

## **The Power of Accepting Feedback (Part 1 of 4)**

*By Jeremy Lee*

There are only two types of people in the world, those who are able to appreciate feedback and those unable to handle feedback. So which are you?

Before answering that, let us understand what is feedback and its characteristics. Feedback occurs under two distinct situations; when someone reveals to you how they perceive (their feelings and thoughts) you to be. Likewise feedback also occurs when a person points out his or her observations of your behavior or attitude towards something, someone or in a particular situation. In both situations the feedback given will be thoughts, feelings and observations on you.

The first characteristic of feedback is its neutrality; it is neither positive nor negative. It is what the person who gave it perceives or observes on you. Similarly feedback does not have the power to hurt or benefit a person. Ultimately it is the perception of the recipient of the feedback that determines the feedback outcome; a compliment or a criticism. Hence feedback does not control a person; it is how the person allows it to control him or her that allows feedback to be positive or negative, hurtful or a compliment.

Lastly feedback can be real or unreal. The feedback given to you can be false when it is said out of spite or deceit. On the other hand, the feedback given to you can be real as it reveals something you are not aware of or it confirms something that you are already aware of. Therefore feedback when given with no ill-intention can be extremely beneficial to oneself. When we take this type of feedback as a reality check and act on it then we can use it to improve ourselves.

Learning to accept feedback can reveal a lot about one's character. People who are able to accept feedback are usually more self-assured and has greater emotional control of themselves compared to those who react negatively to feedback. If one is able to accept constructive feedback without being defensive or uncomfortable, it reveals a person who is open and constantly seeking to improve his weakness and enhance his strength.

Additionally learning to accept feedback gracefully will allow for greater trust and honesty to prevail as others will be more willing to share their thoughts and feelings about us to us. Their inner thoughts, feelings and observations will be communicated to us without evasiveness or censorship. They will speak their mind and reveal their feelings. This type of openness greatly strengthens any relationship and improves communication drastically, thereby leading to greater effectiveness and productivity.

So learn to accept feedback, make it a process of self evaluation and improvement.

In the next article we will examine what we can do when feedback is provided to us. This will be followed by how to give feedback and lastly an article on using feedback in the workplace).