

Clean Feedback Ceremony

A simple method for providing feedback in a manner more likely to produce positive emotional energy for the participants.

Purpose

To provide feedback to another person in a manner which makes it easier for them to receive and take specific action.

Preparation

The Feedback Giver needs to know the clean feedback structure. The Clean Feedback Giver needs to carefully note what they have actually seen or heard in order to provide feedback.

Participants (roles)

Clean Feedback Giver, Clean Feedback Recipient

Pattern

Open—The Clean Feedback Recipient requests feedback on a subject. Or, the Clean Feedback Giver asks the Clean Feedback Recipient if they would like feedback on a subject.

Execute—The Clean Feedback Giver presents their feedback broken carefully into three distinct categories:

1. Evidence, observable behavior the Clean Feedback Giver actually saw or heard.
2. Inference, the meaning the Clean Feedback Giver makes up from the evidence.
3. Impact, the effect the Inference had on the Clean Feedback Giver or the situation.

Close—The Clean Feedback Ceremony may be complete once the Impact has been stated. The Clean Feedback Giver and Recipient may choose to discuss the feedback before closing the ceremony.

Product

A spoken statement from the Clean Feedback Giver. Actions Items, if any, for the Clean Feedback Recipient.

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Tips

Evidence is essential as it helps the Clean Feedback Recipient know what specific actions are being addressed.

The Clean Feedback Provider will benefit from formal training in Clean Language and Systemic Modelling™.

Evidence is provided without judgement. Evidence is not declaring something good or bad, it is simply a statement of the exact behavior observed. “You did a poor job running the meeting,” is a judgement, not evidence. “You did a good job running the meeting,” is a judgement, not evidence. An example of evidence is the following observation, “I noticed you started all three meetings I attended today five minutes after the stated meeting time.” Another example observation, “I noticed you started all three meetings today exactly on time.” Both of these are statements of observations, not judgements.

Inference is what the Clean Feedback Giver thought about when they saw the evidence. Frequently, the inference is a story the Clean Feedback Giver makes up based upon the evidence. The story may or may not be accurate, true, or even reasonable. Still, it is the story the Clean Feedback Giver is telling themselves and hence it is important to surface in the Clean Feedback Ceremony. An inference might be “I assume I will always sit around and wait during the first 5-minutes of your meetings.”

Impact is the Clean Feedback Giver’s description of the effect the evidence and inference have had on them, or the situation. For example, “I feel that my time is wasted at the beginning of your meetings, and I should not try to get to your meetings on time.”

The core pattern for this ceremony comes from the book *From Contempt to Curiosity: Creating the Conditions for Groups to Collaborate Using Clean Language and Systemic Modelling* by Caitlin Walker. Clean Language is a questioning technique developed by psychotherapist David Grove.

Caitlin Walker provides training in Clean Language and Systemic Modelling™.

Additional reading on Clean Language is *Clean Language: Revealing Metaphors and Opening Minds* by Wendy Sullivan and Judy Rees. Also *Metaphors in Mind: Transformation Through Symbolic Modelling* by James Lawley & Penny Tompkins.