

AGILE BASED COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

ABC Management

Output 1 / Activity 4

Article: Feedback

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1. Feedback within the context of competency-based management

The feedback process involves several parties and is a substantial part of competency management. It is crucial for giving credibility to a competence-based assessment and creating impactful Individual Development Plans (IDP). It is intended to raise awareness about how we are doing things, in order to strengthen those that are performed correctly and those that could be improved.

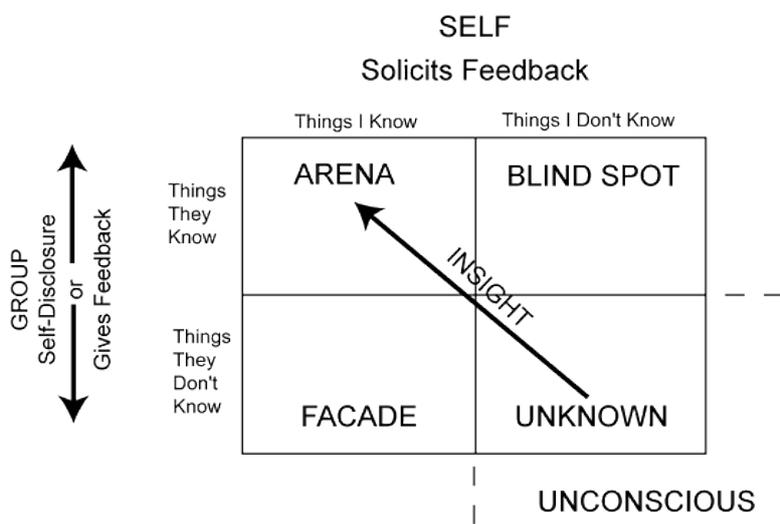
The reality is that people react in different ways when they hear somebody saying: "Let me give you some feedback?" It can even generate tension, fears and some anxiety.

2. My perceptions vs. Others perceptions: The Johari Window

Through the feedback process, there is an exchange of perceptions since the information we give tells others how their behaviour affects us, how we feel, and perceive (feedback and self-disclosure).

Feedback is also a reaction by others, as their feelings and perceptions give us information on how our behaviour affects them (receiving feedback).

One of the most popular models that explains the process of giving and receiving feedback is the so called "Johari window"





The first quadrant, the "Arena," contains things that we know about ourselves and about which the group knows, too. The Arena increases in size as the level of trust increases between individuals.

The second quadrant, the "Blind Spot," contains information that we do not know about ourselves but of which the group may know. When we begin participating in a group, we are not aware of the information communicated to the group. Non-verbal and para-verbal communications are the source of this knowledge for the group.

The third quadrant, the "Façade" or "Hidden Area," contains information that we know about ourselves but the group does not know and we keep it hidden. We may fear that if the group knew it, this might be negative for us.

The fourth quadrant, the "Unknown," contains things that neither we nor the group knows about us. This is our unconscious area. We may learn about it through feedback. The internal boundaries of this pane change depending on the amount of feedback sought and received.

3. How to give constructive feedback?

Feedback must be constructive. This means that when it is given, the sender must consider only the fact that it produces a positive impact on the receiver, in terms of his/her feelings and performance at the workplace. Therefore it is recommended to be cautious about the following aspects, before giving feedback:

- Confidence and safety: Feedback usually will only be productive if it's focused on making the other person feel good. Thus, While giving feedback it is necessary to create the right environment, especially when the receiver is aware that he/she is being assessed and therefore expecting to hear information about his/her areas of improvement.
- Positivity: It is proven that positive feedback highly stimulates the "reward centers" of the brain. It prepares the person to other kind of messages, without being defensive. As a proper feedback after assessment usually includes positive and negative remarks, giving as much positive (or more) as negative feedback.
- Specificity: The more specific is feedback the more open is the receiver. Any ambiguity raises questions, doubts and a certain level of rejection.
- Right moment and frequency: Choosing the right moment to give feedback is a key question for it to be productive and giving it frequently, create a higher impact and turns the future ones into a more relaxed and confident exercise.



- No overloading: Giving feedback about a short number of items is the best way to makes it productive. Select on the 2 or 3 points to avoid confusion about what needs to be improved and lack of focus.

4. The six steps method for giving feedback

Step 1: Describe the purpose of the feedback indicating what will be covered and its level of importance.

Step 2: Describe specifically the observations that have been made. This requires talking about specific actions that took place (when, who, where, results). The sender must only involve what he/she has personally observed.

Step 3: Describe own feelings about the situation so the other person can better appreciate the impact their actions are having.

Step 4: Give the feedback receiver the opportunity to react to the feedback and listen to all him/her.

Step 5: Offer specific suggestions. This shows that we are moving to the “Next step” (How to improve the situation?).

Step 6: Summary of feedback. This should be a summary of Actions and not the negative. The end should be a positive note, by communicating trust and confidence in the ability to improve the situation.