

FEEDBACK IN FIVE

the workbook

A guide to giving honest, kind, and
effective feedback - fast

BY DR. SARAH HOWLING



You're IN THE
RIGHT PLACE
IF...



1. You struggle to give feedback because it feels uncomfortable, like a slog, and it just takes too much time.
2. You've had a bad experience in the past and you're worried about having another, so you either find yourself dancing around issues or you dive straight in, say it as quickly as possible, and run!
3. You avoid giving feedback because you're worried about being misunderstood, making things worse, and you want to be liked.

Welcome

Use GROWTH and GAIN to make your feedback kind, fast, specific, and effective.

Do you struggle to give feedback because it feels uncomfortable, like a slog, and just takes too much time? If so, then take heart – you're not alone! I know this because all of us, myself included, have to face the challenge of feedback when on our own path to achieving our leadership potential. That's why my clients seek me out today.

I'm Dr Sarah Howling and I created the Connection Revolution® and Catalytic Conversations™ to revolutionise how we think and feel about leadership and challenging conversations – feedback being one such kind.

This workbook and video training will show you how to give effective feedback in just 5 minutes – even if you're worried about being misunderstood or making things worse, and you want to be liked!

I'm cheering you on,
Sarah

Why is feedback important?



Feedback helps us grow

Without feedback, we don't learn.
And without learning, we don't
grow.



Feedback shows we care

Recognition, encouragement,
observations, and redirection show
that we want others to
become their best selves.



Silence can be costly and dangerous

Feedback helps us avoid risk and,
when done well, is an opportunity
to strengthen communication,
relationships, and results.

GROWTH Principles

Use GROWTH to make your feedback kind, fast, specific, and effective.

My connected and catalytic Feedback approach works because it follows the GROWTH principles – just incorporating one of these principles into your feedback can have a significant impact.

G GAIN PERMISSION

Permission is the unsung hero of communication. When you have to give feedback, asking permission helps people relax and be more open to listening.

R RECOGNISE STRENGTHS

Each of us has natural talents that are easier for us to leverage in order to create impact. Think about how you can inspire, strengthen, and help someone be their best self.

O OUTCOME (AND SOLUTION) FOCUSED

Keep feedback focused on the solution or the desired behaviour instead of what's currently ineffective or seen as a weakness. Make sure the person is clear on what to do differently (versus simply what to stop doing)

W WITH EXAMPLES

Focus on the behaviour, not the person. The most helpful feedback gives specific examples and doesn't generalise.

T TIMING

Feedback is most impactful in real-time or as soon as possible after the moment occurs. Frequency also matters – don't save feedback up to deliver all at once – it will simply overwhelm the receiver.

H HUMAN, HUMBLE, & HELPFUL

Be aware of your own feelings. Consider your intention for having the conversation. Make sure your goal is to help the other person learn, grow, and succeed.

Building the feedback habit

Can you see how feedback that includes the GROWTH principles can make things so much easier for you? And, how even if you're short of time, it's possible to use the framework to give feedback well?

Feedback is a muscle that can be strengthened through timely and frequent conversations.



It's better to have twenty 5-minute conversations vs five 20-minute ones!



Aim for a ratio of at least 3:1 in favour of positive feedback.

Faster, more frequent feedback conversations also mean you can better balance feedback over time, so there's more appreciative feedback and praise than criticism.

Not every conversation can nor should be short, for example,

- × If it's a significant or sensitive issue.
- × If you know the person may struggle with the feedback.
- × If it's not the first time you've spoken to someone about the matter.



Ask yourself:

'What kind of conversation does this need to be?'

The GAIN framework at a glance

G GET PERMISSION

Give a sense of agency to the receiver by asking if it's ok to have the conversation.

A ACTION

Share the concrete action you personally observed.

I IMPACT

Share the impact of the action and most meaningful consequence

N NEXT STEPS

Make a request or ask a question to invite the receiver into the conversation.

*Use GAIN to make your
feedback kind, fast, specific,
and effective.*

And now for more detail...

This could sound like:

G GET PERMISSION

Ask for permission but be prepared to accept a 'no'!

