

# ***The Feedback Gap:***

*Why Feedback is Hard and How to Do It Better*

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# Session Objectives

- ▶ Empower you to think about feedback differently
- ▶ Create awareness about the elements of an effective feedback conversation
- ▶ Help build confidence by describing tools to effectively prepare for and hold feedback conversations

**Bottom line:** Feedback skills can be built, and you can learn how use feedback to grow, develop, and motivate yourself and your teams.



*What pops into your head when you hear the word 'feedback'?*

- **Feedback definition:** descriptive communication or information about an event, product, process, or a person's performance of a task. Feedback is used as a basis for improvement or reinforcement.
- Feedback is neutral.



# Benefits of Feedback





*Everyone agrees feedback is important. Few managers do it consistently or well.*

**Question:** How confident are you in your ability to give feedback?



# Why is feedback hard?

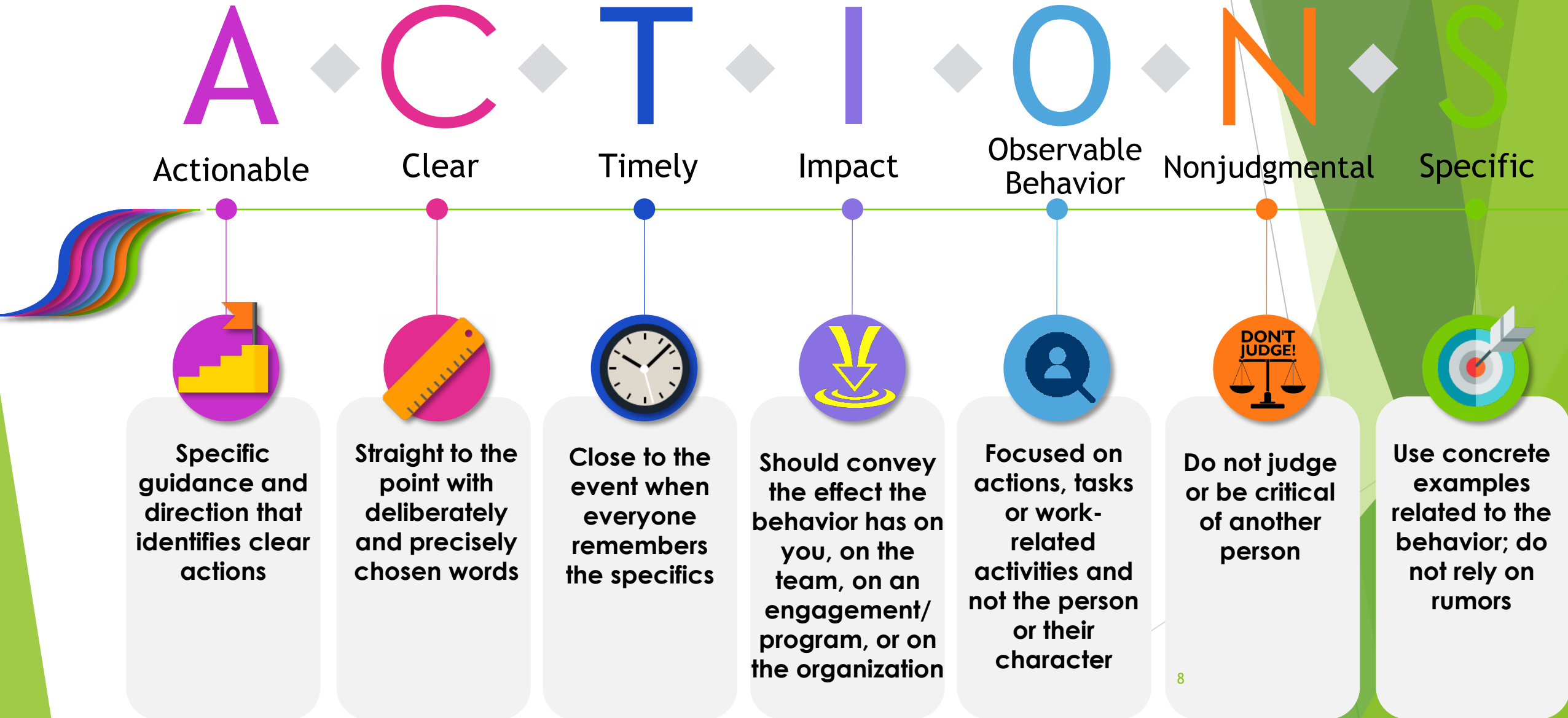
- ▶ Feedback can be difficult for the giver
  - ▶ People struggle to give direct feedback so they may end up being vague
  - ▶ The opposite of radical candor → ruinous empathy
  - ▶ It can be hard for the giver to know what will resonate with the receiver
  - ▶ It can be hard to initiate if feedback isn't a regular practice

