

# We've Got it all Wrong!

## Redesigning the Feedback Process so it's Meaningful



Washington State Lean  
Conference



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FRASER  
CONSULTING

A photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a table, smiling and talking to each other. The man is on the right, wearing a white sweater over a light-colored collared shirt. The woman is on the left, wearing a grey blazer over a light green top. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a cafe or meeting room.

## Introductions Pair Up

1. Share your name, where you work, and what you do.
2. Share one piece of advice that has stuck with you.
3. Share why you are here in this session.







Feedback is essential for growth

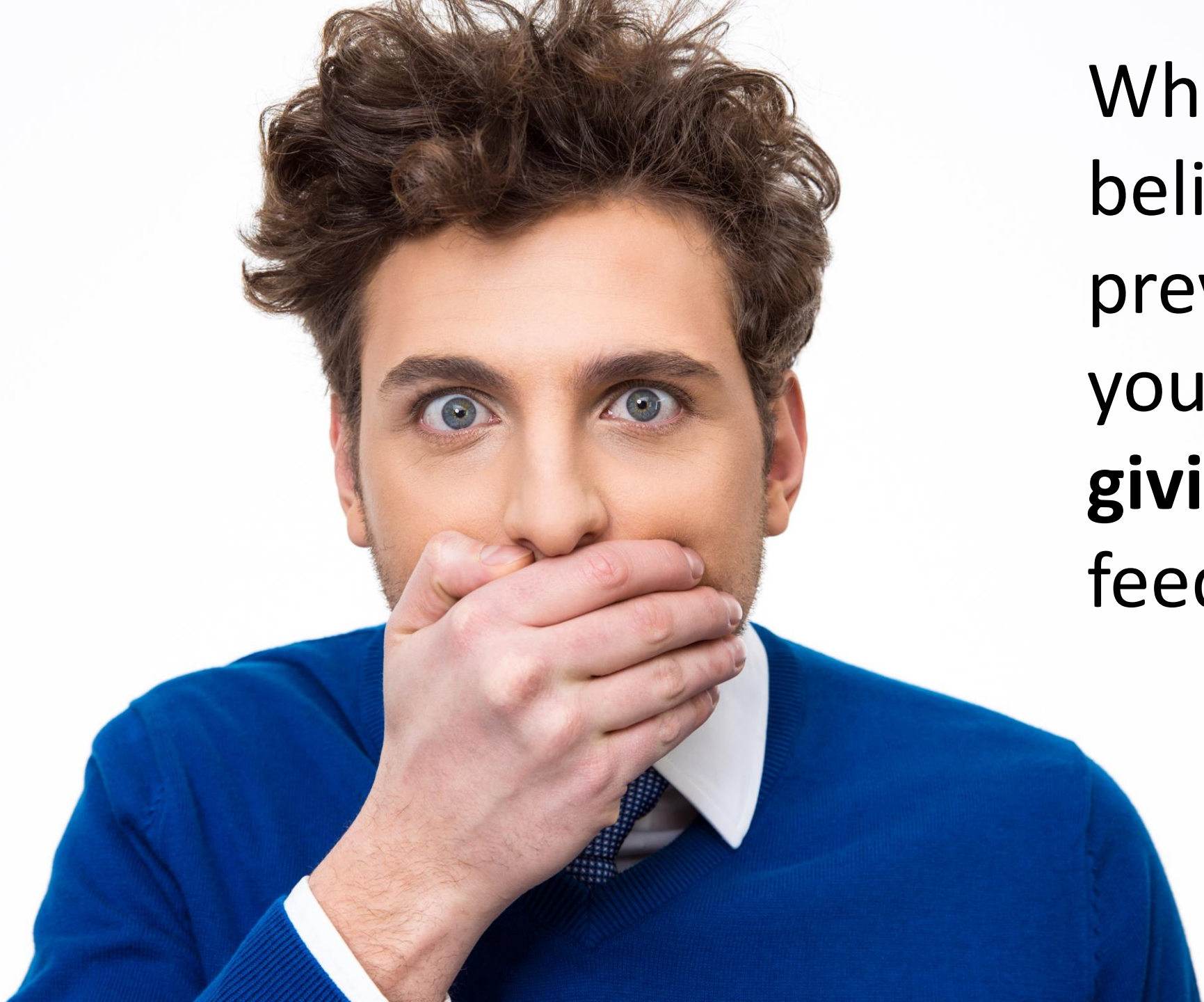
# Feedback Definition

Feedback is a process of exchanging information about past behavior, delivered in the present, which may or may not influence the future.

