High impact feedback: Engaging students as proactive recipients of feedback information

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Feedback: what’s the use?

http://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2016/9/27-1

GUEST POST: Is Your Feedback Carefully Used, or Barely Perused?
Evidence-based practice

I like your hat.
Your face is ugly.
But your top is nice.
“Interesting. When we give feedback, we notice that the receiver isn’t good at receiving it. When we receive feedback, we notice that the giver isn’t good at giving it.”

Stone and Heen (2014, p. 3)
“We use the term ‘proactive recipience’ here to connote a state or activity of engaging actively with feedback processes, thus emphasizing the fundamental contribution and responsibility of the learner.”

Winstone, Nash, Parker, & Rowntree (2017)
‘It’d be useful, but I wouldn’t use it’: barriers to university students’ feedback seeking and recipience

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For feedback to be effective, it must be used by the receiver. Prior research has outlined numerous reasons why students’ use of feedback is sometimes limited, but there has been little systematic exploration of these barriers. In 11 activity-oriented focus groups, 31 undergraduate Psychology students discussed how they use assessment feedback. The data revealed many barriers that inhibit use of feedback, ranging from students’ difficulties with decoding terminology, to their unwillingness to expend effort. Thematic analysis identified four underlying psychological processes: awareness, cognisance, agency, and volition. We argue that these processes should be considered when designing interventions to encourage students’ engagement with feedback. Whereas the barriers identified could all in principle be removed, we propose that doing so would typically require – or would at least benefit from – a sharing of responsibility between teacher and student. The data highlight the importance of training students to be proactive receivers of feedback.

Keywords: feedback; interventions; student engagement; proactivity; communication; focus groups

Table 1. Main themes (psychological processes) and subthemes (barriers).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological process</th>
<th>Barriers to feedback recipience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) AWARENESS of what the feedback means, and its purpose</td>
<td>Inability to decode feedback</td>
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<td>Limited ‘feedback mental model’</td>
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<td>(2) COGNISANCE of strategies by which the feedback could be implemented</td>
<td>Poor knowledge of appropriate strategies</td>
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<td>Poor knowledge of available opportunities</td>
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<td>(3) AGENCY to implement strategies</td>
<td>Sense of disempowerment</td>
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<td>Difficulties with translating feedback into action</td>
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<td>(4) VOLITION to scrutinise feedback and implement strategies</td>
<td>Lack of proactivity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of receptiveness</td>
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Route mastery: can we turn student feedback into a two-way street?

We need a cultural shift in the process of providing comments on student work, argue Naomi Winstone and Robert Nash.

"The solution will require us collectively to create learning environments in which students' active participation in the process is expected and valued."

Characterising Proactive Recipience

• Satisfaction with feedback
• Academic attainment
• ‘Recipience Skills’
  • Reading feedback thoroughly
  • Understanding feedback terminology
  • Knowing appropriate steps to implement feedback
  • Putting feedback into practice
  • Motivation to make use of feedback

• Feedback Orientation (Linderbaum & Levy, 2010)
Feedback Orientation

- An individual's perceived competence to interpret and respond to feedback appropriately
- An individual's tendency to use feedback so as to be aware of others' views of oneself and to be sensitive to these views
- An individual's tendency to feel a sense of obligation to react to and follow up on feedback
- An individual's tendency to believe that feedback is useful in achieving goals or obtaining desired outcomes

Utility
Accountability
Social Awareness
Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy
Social Awareness
Utility
Accountability
Predictors of Recipience

- Satisfaction
- Academic Attainment
- Feedback Orientation: Utility
- Feedback Orientation: Accountability
- Feedback Orientation: Self-efficacy
- Recipience Skills

Current Feedback Recipience

Ideal Future Feedback Recipience

- Satisfaction
- Academic Attainment
- Feedback Orientation: Utility
- Feedback Orientation: Accountability
- Feedback Orientation: Self-efficacy
- Recipience Skills
Individual Differences

Students High in Conscientiousness: Higher Feedback Orientation (Self-Efficacy)

Students High in Neuroticism: Lower Feedback Orientation (Self-Efficacy)
Lower self-reported recipience skills
The Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit (DEFT)

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Thank you

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