- I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us to work together more effectively. Is now a good time to talk?
- May I tell you what's coming up for me?
- Can I make a suggestion?

A ACTION

Share a non-blameful, non-judgemental description of the receiver's behaviour.

- When you _____ (observable behaviour, concrete example).

I IMPACT

Share the effect of that behaviour on the speaker and the most meaningful consequence.

- The impact is _____
- I feel _____
- I think _____

N NEXT STEPS

Ask a question or share your idea for next steps – bring the other person into a dialogue.

- Would you be willing to _____?
- How might we _____?
- So I'd like to _____

How it works in practice...

Here are some examples:

DEVELOPMENTAL FEEDBACK

When arguments happen during team meetings, like this morning (**action**), I notice we lose focus and waste time (**impact**). So I'd like us to be more collaborative about resolving differences of opinion so we can get more done together (**impact**). How can we raise and address concerns without arguing (**next steps**)?

POSITIVE FEEDBACK & PRAISE

Your presentation this morning was informative and challenging, yet fun and engaging for the participants (**action**). You've inspired me and I'd like to create sessions like this too (**impact**). Would you be willing to have a meeting with me to share some tips for designing this type of session (**next steps**)?

*Use GROWTH and GAIN to
make your feedback kind, fast,
specific, and effective.*



Putting it into Action

*Making Feedback in Five
Work For You*

BUILDING SELF-AWARENESS

The more self-awareness you can build about your own relationship with feedback – both giving and receiving – the better.

1. Think back to a challenging or difficult conversation you had with a direct report. What specific issue or conflict were you addressing? How did you handle the situation? How did you feel before, during, and after giving feedback?

2. Now think about a time you received difficult feedback from someone. How did you react? What did you do with the feedback? Was it constructive?

3. Reflect on both of these experiences. What made them challenging for you specifically? Have they influenced how you give and receive feedback today? How so?

Building the positive feedback habit

Identify someone you'll give appreciative feedback to within the next 48 hours. They could be colleagues, friends, or family.

1. Who have you identified and what have you observed this person doing well? Remember to stick to description and observable facts.

2. What impact has the action had?

3. What question will you ask them to invite them into the dialogue?

4. Write out your GAIN statement (and don't forget the GROWTH principles).

Building the developmental feedback habit

Identify a conversation have you been avoiding or you need to have.

1. Who have you identified and what action has prompted the feedback? Remember to stick to description and observable facts. Be specific.

2. What impact has the action had? Again, remember to stick to facts and be specific.

3. What would you like the person to do instead and what impact would this have?

4. What question will you ask them to invite them into the dialogue?

5. Write out your GAIN statement (and don't forget the GROWTH principles).

Final Thoughts

While you're getting more comfortable and confident in giving Feedback in Five and using the GROWTH and GAIN models, remember practice really does make progress. Communication, no matter how well-intentioned and planned, can sometimes be messy – so be kind and gentle to yourself.



Sarah is a leadership and communication mentor for leaders and changemakers like you.

With an MBA and a doctorate in successful leadership and over 25 years of combined experience in leadership development, business building, and transformative communication, not only do you get the benefit of her experience but it's grounded in research and real-world application. There isn't much she hasn't seen or navigated, and she's here to apply that know-how to support you.

I hope you've found this training useful. I'd love for you to get in touch and let me know how you get on. It would also be an honour to be in your corner to build your leadership and the conversations that matter.

So if you'd like more support, **HERE'S HOW
WE CAN WORK
TOGETHER** →

Programmes

The Courageous Conversation Catalyst

MENTORING AND STRATEGY
ONE SESSION

An intensive and powerful 1:1 service that gives you the support, words, and confidence you need to navigate an upcoming challenging conversation.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



The Connection Revolution 1:1 Experience

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A hybrid programme of coaching, mentoring, and training to reflect on, recharge, and reimagine your communication and leadership.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

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Revolutionise:

To change something so
that it is much better

Catalytic Conversations

TEAM CONSULTANCY AND
TRAINING

Whether it's improving dialogue and dynamics, strengthening processes and procedures, or helping your leaders lead – I partner with you through a blend of coaching, training, and facilitation to improve conversations and results.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