# Feedback

- ✓ Is information
- ✓ Consider it neutrally – it's neither positive nor negative
- ✓ Is a process
- ✓ Can be conscious and/or out of awareness
- ✓ It is everywhere – all the time





What  
beliefs  
prevent  
you from  
**giving**  
feedback?



What beliefs  
prevent you  
from **receiving**  
feedback from  
others?





## Feedback Prevention Tactics

- With feedback, people tend to use it to confirm their own beliefs, not to challenge them.
- When data and their model/worldviews don't match – most people discard the data
- We will not even wait to ignore feedback, but actively take steps to prevent feedback from happening in the first place.
  - e.g. hiding from people we don't want to talk to or receive feedback from

# The Giver's Myth



If feedback has all the correct ingredients in its delivery – if it is clear, specific, timed right, non-judgmental and speaks only to behavior – it will be accepted as given.



# The Giver's Myth

If we follow and practice the script they will understand and change their behavior - because we assume that the feedback is always useful





- No matter what it appears to be, feedback information will almost always say something about the giver, not necessarily the receiver.
- The receiver has to want it – if people don't want your feedback, you'll never succeed in reaching them, no matter how smart or wonderful you are.
- Receivers sense the existence of hidden motives in feedback – so if you are really interested in giving feedback, first check in on your own intentions.





As much as giver's want to influence it...

What to do with the feedback is solely in the hands of the receiver.

# Hierarchy of Filters – influence how we receive feedback

Power & Authority

Feedback

Perception of power and authority of the giver.

- ✓ Position
- ✓ Authority
- ✓ Power of delivery
  - Volume
  - Enunciation
  - Tone
  - Intensity

