

Feedforward Interview Protocol – Guide for Managers

Instructions: Feedforward is the opposite of feedback. It is a process of creating anticipation about future performance based on past successes. This interview guide is designed to enable a conversation between managers and their direct reports. The dialogue puts a spotlight on a positive work experience and helps employees determine their success code. This unique inquiry process when used effectively promotes a positive experience between managers and their employees.

It can be used as a complement or a replacement for performance appraisal reviews.

Benefits: Researchers designed this protocol for eliciting positive emotions, fostering bonding and creating internal transformations for the parties involved. Other benefits include: better alignment between employees needs and organizational practices, and improved relationships between managers and subordinate.

| | Directions | Protocol |
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| Step 1 | Eliciting a success story | |
| | Sit face to face with your employee, preferably without barriers such as papers or pens in your hands. | <i>“I our regular conversation we usually discuss a variety of topics. Today let’s talk about the more fulfilling and positive aspects of your work experiences.”</i> |
| | Elicit a specific experience or story and its details. | <i>“Would you share with me an experience you had at work during which you felt uplifted and content, even before you knew the results of your actions?”</i> |
| | Be an active listener. | Summarize/reflect story back to your employee, adding: <i>“Did I miss anything in the story?”</i> <i>“Do you want to add anything else?”</i> |
| | Ask if the interviewee would be happy to experience a similar process again? If No, ask for another experience that was uplifting. | <i>“Would you be happy to experience a similar process again?”</i> |
| | Probe further to uncover the details of the story and how the employee felt in the moment. | <i>“Describe the peak moment of this experience?”</i> |

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| | <p>If at any time your employee describes negative emotions or mixed feelings, start over by asking for another experience.</p> <p>If at any time the interviewee describes thoughts instead of emotions, acknowledge their thoughts and ask again about the emotions.</p> <p>Be an active listener.</p> | <p><i>"How did you feel at that moment?"</i></p> <p>Reflect the emotions back to the interviewee.</p> |
| Step II | Discovering their personal success code | |
| | <p>Elicit the underlying conditions that facilitated the employee's personal code for success. Reveal as many diverse conditions as possible.</p> | <p><i>"What strengths, capabilities and actions made this experience possible?"</i></p> |
| | <p>Probe further to understand the facilitating conditions in others.</p> | <p><i>"What did others do that enabled this experience?"</i></p> |
| | <p>Continue to probe to understand the facilitating conditions in the organization.</p> <p>Be an active listener. Encourage your employee to reveal more until all the conditions are accounted for.</p> | <p><i>"What were the conditions facilitated by the organizations that enabled this experience?"</i></p> <p>Reflect the conditions back to the employee. <i>"...and what else?"</i></p> |
| Step III | The feedforward question | |
| | <p>Make a statement to help your employee see the connection between past successes and future success.</p> | <p><i>"The conditions you have just described seem to be your personal code for reaching [insert the key achievement of the story]."</i></p> |
| | <p>Check for agreement and encourage your employee to leverage learning from past to create similar levels of success in the future.</p> | <p><i>"Think of your current actions, priorities and plans for the near future (e.g., next quarter), and consider to what extent they incorporate all of the conditions that led to your success. "</i></p> |

Adapted from Kluger, A. N., & Nir, D. (2010). The feedforward interview. *Human Resource Management Review*, 20, 235-246.