# Why is feedback hard?

- ▶ Feedback can be triggering for the receiver
  - ▶ Truth triggers
  - ▶ Relationship triggers
  - ▶ Identity triggers
  - ▶ Perfectionist mindset

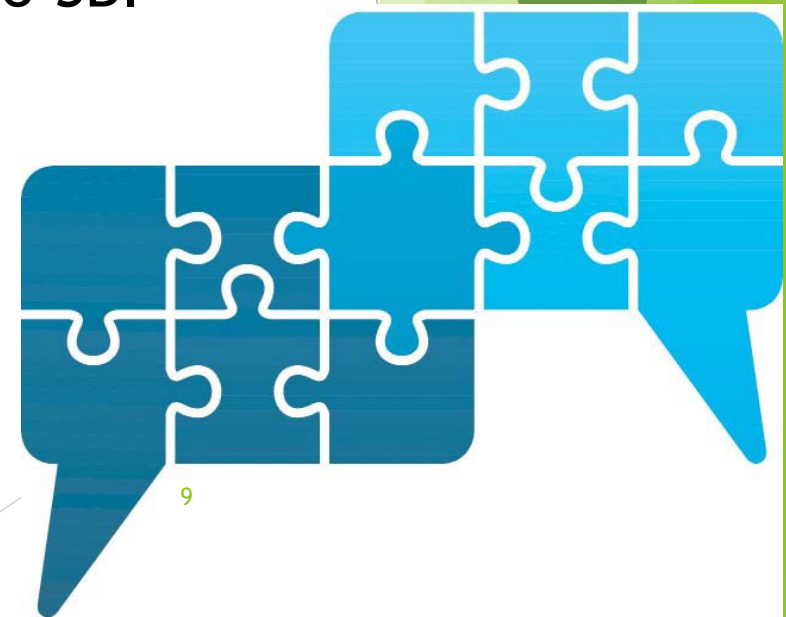


# Characteristics of Effective Feedback



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

- ▶ **Step 1:** Set the stage for a feedback conversation
- ▶ **Step 2:** Use the Center for Creative Leadership's (CCL) Situation ~ Behavior ~ Impact (SBI) model to give/solicit feedback
- ▶ **Step 3:** Give the receiver an opportunity to respond to SBI
- ▶ **Step 4:** Determine solutions and agree on next steps



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

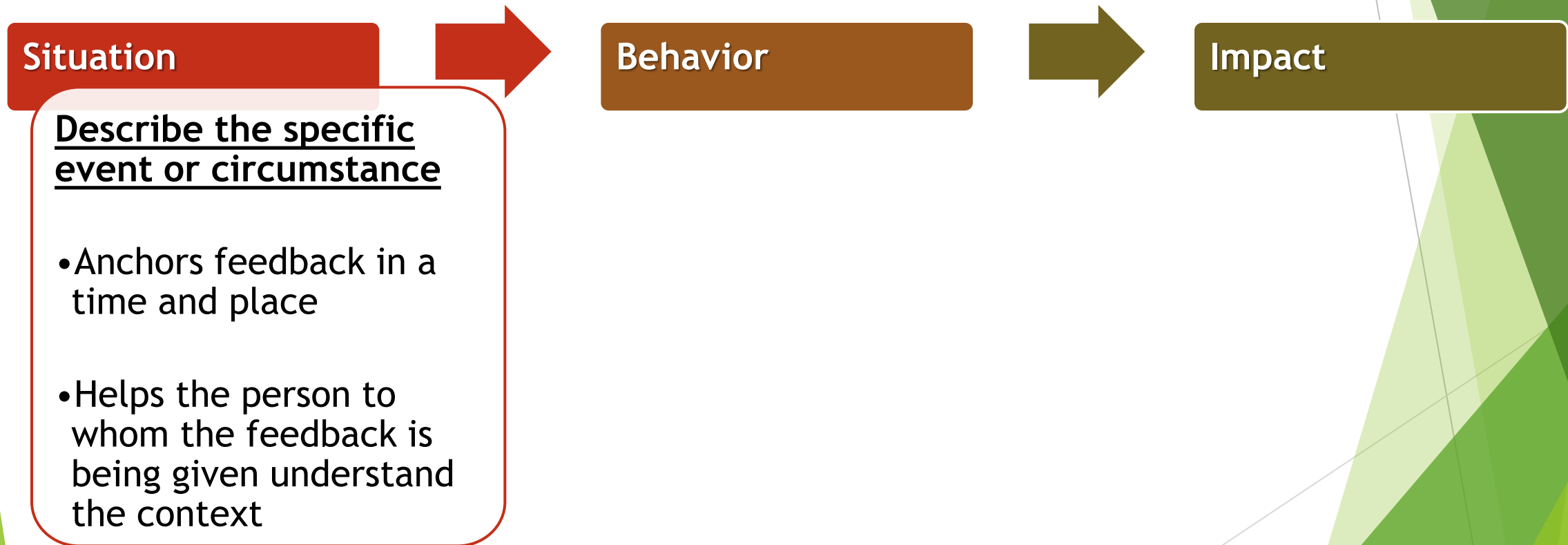
## Step 1: Set the stage for a feedback conversation.