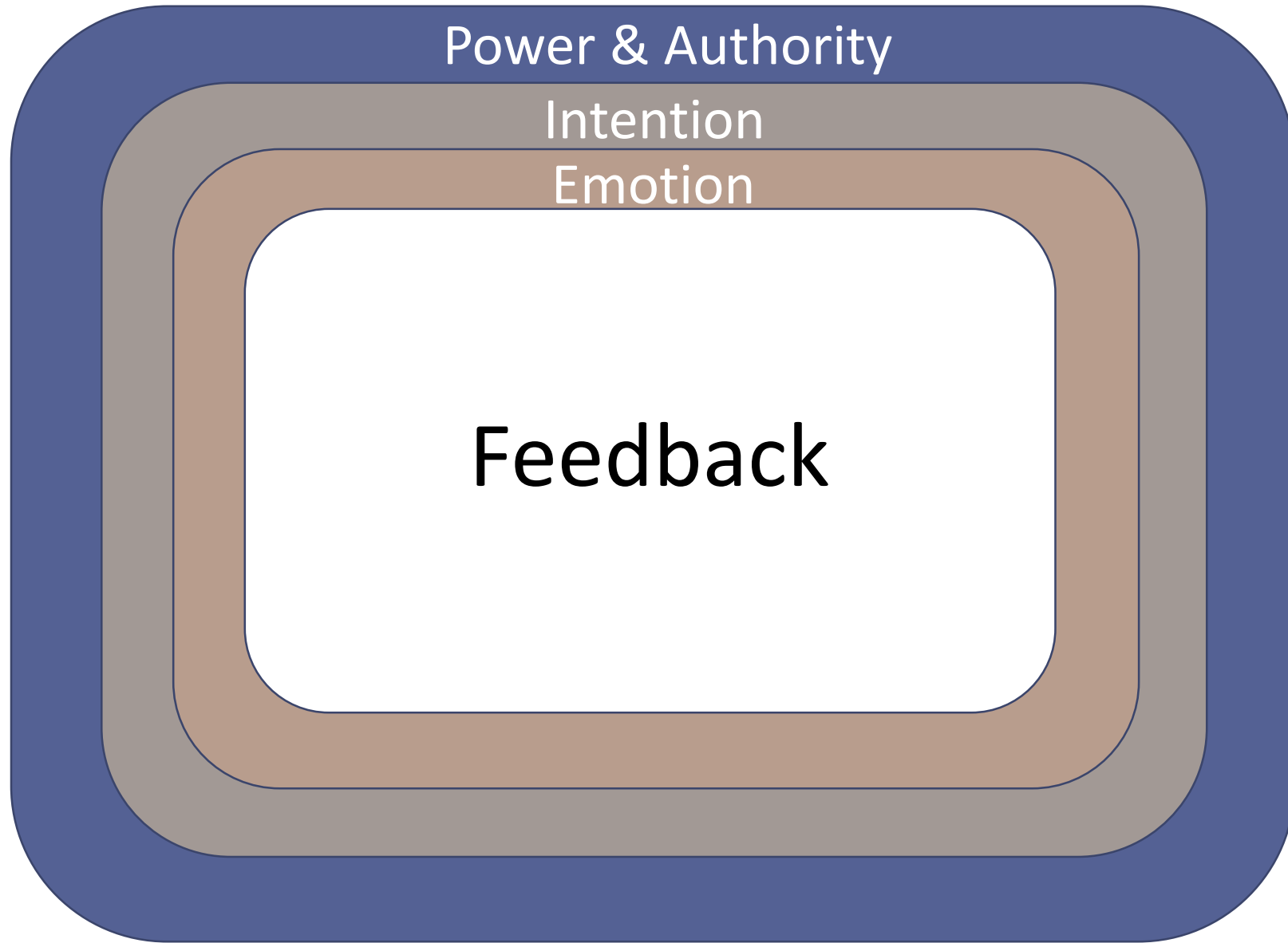


# Hierarchy of Filters – influence how we receive feedback



Investment that the giver desires for their message to be heard in a particular kind of way.

