interprets her father's attempts at coaching as a negative evaluation



of her abilities. This scenario underscores that feedback is not solely determined by what is said but heavily reliant on how it is received. Elsie's frustration arises from her belief that she is being judged, while Annie is receiving encouragement, demonstrating the subjective nature of feedback interpretation.

3.Question:

What role does appreciation play in motivating employees, as outlined in this chapter?

Appreciation is essential for motivation because it fulfills a fundamental human need to be recognized and valued for one's contributions. It boosts morale and fosters a sense of belonging, making employees feel seen and understood. In the workplace, employees often report a lack of feedback when they desire acknowledgment of their hard work. Appreciation can invigorate efforts and reinforce loyalty and commitment to tasks and the organization as a whole. The chapter stresses that appreciation should be specific, meaningful, and genuine to effectively inspire employees.

4.Question:

What challenges are associated with coaching, according to Chapter 2?

Challenges in coaching can include:

1. ****Resistance or Ingratitude****: Coachees may resist feedback or find it unhelpful, leading coaches to feel discouraged and less inclined to provide feedback in the future.
2. ****Lack of Formal Recognition****: In many organizations, efforts to coach are not formally recognized, reducing motivation to engage in these



activities.

3. ****Misalignments in Expectation****: There can be misunderstandings regarding the type of feedback desired by the receiver, causing the coaching to not land as intended. The chapter points out that successful coaching relationships require effort and clear communication about the goals of the feedback.

5.Question:

Why is it important to separate evaluation from coaching in feedback conversations?

Separating evaluation from coaching is crucial because evaluation can overshadow coaching, inducing defensiveness and anxiety in the recipient. When feedback is framed as evaluation, the recipient may fixate on performance judgments rather than constructive advice, hindering their ability to learn and grow. The chapter suggests that evaluation should be delivered first, allowing recipients to understand where they stand before moving into developmental discussions. By isolating these two types of feedback, individuals are more likely to focus on the learning opportunities rather than becoming preoccupied with emotional responses to evaluation.

Chapter 3 | FIRST UNDERSTAND • Shift from “That’s Wrong” to “Tell Me More” | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the main premise of Chapter 3 in 'Thanks for the Feedback'?

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Chapter 3 focuses on the importance of understanding feedback before making judgments about it. The authors emphasize the need to shift from an initial response of spotting what is wrong in the feedback ('wrong spotting') to a more constructive approach that involves understanding the giver's perspective and the reasoning behind their comments. They argue that feedback often comes in the form of vague labels that can be easily misinterpreted, and highlight the significance of clarifying both the source and the intention behind the feedback.

2.Question:

Why do people often dismiss feedback as wrong or unhelpful?

People dismiss feedback as wrong for several reasons, including the tendency to look for flaws in the feedback ('wrong spotting'). This behavior is amplified by the fact that feedback can often be vague, which makes it easier to misunderstand or ignore. Individuals may perceive feedback as invalid due to personal biases, differing interpretations, or their own experiences. As a result, they may not fully engage with the feedback to explore its underlying meaning or intent.

3.Question:

How do feedback givers and receivers interpret labels differently?

Feedback givers and receivers often have different interpretations of the same label because the giver attaches a specific meaning based on their own experiences and context, which may not be shared by the receiver. For example, when someone is told to be 'more assertive,' the giver may envision energy and engagement, while the receiver might interpret it as being



aggressive or pushy. This disconnect highlights the need for receivers to seek clarification on what the label means and how it relates to their specific situation.

4.Question:

What techniques can receivers use to better understand feedback?

Receivers can employ several techniques to better understand feedback, including: 1) Asking clarifying questions about the giver's observations ('What do you mean by <label>?') to uncover the data behind the interpretation. 2) Engaging in discussions about the context and specifics of the feedback to align interpretations. 3) Reflecting on what might be 'right' about the feedback to recognize valid points and areas for improvement. 4) Actively distinguishing between data (facts) and interpretations (judgments) to enhance their understanding.

5.Question:

What is the significance of shifting from 'wrong spotting' to 'difference spotting' and 'right spotting'?

