# Feedback without the Cringe

**Your team are asking for feedback but you don't know where to start?**

**The thought of delivering bad news makes you cringe all over?**

## THE PURPOSE

When people talk about feedback, we instantly think of the negative. Not all feedback is bad! Whether positive or developmental, you should have a framework!

In an ever evolving business landscape, companies that prioritize feedback will remain agile, high performing and well positioned for highly engaged teams.

Giving feedback takes practise. Learning to manage your own emotions, say what is needed in a way that lands and managing your employees emotions takes a lot of care and consideration.

Don't get consumed by your own emotions, or theirs, and deliver feedback without the cringe with my take on the SBI framework to get you thinking about the topic, the conversation, the impact and the solution.

The purpose of using a framework for feedback is to provide:

- Clarity
- Consistency
- Positive repetition or remediation

## THE FRAMEWORK
**S**ituation
**B**ehavior
**I**mpact
**S**olution (added bonus by Laura Lillie Coaching)

## THE PROCESS
Before delivering feedback, good or for improvement, go through this framework by preferably writing or typing out each heading. This will allow you to go through the motions of gathering your thoughts.
As you get more comfortable with the framework, you can learn to go through the motions mentally.

### The Situation:
- Describe the situation, and be specific about when, where and what occurred.
- No hearsay or assumptions
- Avoid generalities like "last week" or "Remember when we spoke a while back".
- Instead use specific dates and times for example: *"during the 10am team meeting on Friday Jan 4, last week…"*

### The Behaviour
- Refer to the specific observable action or behaviour that needs to be addressed
- Stick to the facts only and do not insert your opinion or personal judgements
- Do not assume you know what the other person was thinking at the time

For example:

*"You were interrupting the conversation during the team meeting"*
*Vs*
*"You butted in whilst I was talking to the team, and it was really annoying"*

**The Impact**
- Describe the effect and results that the behavior had on you, them or others involved
- The person is more likely to absorb what you are saying if you describe exactly how things happened
- Share the reality of the situation and the effect it had
- Be open to sharing the consequences of the behavior as well.

For example:

*"It was frustrating for both me and the team to be interrupted. It prevents others from speaking and sharing their ideas which affects the team negatively in speaking openly in future."*

*OR*

*"I was really impressed how you handled that objection from that client without the support from the technical team. You are seen as a confident sales person by the client"*

**The Solution**
- After going through the situation, the behavior and the impact; it is important to discuss the solution
- This could be to either stop, start or continue the behavior
- Ask open ended questions to get their initial response for a solution
- They are in charge of how they conduct themself, so encourage them to provide a solution to increase accountability
- Depending on their seniority, you might need to use specific questions to encourage a solution.

For example:
- *What do you feel is the solution to prevent this from reoccurring*
- *What do you feel is needed to help you maintain this behavior/outcome/result*
- *Could it be helpful for us to discuss this more regularly during 1-1s*

**EXAMPLE CONVERSATION:**

**Manager:** (Opening summary of the situation) At [Company] we have a strong culture of 2 way feedback as this is super important for us to develop and improve. Feedback is important for both personal and professional development and supports overall career development. With that in mind, I want to speak to you today about some feedback and something I've noticed over the last three weeks. When I've offered constructive criticism or feedback during our weekly 1-1s, your tone and body language becomes defensive. Your sentences are short and you face the floor more, which is unlike you. I wanted to get your perspective on how you feel when I deliver feedback.

**Employee:** (defensive) What are you talking about? I'm always open to feedback.

**Manager:** (using the S-B-I model) The specific situation I'm referring to is when I gave you some feedback on your last project, during our 1:1 on Friday and the Friday before and you seemed to become defensive. The behavior I observed was that you didn't seem open to hearing the feedback, and instead, you became very quiet and dismissive. For example, shorter answers and some eye rolling.
 The impact of this was that I couldn't offer feedback that could help you grow and develop your skills.

**Employee:** (still defensive) I don't believe that's true. I'm always open to feedback for improvement.

**Manager:** (remains patient in B-I ) I understand, however it's important to remember that feedback is not a personal attack. It's an opportunity for growth. When you shut down and become defensive, it can make it challenging for us to have open and honest conversations that benefit both you and the company.

**Employee:** (reflecting) I see what you mean. I didn't realize that my behavior was coming across that way.

**Manager:** (using Solution) I didn't want to assume you knew how it was coming across. It's essential that we can have open and honest conversations about areas of improvement. I appreciate your willingness to listen and reflect today. Moving forward, what do you feel we can both do to continue to support open communication around feedback?

**Employee:** It would be great to have a regular feedback time in our 1:1 so it is more structured rather than a side conversation. Also if we can use our 1-1 tool to record notes, so that I can reflect on the feedback after the conversation.

**Manager:** That's a great idea. Can you add a weekly agenda item to your 1:1 document so we have time during our 1:1 each week for feedback both ways? Great suggestion to ensure that we can have productive conversations that benefit both you and the company

## EVALUATION

- The manager was able to effectively identify the specific situation, the behavior observed, and the impact of the situation
- The model helped to keep the conversation focused on the issue
- The manager provided a clear structure for the feedback
- The manager also invited the employee to provide a solution as well as ownership of making it happen each week
- There was an opportunity for 2 way feedback
- The manager showed patience and empathy towards the employee's defensive reaction, defusing it by explaining the impact of their behavior.

**Now it's your turn to get prepared. Go through the framework and get prepared to deliver feedback without the cringe and with confidence.**

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I guarantee that you will come away with fundamental management skills and tools that you wished they had sooner, that drive accountability and results that enable you to emerge as the leader you want to be.

Let's Connect