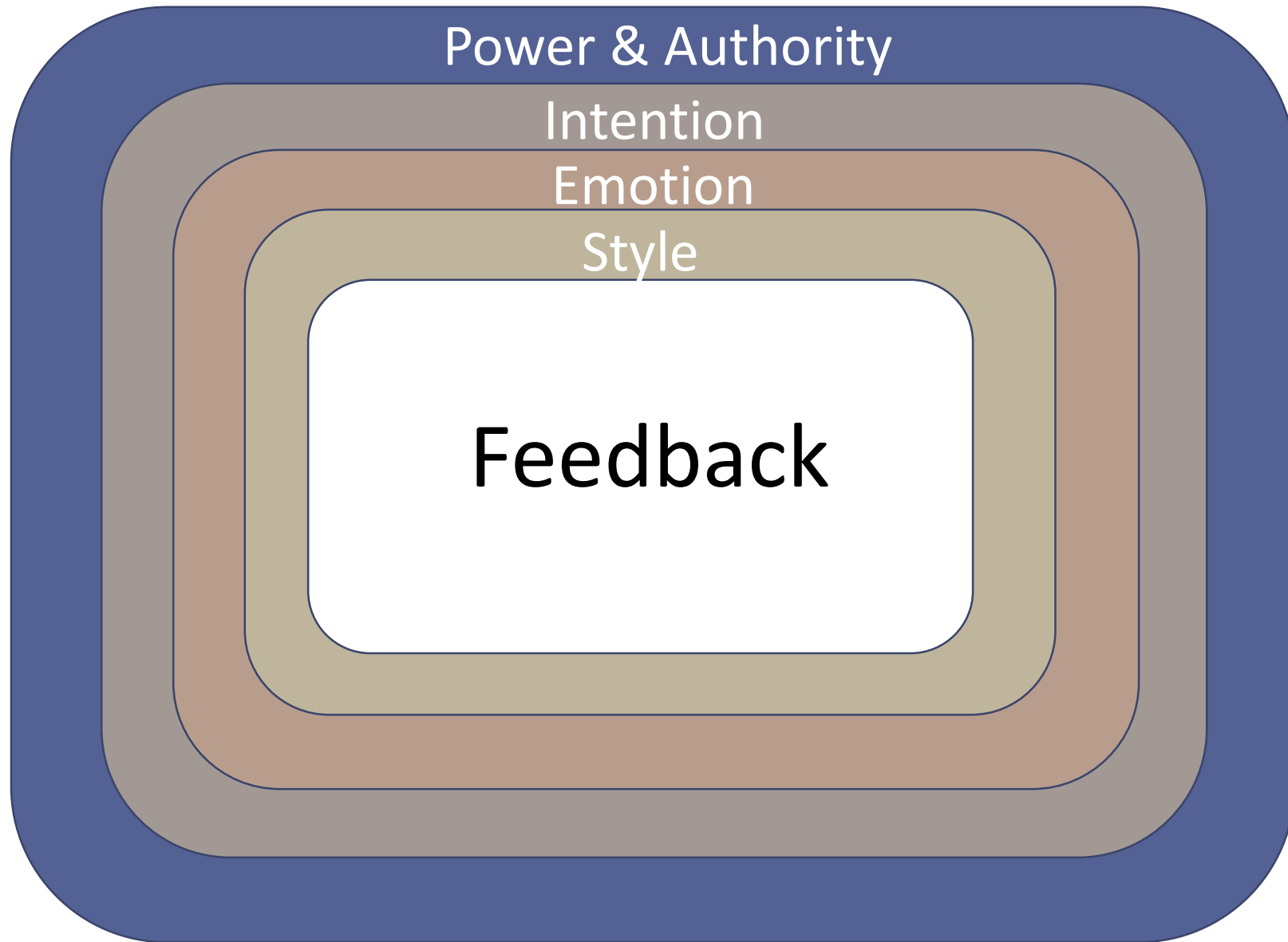
# Hierarchy of Filters – influence how we receive feedback



Perception of the emotional state of the giver.

Be sure to notice your emotional responses to their emotional wrapping.