The shift from 'wrong spotting' to 'difference spotting' and 'right spotting' is crucial for constructive feedback engagement. By focusing on understanding differences in perspectives and interpretations (difference spotting), receivers can appreciate the giver's viewpoint and collaborate towards common goals. Moreover, practicing 'right spotting' encourages a mindset of seeking useful elements in the feedback, which can lead to valuable insights and learning opportunities. This approach fosters a more open, empathetic



dialogue rather than a defensive response to criticism.

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Chapter 4 | SEE YOUR BLIND SPOTS • Discover How You Come Across | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the main theme of Chapter 4 in 'Thanks for the Feedback' by Douglas Stone?

The main theme of Chapter 4 is the exploration of 'blind spots' in our self-perception, highlighting the disconnect between how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. The chapter illustrates this through the example of Annabelle, who, despite her efforts to be respectful, is viewed by her team as difficult and impatient. The chapter emphasizes that our true feelings and attitudes often leak through our behavior, contributing to misunderstandings and misinterpretations by others.

2.Question:

How does the concept of the Gap Map explain the differences in self-perception and others' perceptions?

The Gap Map illustrates the process of how our thoughts and feelings translate into intentions, behaviors, and ultimately the feedback we receive from others. It shows that individuals often fail to recognize how their internal emotional state influences their outward behavior, which in turn affects the perceptions others have about them. The map lays out the journey of feedback flowing from personal intentions to public interpretation, emphasizing that the 'me' others see might bear little resemblance to the 'me' I know, thereby creating a gap in understanding.

3.Question:

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What are some common blind spots that people have, as highlighted in the chapter?

Common blind spots include failing to recognize how one's facial expressions convey emotions, how tone of voice impacts communication, and being unaware of broader behavioral patterns that others easily observe. For instance, Annabelle's impatience leaks through her body language and tone, leading colleagues to perceive her negatively, even when her intentions are positive. The chapter illustrates that these blind spots stem from an inability to see or hear ourselves as others do, resulting in gaps in communication and relationships.

4.Question:

What are the three dynamics that amplify the gap between how we see ourselves and how others see us?

The three dynamics that amplify the gap are: 1) Emotional Math - we may discount our emotional expressions while others view them as significant; 2) Situation versus Character - we tend to attribute our actions to situational factors while others attribute them to our character; 3) Impact versus Intent - we judge ourselves based on our intentions while others judge us based on the actual impact of our actions. These dynamics can lead to a perception divide, where feedback received feels unjust or surprising.

5.Question:

How can individuals better understand their blind spots according to the chapter?



To better understand their blind spots, individuals should actively seek specific feedback from others, asking questions such as 'What do you see me doing that gets in my own way?' or 'What impact do I have on you?' They should also look for patterns in feedback over time to identify recurring themes or behaviors that may not be evident to them. Additionally, utilizing tools like audio/video recordings of their own behavior can provide insight into how they are perceived, allowing them to adjust their actions and improve communication.

Chapter 5 | DON'T SWITCHTRACK • Disentangle What from Who | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the main concept of Chapter 5 in 'Thanks for the Feedback'?

The main concept of Chapter 5, titled 'Don't Switchtrack: Disentangle What from Who', is that feedback conversations often become convoluted when emotional triggers related to relationships complicate the discussion. The chapter introduces the term 'switchtrack', which describes situations where a conversation shifts from the original feedback topic to another issue that is emotionally charged for the receiver, leading to misunderstandings and ineffective communication. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing multiple topics in a conversation and discussing them separately to facilitate better understanding and resolution.

2.Question:

What example does the author provide to illustrate the switchtrack dynamic?

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The author uses an example from the sitcom 'Lucky Louie', where Louie presents his wife Kim with red roses, despite her previous statements that she doesn't like them. Kim's feedback about the roses triggers Louie's feelings of being unappreciated, causing him to shift the conversation to his own feelings instead of addressing Kim's concern. This illustrates the switchtrack dynamic, as both characters end up discussing their own emotional reactions rather than the actual issue, which is Kim's feeling of being unheard and unacknowledged in their relationship.

3.Question:

What causes switchtracking to occur according to the chapter?

Switchtracking occurs primarily as a reaction to relationship triggers, which can manifest in two key ways: (1) what we think about the feedback giver (including their credibility, judgment, and trustworthiness), and (2) how we feel treated by the giver (such as feelings of appreciation, autonomy, and acceptance). When emotional triggers are activated, the receiver of feedback tends to focus on their own feelings and perceptions instead of addressing the feedback itself, leading to a divergence in the conversation.