- ▶ Plan for feedback
- ▶ Make sure the timing is appropriate or ask for permission
- ▶ Determine when and where
- ▶ State your positive intention and purpose for the feedback



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Step 2: Use CCL's SBI model to give/solicit feedback



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Step 2: Use CCL's SBI model to give/solicit feedback

### Situation

#### Describe the specific event or circumstance

- Anchors feedback in a time and place
- Helps the person to whom the feedback is being given understand the context

### Examples:

- ▶ In the meeting yesterday
- ▶ In the kitchen this morning when we were discussing...
- ▶ When you presented the project status update to the senior management team last Thursday...

### Avoid:

- ▶ Several times last week...
- ▶ You always.../ You never...
- ▶ Recently I saw you do...

# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Step 2: Use CCL's SBI model to give/solicit feedback

### Behavior

#### Describe the behavior

- Observable actions
  - Verbal comments
  - Nonverbal behaviors and signals
  - Mannerisms
- Don't assume you know what the other person was thinking

### Examples:

- ▶ He spoke at the same time another person was speaking.
- ▶ She did not follow up on the email after a week without a response and waited two weeks until her AIC reminded her
- ▶ She did not suggest or develop a well-defined methodology for analyzing the information
- ▶ He did not implement the edits and suggestions on the draft

### Avoid:

- ▶ He was rude during the meeting.
- ▶ She was lazy and not proactive
- ▶ She just doesn't get it
- ▶ He's being sloppy



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Incorrect:

1. Hey, you did a nice job in that presentation. The client loved it.

## Correct:

1. You **spoke clearly** with a cadence and tone that was engaging; you **included enough detail** to help the staff understand, but not so much as to overwhelm. You **answered their questions accurately** and they were **smiling** and **nodding** as you spoke.



2. You are not being independent and proactive enough and you're always late or slow to do things

2. You did not **develop a spreadsheet** to assess the information for **three weeks** until prompted by your manager and it was only **50% complete** after **two weeks**. Similarly, you did not **follow up** on the interview requests until prompted to do so.

# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Step 2: Use CCL's SBI model to give/solicit feedback

### Impact

Describe the impact on you, on coworkers, on an engagement/program, or on the organization

- What I (or others) think, feel, or do as a result of the behavior
- I saw... I heard you say... I felt... I thought...
- Is not an interpretation or judgment on motivation or intent

### Examples:

- ▶ When you did not acknowledge my comment, I felt excluded.
- ▶ Incorporating the director's edits to your objective in a timely fashion allowed your manager to complete their review and get it back to the director on time.
- ▶ Because you kept speaking over your team members in the meeting, they stopped talking and we did not have a chance to hear their ideas.

### Avoid:

- ▶ I felt you were not paying attention.
- ▶ You are doing great! I am proud of you.
- ▶ ...your rudeness caused the team to shut down...



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Incorrect:

1. You kicked butt, the director was impressed.

## Correct:

1. You not only represented the agency well, you gave the clients what they needed. Your performance means the team and Director feel confident giving you more of these opportunities in the future.



