

How to Improve Preceptor Evaluations and Feedback

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10/11/2019

Disclosures

- I have no relevant financial interests to disclose
- This presentation was supported (in whole or in part) by HCA Healthcare and/or an HCA Healthcare affiliated entity. The views expressed in this publication represent those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of HCA Healthcare or any of its affiliated entities.

Purpose and Outline

- Giving and receiving feedback is a crucial interpersonal skill, and further training and development is needed to develop that skill in a preceptor.
- Review common obstacles to the feedback process
- Provide understanding of how a learner can be set up to receive feedback and respond to it
- Provide tactics and strategies for delivering feedback effectively

Learning Objectives

1. Describe how to improve preceptor evaluations and feedback.
2. Describe the barriers that interfere with effective feedback processes.

Are We the Critics?

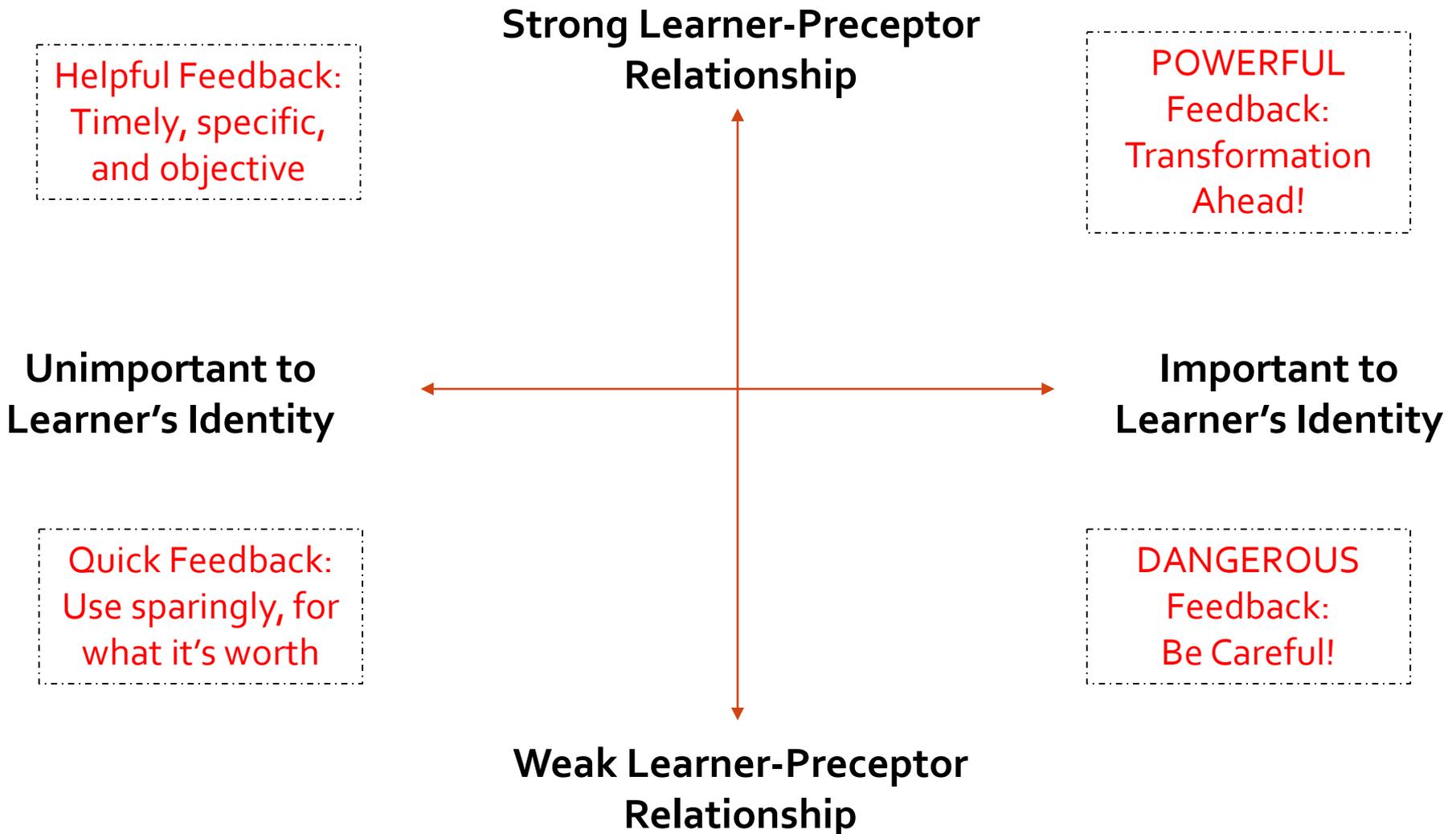
“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