4.Question:

How can individuals manage the tendency to switchtrack during feedback conversations?

Individuals can manage the tendency to switchtrack by developing awareness of the two topics that may be present in a conversation—the original feedback and the relational concerns. The chapter provides several strategies, including: recognizing when two topics are being discussed, using



'signposting' to clearly distinguish between the topics, and focusing on listening to the underlying relationship issues hidden beneath the feedback. By addressing each topic separately, individuals can improve understanding and communication, thereby overcoming the emotional barriers that typically lead to switchtracking.

5.Question:

What unexpected players in the feedback process does the author identify, and why are they significant?

The author identifies 'surprise players' in the feedback process as individuals we may not trust or like, such as difficult colleagues or strangers. These individuals provide unique perspectives that can be invaluable. Because they are often outside of our usual comfort zones, their feedback can reveal blind spots in our behavior or performance that we might ignore due to our discomfort with them. Engaging with these players can lead to growth and development, making them significant in the context of receiving effective and honest feedback.

Chapter 6 | IDENTIFY THE RELATIONSHIP SYSTEM • Take Three Steps Back | Q&A

1.Question:

What are the two key insights about feedback discussed in Chapter 6?

The chapter identifies two essential insights about feedback: 1) Each person involved in a feedback situation sees only part of the problem, specifically the part that the other



person contributes. This often leads to a blame game where each party only looks at the other's actions while neglecting their own contributions to the issue. 2) Both individuals are usually part of the problem, even if their contributions differ in significance. This means that both the feedback giver and the receiver are involved in creating the dynamics that lead to the feedback.

2.Question:

How does viewing feedback through a relationship system lens help in understanding conflicts?

A relationship system lens provides a broader perspective on conflicts by highlighting the interdependence and interactions between individuals in a relationship. It allows each party to recognize the roles they play in the dynamics of a situation, their differing preferences and tendencies, and how these contribute to the overall problem. By understanding these systems, individuals can move beyond blame to discover collaborative solutions, enhancing communication and cooperation.

3.Question:

What are the three steps back taken to analyze feedback and its context?

The chapter outlines a three-step approach to analyze feedback: 1) ****One Step Back****: Look at the 'You + Me' intersections. This involves examining how the differences between the two individuals contribute to the friction. 2) ****Two Steps Back****: Focus on role clashes. This step involves considering the roles each individual plays in the system and how these roles can lead to misunderstanding or conflict. 3) ****Three Steps Back****: Examine the big



picture, which includes identifying external factors such as policies, other players, and processes that may influence behavior and feedback.

4.Question:

What role do 'accidental adversaries' play in feedback dynamics according to Chapter 6?

'Accidental adversaries' refer to individuals in conflicts who may not have a personal issue with each other but find themselves in opposition due to their roles and the nature of their interactions. The chapter explains that when individuals in overlapping roles (like supervisor and employee) face recurrent friction, they may begin to view each other as adversaries; however, their conflict often arises not from personal failings but from the structural clash of their roles. Recognizing this can help mitigate misunderstandings and improve communication.

5.Question:

What is the significance of accountability in a systems approach to feedback?

In a systems approach, accountability is essential because it helps clarify individual contributions to problems, allowing for genuine responsibility to be taken. Understanding that multiple factors contribute to an issue enables individuals to reflect on their behavior within the system rather than merely deflecting blame. This process enhances personal growth and fosters a collaborative environment for problem solving, making it possible for effective and constructive dialogues about feedback to occur.





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Chapter 7 | LEARN HOW WIRING AND TEMPERAMENT AFFECT YOUR STORY | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the significance of 'baseline' in the context of feedback according to this chapter?

Baseline refers to the default state of well-being or contentment that individuals gravitate toward after experiencing feedback, whether positive or negative. It is important because it influences how people react to feedback. For example, individuals with a higher baseline tend to respond more positively to positive feedback, whereas those with a lower baseline are more impacted by negative information. This concept is further illustrated by contrasting characters Krista, who maintains a high baseline and is less affected by negative feedback, and Alita, who has a lower baseline and is more deeply affected by criticism.

2.Question:

How do emotional responses to feedback vary among individuals as discussed in the chapter?