2. You screwed up and annoyed your team lead

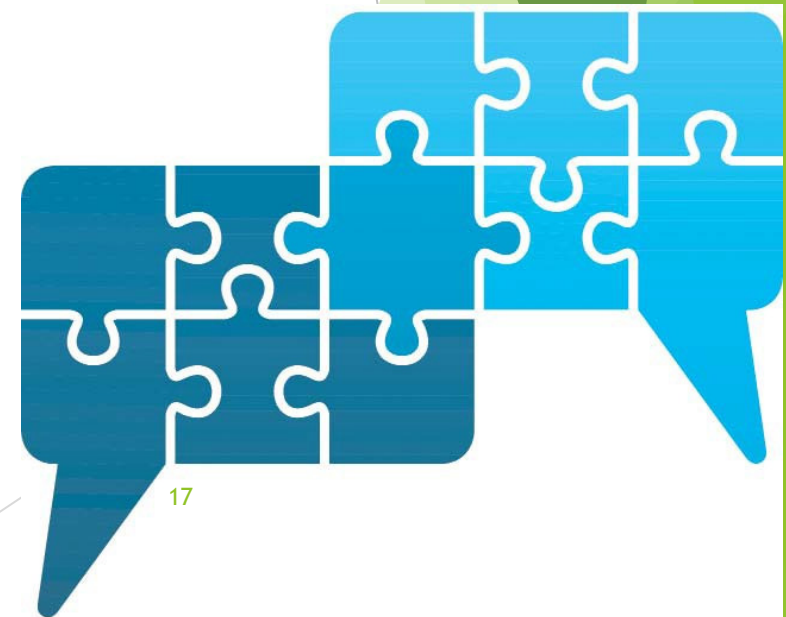
2. When you don't meet deadlines, it slows the engagement and can threaten long-run timelines; when you're not proactive, it requires the team lead to do parts of your work for you and spend time and energy reminding you to<sup>16</sup> do things.



# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

## Step 3: Give the receiver an opportunity to respond to SBI

- ▶ Remain silent; let the receiver digest the information
- ▶ Listen to the response and consider what is said
- ▶ Ask an open-ended question, if appropriate
- ▶ Be open to scheduling a follow-up meeting

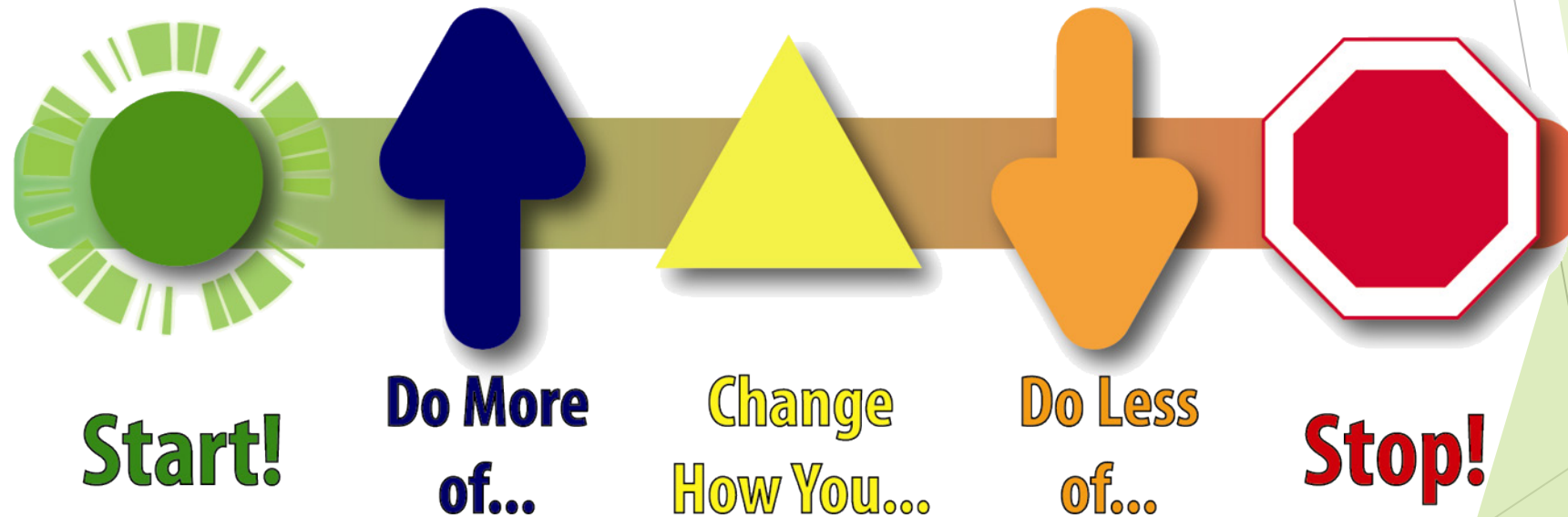


# Common Traps to Avoid While Remaining Silent

Key Traps	Consequences
Backing out	The receiver will lose/not hear the message
Pulling in your experiences prematurely	The giver takes ownership away from the receiver
Pulling in your vulnerability prematurely	The giver presumes to know what the receiver is experiencing or thinking
Giving advice prematurely	The advice may not match the receiver's reality

