Creating All-Star Performers

The Power of **Effective Feedback**

Dynamic Solutions Series

by Timothy I. Thomas

Creating All-Star Performers: The Power of Effective Feedback
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All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

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Creating a Team of All-Star Performers

What role does feedback play in creating a team of all-star performers? Consider the definition again by reviewing the chart below:

When feedback is …	Then feedback will …
… open and honest	• Improve communication between the two parties • Validate the employee
… held as a two-way conversation	• Increase mutual respect between the two parties • Improve understanding of how each person thinks and approaches situations • Foster productive collaboration
… directed at performance issues	• Clarify exactly what the employee is doing incorrectly or ineffectively • Increase the employee's sense of ownership of the situation
… specific in its nature	• Increase an employee's understanding of the ramifications of their behavior
… clear about future desired behaviors	• Motivate the employee to achieve their highest potential

The positive outcomes of giving effective feedback are astonishing and oftentimes bring about company-wide improvements. By accomplishing the above benefits, effective feedback can:

- Increase productivity
- Increase sales
- Decrease conflict
- Streamline processes
- Increase creativity
- Improve delegation

- Improve efficiency
- Uncover training needs
- Improve the bottom line
- Improve customer service
- Develop new skills
- Improve problem-solving abilities

If Feedback Is Such a Powerful Tool, Why Don't More Leaders Use It?

If feedback can do all that for us – and more – why don't more leaders use it? Below are the top four reasons I have discovered in my work with companies of all sizes. Do any apply to you?

<u>Reason #1</u>: *"Why should I?"*

The first reason, "Why should I?" is most often given when we are talking about **reinforcing feedback**: that is, feedback that recognizes a job well done, and seeks to encourage repeat behavior.

In this case, leaders have often told me, "I'm paying these people to work! Why should I have to tell them they're doing a good job all the time?"

My response to this "old-school" philosophy is this: imagine you're in the stadium watching your favorite team and they score. What do you do? You yell and cheer and wave your arms … along with thousands of other people! Well, why are you doing that? Members of that team are also being paid (often paid outrageous sums of money!). Why are you cheering them? They're just doing their job!

But you do cheer them – time and again. Why? Because you are giving them positive, reinforcing feedback. You want them to know you are behind them, supporting them, rooting for them. Your employees have the same needs!

<u>Reason #2</u>: *"I don't like confrontation."*

Reinforcing feedback is one of two types of feedback – the other is re-directing feedback. **Re-directing feedback** is feedback that seeks to change negative behavior or performance.

Re-directing feedback situations are often considered a battlefield, with the combatants armed to the teeth. When you enter into a feedback session with that mindset, it's no wonder you're on the defensive, with your adrenaline running high.

It's vital to remove that image from your mind: feedback is not a fight. It is a collaboration in every sense of the word. You aren't looking to defeat an enemy; you want to forge a solid and positive relationship and help your employee to grow and improve their performance. The giving of feedback, even difficult, re-directing feedback, is a gift for the recipient.

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Reason #3: *"I don't know how."*

Ignorance is never bliss. In fact, it's a prison. And giving effective feedback isn't instinctive: people don't know how to do it naturally. Fortunately, by the time you finish this e-book, you will have everything you need to know to give powerful feedback that can transform your business.

Reason #4: *"If I wait long enough, maybe the problem will go away."*

Trust me – it won't.

About the Author

Timothy I. Thomas established Makarios Consulting in 2003 as a natural outgrowth of his extensive experience and educational background. He graduated in 1987 Magna Cum Laude from the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. From there, he went on to attain a Master of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary (1990), and a Master of Science degree in Training and Organization Development from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia (2002).

Since 1998, Mr. Thomas has transformed organizations working as a leadership development trainer, executive coach, and change management expert. Mr. Thomas also has expertise in needs assessment, performance consulting, training design and delivery, 360-degree appraisal processes, and employee surveys. He brings to his clients a complete understanding of corporate culture and business processes as well as keen financial acumen, having himself been a Vice President at two international banking institutions.

Mr. Thomas' clients include Fast 500 companies such as Melillo Consulting, Inc., a computer consulting firm; internationally recognized industry leaders such as Catalent Pharma Solutions, Rohm and Haas Company, Lincoln Electric Company, and pharmaceutical giant Merck & Co., Inc.; and rapidly emerging companies such as Cadient Group.