Emotional responses to feedback can vary significantly among individuals based on their inherent wiring and temperament. The chapter describes three key variables: 'Baseline', which determines general happiness levels; 'Swing', which denotes how far individuals emotionally react to feedback; and 'Sustain/Recovery', which indicates how long they stay affected by the emotional swings. Some people might swing wide emotionally, reacting strongly to feedback, while others remain calm, creating varied workplace dynamics. This variability can lead to misunderstandings where those who



react strongly to criticism may see others as dismissive.

3.Question:

What role does neuroscience play in understanding how individuals process feedback?

Neuroscience plays a pivotal role in understanding individual differences in feedback processing. The chapter discusses how the brain reacts to pleasure and pain, particularly through the interplay of different brain regions like the amygdala, which responds to threats, and the prefrontal cortex, which regulates emotional responses. Research suggests that different hemispheres of the brain are associated with processing negative and positive feedback, leading to varied emotional responses and recovery times based on individual differences in brain structure and function.

4.Question:

What are 'sustain' and 'recovery' in the context of feedback, and how do they differ among individuals?

Sustain refers to how long an individual maintains positive feelings after receiving good feedback, while recovery pertains to how quickly one returns to their baseline following negative feedback. The chapter highlights that individuals vary widely in these aspects, with some experiencing lasting joy from positive reinforcement, while others quickly return to a neutral state. Conversely, some individuals can be deeply affected by negative feedback, taking much longer to recover and often experiencing a more severe emotional dip. Factors such as brain wiring influence these tendencies



drastically, creating diverse emotional landscapes among people.

5.Question:

How do emotions distort perceptions of feedback, according to the chapter?

Emotions can significantly distort how individuals perceive and interpret feedback, leading to inaccuracies in self-assessment. The chapter outlines several biases—such as the 'Google bias', which makes one recall past failures more readily when feeling down, and the 'forever bias', causing one to believe they will always feel bad after negative feedback. These distortions can lead to an overly negative view of oneself and one's future, severely impacting one's ability to learn and grow from feedback.

Chapter 8 | DISMANTLE DISTORTIONS • See Feedback at “Actual Size” | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the main focus of Chapter 8 in 'Thanks for the Feedback' by Douglas Stone?

Chapter 8, titled "Dismantle Distortions," emphasizes the importance of effectively receiving feedback by addressing the emotional distortions that can cloud our judgment. It highlights how negative feedback can trigger overwhelming emotions, leading individuals to exaggerate and misinterpret its significance. The chapter outlines several strategies for separating feelings from the actual feedback, helping readers to maintain a balanced perspective.

2.Question:

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Can you describe Seth's experience with feedback and its impact on him? Seth, a counselor, faces a humiliating moment during a meeting when his boss jokingly comments on Seth's disorganization, triggering severe shame and anxiety in him. This response leads him to question his competence, deciding to cancel travel plans to address his perceived failures. However, upon reflection, Seth realizes that his boss's comment was meant to foster connection and not a personal indictment. This incident highlights how our emotional reactions can distort the feedback and lead to a skewed self-assessment.

3.Question:

What strategies does the chapter suggest for dismantling distortions when receiving feedback?

The chapter presents five strategies: 1. ****Be Prepared, Be Mindful****: Anticipate potential feedback and reflect on your reactive patterns to better manage your responses. 2. ****Separate the Strands****: Distinguish between your feelings, the story you tell about the feedback, and the actual feedback received, to clarify any exaggerations. 3. ****Contain the Story****: Use techniques like a Feedback Containment Chart to keep feedback in perspective and prevent it from spiraling out of control. 4. ****Change Your Vantage Point****: Shift your perspective by imagining how an observer would react or by viewing the situation humorously. 5. ****Accept That You Can't Control How Others See You****: Recognize that others' views are not definitive of your self-worth and should not dictate your self-perception.

4.Question:

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How does the chapter advise individuals to handle their emotional reactions to feedback?

The chapter advises individuals to practice self-observation during feedback conversations, acknowledging their emotional responses without judgment. This awareness helps to calm their immediate reactions and enables a clearer assessment of the feedback itself. By recognizing their typical patterns of behavior—such as defensiveness or panic—they can address these responses constructively. It encourages individuals to contemplate the physical sensations associated with their emotions as a way to gain control over their reactions.