-Theodore Roosevelt

Barriers to Effective Feedback

- Goal: Growth and improvement
- Both learners and preceptors are committed to the growth of the learner
- Effective Feedback should be easy!
- Many barriers/pitfalls
 - Identity
 - Relationship
 - Fear
 - Miscommunication
 - Words are powerful!

The Feedback Axis: Identity and Relationship



Growth Mindset – Carol Dweck

- Fixed Mindset
 - My capabilities are relatively fixed and unchangeable
 - “I’m not good at that. I’ve never been good at that. I’ll never be good at that.”
- Growth Mindset
 - My capabilities can be improved with consistent effort
 - “That doesn’t come easily to me, so I have to work harder and put systems and processes in place in order to improve.”
- Reminds us that mistakes are a natural part of growth, because we are challenging ourselves outside our comfort zone
- Mistakes and failures are not an indictment on our abilities, simply a sign that we are attempting difficult things

Applied to a Learner

- Feedback can cripple a learner if they believe they are powerless to improve
- Feedback can strengthen a learner if they see it as something they can change
- Teach the Growth Mindset on Day 1
- Remind the learner during the feedback session that their shortcomings and mistakes can be overcome through effort
- Remind the learner that you are not criticizing THEM, you are pointing them in the direction of improvement

Learning Objective 1

How does the “Growth Mindset” help a learner receive feedback effectively?

- A. By reminding the learner that their past experience has prepared them for this challenge
- B. By emphasizing that making mistakes is a natural part of improving
- C. By building trust and relationship with the learner and fostering connection
- D. By emphasizing the mindset that we are born with certain innate traits that allow us to succeed

Identity – Who Am I?

- The most important question for any of us
- Identity can be a pitfall on the path of feedback
- Many of us tangle up our actions with our identity
 - If you criticize my performance, you criticize me
 - If you don't value my contribution, you don't value me
 - If I fail at this task, I am a failure
- I see myself as someone who is good at X and so I am not open to feedback about X
- Someone who falls short of their self-imposed sense of identity can quickly flip into 'shame,' which interferes with relationship and performance
- It is important to frame your criticism in a way that highlights objective behaviors, instead of making accusations against their identity
 - "Late" vs "Irresponsible"
 - "Incomplete assignment" vs "Lazy"
 - "Ineffective preparation" vs "Un-intelligent"

Learning Objective 2

The concept of “Identity” is relevant to feedback because

- A. Sometimes a learner is unable to accept feedback because it conflicts with their perception of their own identity.
- B. Failing to live up to their own expectations leads to shame, which interferes with connection and growth.
- C. A skillful preceptor can frame criticism in a way that preserves the learner’s identity
- D. All of the above

First, Know Yourself

- Do you Bail or Bruise?
- Do you wear an Appreciative Hat or a Critical Hat?
- Are you Verbose or Terse?
- Do you give feedback that is too vague or too painfully, irritatingly specific?

For the Hardest Conversations

- Prepare yourself mentally
- Have time and space that is conducive
- Use a script
- Consider having a partner in the room

Habits for Effective Feedback

- Start with humility
 - Your opinion vs The Right Way
 - Small sample size/more to the story
 - I was once where you were
 - Everyone is facing a hard battle
- Absolutely no sarcasm!
- Ask questions
- Know your tendencies and balance them
- Stop, Start, Continue
- Focus on observable behaviors, not the inferences you have made from those observations
- Truly believe the Growth Mindset (for you and them)
- Enjoy and celebrate their efforts!

Reference

- Dweck, C. S. (2017). *Mindset*. London: Robinson, an imprint of Constable & Robinson Ltd

Questions and Discussion

Thank you!

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