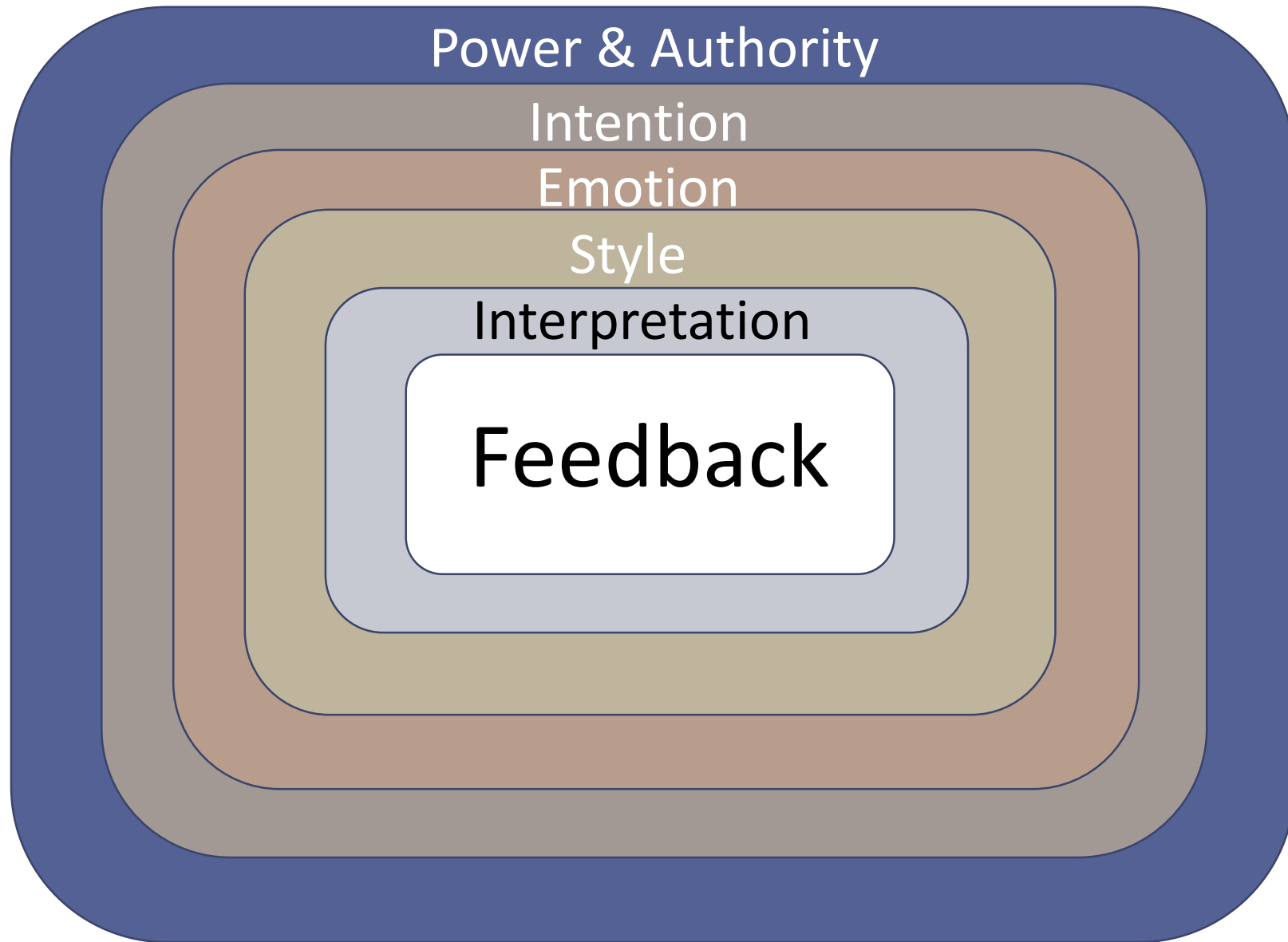
# Hierarchy of Filters – influence how we receive feedback



Each of us has our own unique style. What we think is clear and straightforward, to others is not.



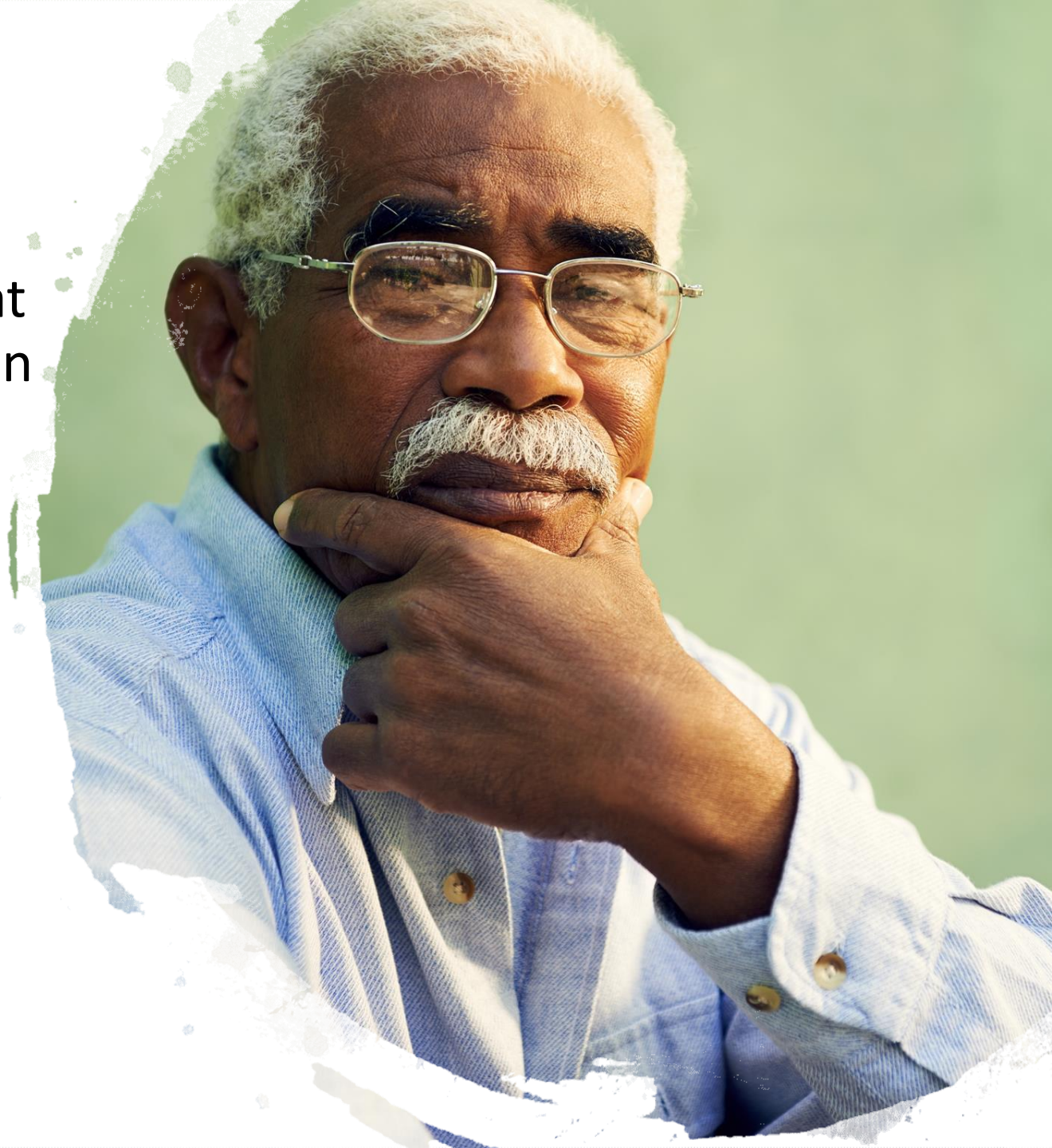
# Hierarchy of Filters – influence how we receive feedback