5.Question:

What role does humor play in processing feedback, according to Chapter 8?

Humor is portrayed as a powerful tool for changing one's emotional state and perspective when facing negative feedback. By adopting a comedic viewpoint, individuals can lighten the emotional burden of criticism, making it easier to cope with and gain insight from the feedback. The chapter suggests that laughter can help shift focus from distress to understanding, facilitating personal growth and resilience.

Chapter 9 | CULTIVATE A GROWTH IDENTITY • Sort Toward Coaching | Q&A

1.Question:

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What are the implications of identity on how people perceive and receive feedback according to Chapter 9?

In Chapter 9, the authors explain that identity is intrinsically linked to how feedback is perceived and received. Feedback can cause significant emotional upheaval because it may challenge or contradict the identity story individuals tell themselves about who they are. A fragile or simplistic identity—like seeing oneself as either 'good' or 'bad'—leads to a brittle response to feedback, making it hard for individuals to absorb constructive criticism without feeling personally attacked or invalidated. Conversely, a robust identity that embraces complexity allows individuals to see feedback as a valuable tool for growth rather than a threat to their self-image.

2.Question:

How does the concept of a 'growth identity' differ from a 'fixed identity'?

A 'growth identity' is characterized by the belief that traits and abilities can be developed through effort and learning, whereas a 'fixed identity' holds that these traits are static and unchangeable. Those with a growth mindset view challenges and feedback as opportunities to learn and improve. In contrast, individuals with a fixed mindset see challenges as threats that may expose their inadequacies, often leading to withdrawal or aversion to feedback. This mindset significantly affects how individuals approach learning, feedback, and challenges in their personal and professional lives.

3.Question:

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What specific strategies does Chapter 9 suggest for cultivating a growth identity?

Chapter 9 outlines three critical practices to cultivate a growth identity: 1)

****Sort toward coaching**** - This involves discerning whether feedback is intended to coach or evaluate. By approaching feedback as coaching, individuals can reduce defensive reactions and engage more productively with the information provided. 2) ****Unpack judgment from the evaluation suitcase**** - When receiving evaluative feedback, it's beneficial to separate assessment, consequences, and judgment. Understanding the different components allows individuals to alleviate the emotional weight of judgment and focus on constructive elements instead. 3) ****Give yourself a 'second score'**** - This practice suggests viewing how one handles feedback or struggles as a separate element of evaluation. Even if the initial feedback is negative, individuals can feel accomplished by how they respond and learn from the situation. This reframing helps to sustain motivation and facilitate growth.

4.Question:

What does the chapter indicate about the role of peers in shaping one's identity story?

The chapter highlights that our identity stories are significantly influenced by comparisons to others, suggesting that peers serve as yardsticks for measuring our own successes and failures. For example, if someone sees their peer achieving significant milestones, they may feel ashamed or



inadequate if they perceive themselves as falling short in comparison. This impacts how they react to feedback, as they might defend against it if it threatens the positive image they have built about themselves relative to others. This comparison-based evaluation can reinforce a fixed identity, making it harder for individuals to adopt a growth mindset or perceive feedback as an opportunity for self-improvement.

5.Question:

How does Chapter 9 address the emotional effects of feedback on individual identity, specifically regarding personal and relational scenarios?

The chapter discusses how feedback—whether positive or negative—can evoke profound emotional responses that directly affect one’s sense of self. It provides personal examples, such as the guilt one might feel over a decision made regarding a loved one's care, which can undermine one’s self-identity and evoke feelings of shame or failure. The emotional turmoil can lead individuals to either perceive feedback as harsh criticism or to disengage and reject it altogether. The authors argue that recognizing the emotional impacts of feedback is essential in reshaping how individuals approach both personal and relational challenges, fostering resilience and a more adaptable sense of self.





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Chapter 10 | HOW GOOD DO I HAVE TO BE? Draw Boundaries When Enough Is Enough | Q&A

1.Question:

What are the three types of boundaries described in Chapter 10 and how do they differ?