# Elements of an Effective Feedback Conversation

**Step 4: Determine solutions and agree on next steps.**





# Giving Feedback - Best Practices

Do:

- ▶ Give a heads up and schedule a time; avoid ambushing
  - ▶ Consider incorporating feedback as a normal part of 1-1 agendas
  - ▶ Practice SBI with positive or reinforcing feedback
- ▶ Make sure your feedback is specific (Use CCL's SBI)
- ▶ Focus on making it actionable- be clear about what you would like to see more of
- ▶ Thank the person for listening and being open to your feedback
- ▶ Give the space to respond and change; acknowledge changes





# Building the Habit: Feedback Culture

Feedback is a practice, not an event

- ▶ You can start anytime—be transparent about your goal to get better at giving or soliciting feedback
- ▶ Commit to practicing with regular, low-stakes feedback
  - ▶ Practice SBI with positive, reinforcing feedback
  - ▶ Power through the awkwardness, just practice
  - ▶ Make it a standing agenda item for 1-1s
- ▶ Solicit feedback (including upward feedback) regularly





# When to Give Feedback

## Any time/during regular 1-1s

- Appreciation/strengths based feedback
- Reflective feedback (what do you think is going well/not well)
- Positive SBI feedback on audit tasks
- Constructive SBI feedback on audit tasks
- Feedback on how someone is responding to feedback

## During expectation setting

- Preferences for delegation (2-way feedback)
- How you prefer to give/receive feedback (e.g. how frequently you would like feedback and how you prefer it to be given)
- Expectations around independence, support, and guidance
- How performance expectations relate to career goals

## During review discussions

- Specific goals or results that have been achieved including what has gone well and what could be done differently or better
  - Review of some specific examples from prior regular feedback
- Discussion of the feedback relationship—what has been effective, where is more/different feedback needed, is feedback being implemented



# When to Give Upward Feedback

## Any time

- How you are being supported to do your job
- What you appreciate about how you are supervised or managed
- What you would like your supervisor/supervisor to do differently
- How your supervisor can continue to support you to achieve your goals or results

## During expectation setting

- How you prefer work to be delegated to you
- What support you need to achieve work/life balance
- What support or guidance you need on particular tasks
- How you prefer to receive feedback (e.g. how frequently you would like feedback and how you prefer it to be given)

## During review discussions

- How you have been supported to achieve your goals or results including what has gone well and what could be done differently or better
- What support you need to implement feedback



# Building the Habit: Feedback Culture

Leaders: model soliciting and receiving feedback!

- ▶ *How well do I communicate expectations and priorities to you?*
- ▶ *What's one thing I could do to make our team meetings more effective?*
- ▶ *Do you feel you have the resources and support you need from me to succeed?*
- ▶ *How can I better support your professional growth?*
- ▶ *Is there anything I could do differently to help you feel more empowered in your role?*
- ▶ *Do you feel your input is valued when decisions are made?*
- ▶ *How can I involve you more in shaping our team's direction?*
- ▶ *What's one thing I could change to make collaboration easier?*
- ▶ *What's one thing I do that helps you perform at your best?*
- ▶ *What's one thing I do that makes your work harder?*
- ▶ *If you were in my position, what would you do differently?*



# Tips for soliciting helpful, candid feedback from supervisors

- ▶ Get clear on what type of feedback you are seeking and why
- ▶ Ask permission and set up a time- don't ambush
  - ▶ If you plan to use your 1-1, let the person know in advance
  - ▶ Consider sending your questions in advance to give the person time to think
  - ▶ Consider asking for regular/repeat feedback or career development convos
- ▶ Set the stage with information about the type of feedback you are seeking
- ▶ Ask specific questions and use the Situation-Behavior-Impact model when you can
- ▶ Commit to listening with curiosity rather than planning a rebuttal or a defense
  - ▶ Probe for detail and examples if you're not clear on how the feedback translates into action

# Q&A

- ▶ What questions do you have?
- ▶ Are there any examples or challenges people would like to share?
- ▶ What would you like a deeper dive on? Further topics to explore...

**What is one new thing  
you will try?**

**How will you ensure  
that you continue to  
focus on giving  
feedback?**



# Resources

## Books:

[Thanks for the Feedback by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen](#)  
[Radical Candor by Kim Scott](#)

## Watch Radical Candor in Six Minutes:

[Radical Candor In 6 Minutes With Kim Scott - YouTube](#)

## Watch Tedx Talk:

[How to lead with radical candor | Kim Scott | TEDxPortland - YouTube](#)

## Other ideas:

- Get coaching on feedback
- Start a feedback reading group with colleagues