Each receiver has their own interpretation of the giver. The story they perceive about the giver

# Discussion

1. Think about some feedback that you received and the information was influenced by these filters.
2. Describe the impact they have on you receiving the feedback.
3. If you were to redesign the feedback from the giver, what would you adjust?







It is always a choice

- The ways we attempt to integrate the feedback we receive is always a choice.
- We can choose to interpret feedback as criticizing, demanding, contradictory, complimentary, inaccurate, worthless, “right on” or demeaning.
- Or, we can experience feedback as empowering.



A photograph of two women sitting at a table in a library, smiling and talking. The woman on the left has dark curly hair and is wearing a blue patterned top and large hoop earrings. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a light-colored knit sweater. They are both looking at each other. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books. The text "Own the Feedback Process" is overlaid in white on the image.

# Own the Feedback Process

Why not ask for what you want?



For my feedback to be effective, you and I first have to determine exactly what you want.







# Goals

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Feedback works best when you know your goal and ask people specifically about that goal



## Discussion

1. Think about a goal.
2. What specifically are you trying to accomplish?
3. What information will help you know how you are progressing toward the goal?
4. Who can help give you feedback?
5. What do you want from them?
6. What are your next steps?

## Discussion

1. Think about a person you want to give feedback to.
2. What is your intention surrounding the feedback?
3. How might you set up the feedback process exchange?



“I’m getting the feeling that you’re trying to tell me something, but I can’t figure out what it is. Can you help me?”



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## ARTICLE MANAGING PEOPLE

### The Feedback Fallacy

For years, managers have been encouraged to praise and constructively criticize just about everything their employees do. But there are better ways to help employees thrive and excel.  
*by Marcus Buckingham and Ashley Goodall*

# The Feedback Fallacy

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Ask: How can we help each person thrive and excel? And that the answers take us in a different direction.

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Research is clear: Telling people what we think of their performance doesn't help them, it actually *hinders* learning.



# Problems with Feedback

Problem 1: Theory of the Source of Truth  
That other people are more aware than you of your weaknesses and that the best way to help you is for them to show you.