The three types of boundaries described are: 1. ****I MAY NOT TAKE YOUR ADVICE****: This is the softest boundary where the receiver indicates they are willing to listen to feedback but may choose not to take it. It's about clarifying that while they may hear the advice, it does not obligate them to act on it. 2. ****I DON'T WANT FEEDBACK ABOUT THAT SUBJECT, NOT RIGHT NOW****: This boundary is firmer and establishes a right to decline feedback on certain topics at specific times. The receiver is explicit in stating that they do not want to hear about a particular subject for personal reasons, often related to their emotional state or past struggles. 3. ****STOP, OR I WILL LEAVE THE RELATIONSHIP****: This is the strongest boundary. It implies that if the feedback giver cannot refrain from offering unsolicited judgments or advice, the receiver may end or alter the terms of the relationship altogether. This boundary underscores the importance of acceptance and respect in any relational dynamic.

2.Question:

How does the author suggest determining whether boundaries are needed in a relationship?

The author suggests initial awareness of negative feelings such as overwhelm, self-doubt, or inadequacy as indicators that boundaries may be necessary. To evaluate if a boundary is justified, the individual can ask a series of reflective questions, including:



1. Are comments attacking my character rather than my behavior? 2. Is the feedback relentless despite discussing its unhelpfulness? 3. Does the feedback giver issue threats rather than warnings? 4. Am I always the one expected to change without reciprocity? These questions help assess the health and balance of a relationship and the appropriateness of establishing boundaries.

3.Question:

What strategies does the author recommend for effectively rejecting feedback while maintaining relationships?

The author emphasizes the importance of being both firm and appreciative when rejecting feedback. This can be achieved through several strategies: 1. ****Being Transparent****: Clearly communicating reasons for rejecting feedback, as in explaining personal challenges to avoid misunderstandings. 2. ****Using 'And' Instead of 'But'****: Combining appreciation with rejection by saying something like, "I appreciate your input, and this isn't the right time for me to consider it." This approach acknowledges the giver's intention while asserting personal autonomy. 3. ****Making Specific Requests****: Clearly delineating what feedback is unwelcome, specifying topics or behaviors that should be avoided, and stating the timeframe for which the boundaries apply. 4. ****Describing Consequences****: Providing clear warnings about what might happen if the boundaries are crossed, without threatening, which serves to uphold one's own standards.

4.Question:

What role do emotions play in the feedback and boundary-setting



process according to the author?

Emotions are central to the boundary-setting process as they can dictate how feedback is received and processed. The author notes that recognizing and understanding one's emotional reactions to feedback is crucial; feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, or overwhelm can signal the need for boundaries. Sharing these emotions with feedback givers can foster understanding and open dialogue about how their comments affect the receiver emotionally. Furthermore, the author encourages using complex emotional expressions, such as combining appreciation with boundary requests, to convey the importance of both parties' feelings in maintaining healthy relationships.

5.Question:

In Chapter 10, how does the author suggest handling the situation when someone continues to provide unwanted feedback despite established boundaries?

When faced with someone who persists in providing unwanted feedback despite established boundaries, the author suggests several approaches: 1. ****Reiterate Your Boundaries****: Clearly reaffirm the previously discussed boundaries and the reasons behind them, reminding the feedback giver of the agreement. 2. ****Describe Consequences****: If the individual does not respect the boundaries, communicate the potential outcomes of their actions, such as altering relationship dynamics or taking time apart. 3. ****Problem-Solving Together****: Engage in a conversation to collaboratively find solutions that reduce the friction caused by their feedback. This could involve asking them



to limit discussions to certain topics or explore alternative ways they can support you without crossing your boundaries. The key is to remain consistent while demonstrating a willingness to work towards mutual understanding.

Chapter 11 | NAVIGATE THE CONVERSATION | Q&A

1.Question:

What are the three main parts of a feedback conversation as outlined in Chapter 11?

The three main parts of a feedback conversation are: 1. ****Open****: This phase involves getting aligned on the purpose of the conversation. It includes clarifying what kind of feedback is being discussed (evaluation, coaching, or appreciation), establishing who the decision-maker is, and determining if the feedback is final or negotiable. 2.

****Body****: This is the two-way exchange of information where essential skills such as listening, asserting (sharing one's own views), managing the conversation process, and problem-solving come into play. 3. ****Close****: In this final phase, the conversation wraps up by clarifying any commitments, action steps, benchmarks, and follow-up actions. This ensures both parties have a clear understanding of what has been agreed upon.

2.Question:

How does the author suggest one should approach the 'Open' phase of a feedback conversation?

In the 'Open' phase, it's crucial to establish alignment between the giver and receiver of



feedback. The author suggests asking three specific questions: 1. ****Is This Feedback If So, What Kind?****: It's important for the receiver to recognize whether they are receiving feedback or just engaging in a normal conversation and to understand the type of feedback being offered. 2. ****Who Decides?****: Clarify who has the authority to make final decisions about the feedback and its implications, which can help prevent misunderstandings about the nature of the feedback (suggestive vs. authoritative). 3. ****Is This Final or Negotiable?****: Understanding whether the feedback is a final evaluation or a provisional assessment allows the receiver to know if they can influence the conversation and its outcome. This alignment sets a constructive tone for the rest of the conversation.

3.Question:

What are the four essential skills one must develop to manage the body of a feedback conversation effectively?

The author identifies four essential skills for effectively managing the body of a feedback conversation: 1. ****Listening****: This includes asking clarifying questions, paraphrasing the giver's views, and acknowledging their feelings to ensure understanding and engagement. 2. ****Asserting****: This involves sharing one's own perspectives and advocating for oneself while acknowledging that one's viewpoint may not represent the entire picture. 3. ****Process Moves****: These are techniques for managing the conversation's flow, such as noticing when it becomes unproductive and suggesting a better direction or process. 4. ****Problem Solving****: This focuses on addressing the question of what actions should follow the



feedback — essentially determining the next steps and collaborating on solutions or paths forward.

4.Question:

How can listeners ensure their conversation remains constructive despite emotional triggers that may arise from receiving feedback?

Listeners can maintain a constructive conversation despite emotional triggers by engaging their 'internal voice' and preparing themselves mentally before the feedback discussion. By acknowledging and understanding their internal reactions—such as feelings of defensiveness or frustration—they can work towards curiosity and understanding instead. The author suggests that listeners prepare to engage with their internal voice by conducting a dialogue that involves identifying triggers and consciously shifting focus from 'wrong spotting' (focusing on what they perceive as incorrect in the feedback) to listening for what might be right and useful. This involves intentionally seeking to understand the feedback giver's perspective and clarifying how their views may differ while allowing for empathy and curiosity to guide the conversation.

5.Question:

What is meant by 'process moves' in the context of feedback conversations, and why are they important?

'Process moves' refer to the strategic interventions made during a conversation that help steer it back on track when it becomes unproductive or confrontational. They involve recognizing when the conversation is



stagnating or escalating and proactively addressing the process of the discussion rather than only its content. By making explicit observations about the conversation dynamics — such as identifying that both parties are talking past each other or that emotional intensity is rising — one can propose a reset or a shift in focus. This skill is important because it allows for clearer communication and fosters a cooperative atmosphere, increasing the chances of resolving issues and finding mutual understanding, thus enhancing the overall effectiveness of the feedback conversation.

Chapter 12 | GET GOING • Five Ways to Take Action | Q&A

1.Question:

What does the phrase 'Name One Thing' signify in Chapter 12, and why is it important for effective feedback?

The phrase 'Name One Thing' is a crucial concept introduced in Chapter 12 to help individuals simplify their approach to receiving and acting on feedback. It emphasizes the idea of narrowing down feedback to focus on one specific area of improvement rather than being overwhelmed by multiple suggestions or concerns. This is important because our attention to change is a limited resource, and by concentrating on one meaningful and useful feedback point, individuals can take in feedback more effectively, act on it, and avoid paralysis by analysis. This method makes it easier to initiate meaningful change without feeling overwhelmed.

2.Question:

How does the author suggest one should solicit feedback effectively?



The author recommends asking direct, specific questions to solicit feedback rather than vague requests such as 'I would like some feedback.' For example, asking 'What's one thing I could work on?' or 'What's one thing you see me doing that gets in my own way?' sets clear expectations for the feedback giver. This more focused approach not only helps the feedback giver prioritize their response but also allows the recipient to gain actionable insights that align with their goal of improvement. The emphasis is on opening communication channels that encourage more profound and actionable advice.

3.Question:

What role does the experiment mindset play in adapting to feedback, according to the chapter?