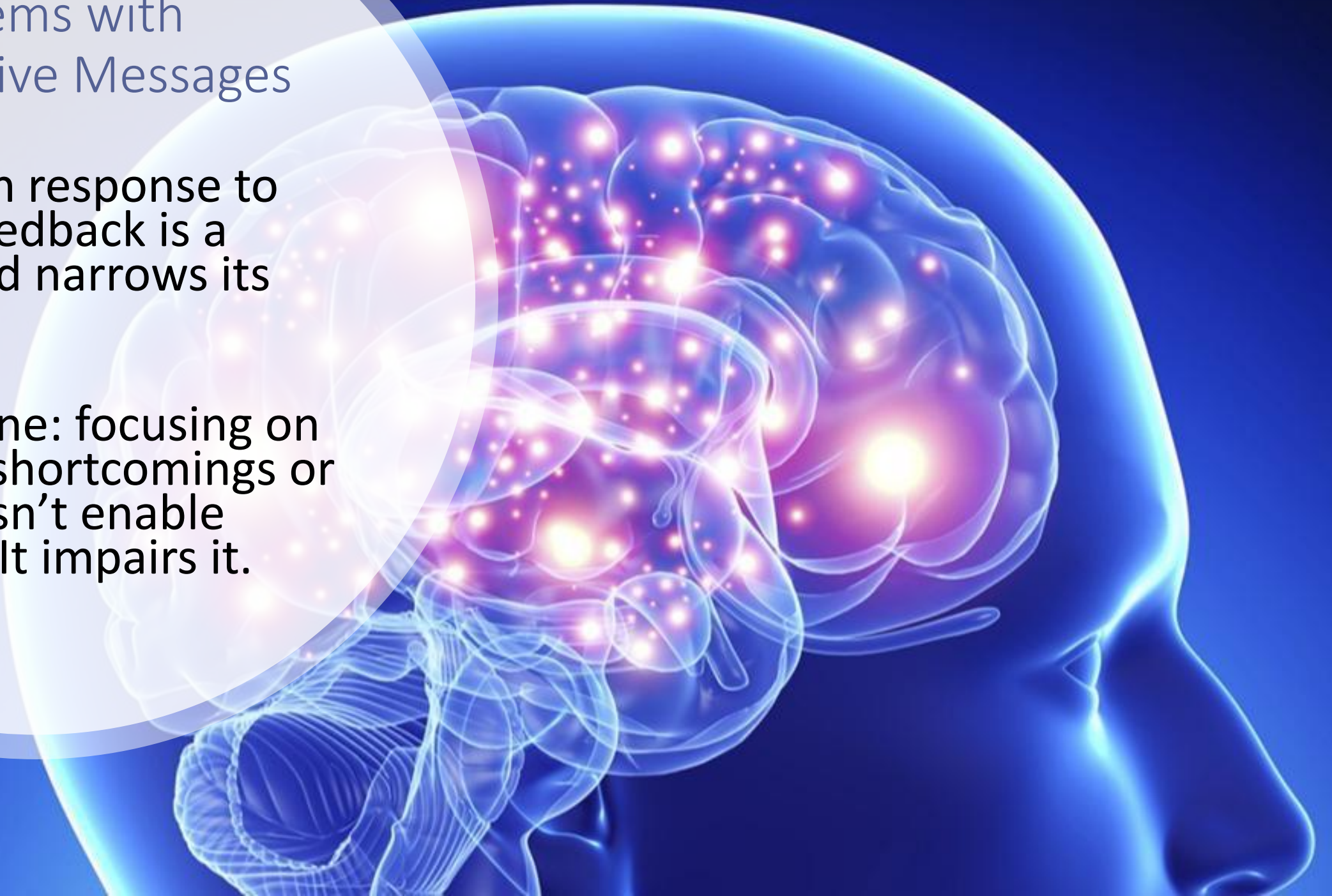
# Problems with Feedback

## Problem 2: Theory of Learning

The process of learning is like an empty vessel – you lack certain abilities you need so your colleagues should teach them to you.