The experiment mindset is portrayed in Chapter 12 as a valuable approach for individuals unsure about how to respond to feedback. Instead of committing to a particular change permanently, the author suggests treating feedback as an opportunity for experimentation. This means trying out new behaviors or suggestions in low-stakes environments to gauge their effectiveness without the pressure of an all-or-nothing commitment. By adopting this mindset, individuals can discover what works or doesn't work for them, learn from the outcomes of their experiments, and gradually improve their skill or behavior rather than feeling paralyzed by the fear of failure.

4.Question:

Can you elaborate on the significance of 'listening for themes' when collecting feedback as demonstrated by Rodrigo's example?



Listening for themes is highlighted in Rodrigo's example, where he actively seeks feedback from multiple colleagues about his effectiveness. By doing this, Rodrigo identifies recurring patterns in the feedback, such as his tendency to hang back during discussions and his performance visibility. Recognizing these themes allows him to pinpoint specific areas for improvement rather than being lost in a sea of feedback details. This method not only clarifies what actions he needs to focus on but also validates his insights, reinforcing the idea that feedback can sometimes contain contrasting perceptions that, when distilled, lead to meaningful change.

5.Question:

What is the J Curve described in the chapter, and why is it important for understanding the process of change?

The J Curve is a conceptual model in the chapter that illustrates the typical trajectory of behavior change over time. Initially, when a person starts to implement feedback or make changes, they often experience a downturn in their happiness, effectiveness, or comfort (the bottom of the J) before eventually rising to a higher level of contentment and skill. Understanding the J Curve is crucial because it prepares individuals for the discomfort and frustrations that often accompany change; it reinforces the important point that just because things may feel worse initially, it doesn't mean that improvement isn't on the way. This awareness can provide the motivation to persist through the challenging initial phases of adopting new behaviors.





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Chapter 13 | PULL TOGETHER • Feedback in Organizations | Q&A

1.Question:

What was the initial reaction of Everett to his 360-degree feedback report, and how did it change over time?

Everett initially reacted defensively to his 360-degree feedback report after receiving data that contradicted his self-perception. He felt that the feedback lacked execution and was pointless, criticizing the process to anyone who would listen. However, over time, he experienced a moment of realization that the feedback provided him with a new perspective on his struggles, personal relationships, and areas for potential change. This revelation transformed Everett into a supporter of the 360-degree feedback system, viewing it as essential for self-improvement and accountability.

2.Question:

What challenges did Pierre face with his company's performance management system, and what was his ultimate solution?

Pierre, a retail clothing chain president, recognized that the existing performance management system consumed excessive time and left employees feeling demoralized and stressed. He found the system unproductive and lacking the necessary effectiveness to address performance issues. In response to these challenges, Pierre ultimately decided to cancel performance reviews altogether, believing that although the people were capable, the system was fundamentally flawed and not worth the stress it caused.

3.Question:

What are the key characteristics of an effective feedback system according to the

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chapter, and why is perfect feedback unattainable?

An effective feedback system should possess transparency, consistency, adaptability to individual needs, and clear communication. The chapter argues that no feedback system can be perfect due to inherent human difficulties in perception and communication, such as differences in temperament, manager effectiveness, and the complexities of organizational dynamics. Additionally, feedback is subjective and relationship-based, making it challenging to have a universally effective system across diverse individuals and situations.

4.Question:

How can leaders and HR effectively communicate about feedback systems to improve acceptance and participation?

Leaders and HR can improve acceptance and participation in feedback systems by discussing both the benefits and drawbacks of the systems being implemented. They should engage employees in conversations about the various goals, the rationale behind the chosen system, and the potential costs associated with half-hearted participation. By encouraging transparency and inviting ongoing discussion, and by acknowledging concerns, HR can help shift the narrative from a critical stance to a collaborative problem-solving approach.

5.Question:

What practical strategies can individuals within an organization utilize to foster a culture of learning and effective feedback?

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Individuals can promote a culture of learning by highlighting learning stories in the organization, cultivating growth identities, discussing feedback reactions more openly, and establishing a dual-track feedback approach (formal evaluations and informal coaching). Additionally, they can appreciate the diversity of feedback styles and temperaments, supporting peers in discussing their learning experiences and strategies for improvement. Ultimately, encouraging everyone to take personal responsibility for their own learning and development is essential.