## Problems with Negative Messages

- Your brain response to critical feedback is a threat and narrows its activity.
- Bottom line: focusing on people's shortcomings or gaps doesn't enable learning. It impairs it.



## Discussion

1. When you receive a **compliment** what is your automatic reaction?
2. When you receive **criticism**, what is your automatic reaction?





## We learn better...

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- Research shows that learning happens when we see how we might do something better by adding some new nuance or expansion of our own understanding.
- Learning rests on our grasp of what we're doing well, not on what we're doing poorly and certainly not someone else's sense of what we're doing poorly.
- We learn the most when some else pays attention to what's working within us and asks us to cultivate it intelligently.

# Problems with Feedback

## Problem 3: Theory of Excellence

A belief that great performance is universal, analyzable, and describable – and that once defined, it can be transferred from one person to another, regardless of who each individual is.

- Excellence is almost impossible to define
- Each person's version of it is uniquely shaped and is an expression of that person's individuality.

# Focus on What is Going Well



Thinking about things that are going well will alter their brain chemistry so that they can be open to new ways of thinking or acting.



Start with Present: "What are three things that are working for you right now?"



Ask about the Past: "When you had a problem like this in the past, what did you do that worked?"



Future: "What do you already know you need to do? What do you already know works in this situation?" Assume they already know the solution.





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## **ARTICLE** **RECEIVING FEEDBACK**

Why Asking for Advice  
Is More Effective Than  
Asking for Feedback

*by Jaewon Yoon, Hayley Blunden, Ariella Kristal and  
Ashley Whillans*

# If you want feedback, ask for Advice

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Since feedback is often associated with evaluation. The past is unchangeable and the future is full of possibilities.

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Instead, ask people for advice. Advice is focused on improvement and is future – oriented.



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## ARTICLE DEFEND YOUR RESEARCH

### Negative Feedback Rarely Leads to Improvement

*An Interview with Paul Green by Scott Berinato*

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# Negative Feedback Rarely Leads to Improvement

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When people received negative feedback, they tend to move away from the person(s) who offered it and look for new and different relationships.

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Even though the theory is that negative feedback is supposed to help, it's perceived as a threat.

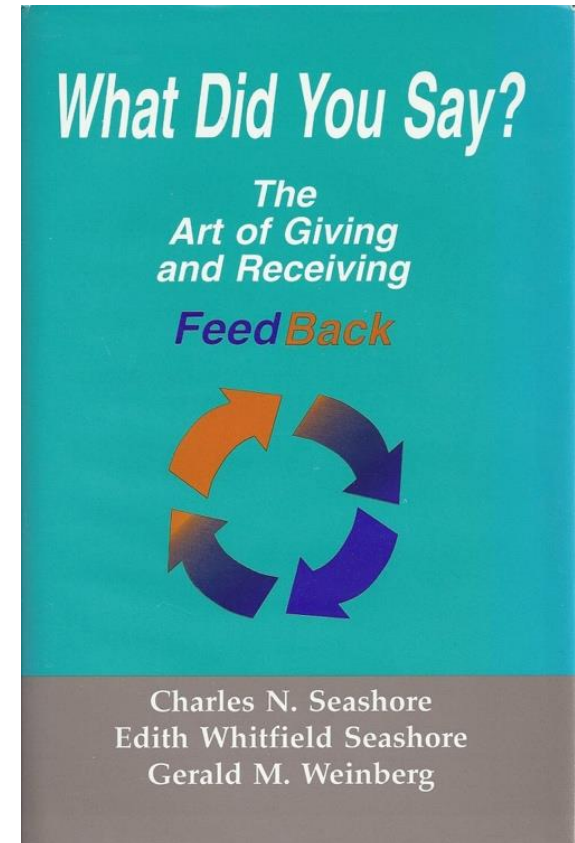
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People need to feel that they are valuable and they know they need to improve.

# References

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Seashore, Seashore, & Weinberg. (2003). *What did you say? The art of giving and receiving feedback*. Columbia, Maryland. Bingham House





# Questions?

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# TRUST REPAIR

It **IS** Possible!

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Proven Strategies to Help  
Groups Get Unstuck

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Wendy Fraser, Ph.D.