

CAREER HEALTH

Feedback: How to Keep Everybody Happy

By Liz Koller

Feedback is an essential part of the design business, but it's also the trickiest. "Whether you are a professional designer, freelancer, client, friend or boss, learning to give and receive effective feedback is an essential skill," says Andrew Follett from designm.ag's blog. I have found a couple of other online articles that compile a list of dos and don'ts when it comes to giving feedback on a project from both ends of the spectrum (client and designer).

Why get Feedback in the first place?

1. Helps avoid mistakes - A costly problem caught early can be fixed.
2. Higher quality of work - Instead of getting stuck with a less than great project you can strive to make a higher quality result.
3. Keeps everybody on the same team - If everybody checks in on what's going, nobody will get a surprise with end result.
4. Newer or better ideas can get implemented - Sometimes great ideas come after approval of a design or project. This is a way you can get your ideas heard.

General Rules

1. Get out materials in advance - If everybody is prepared ahead of time, nobody is bombarded and put on the spot.
2. Keep things brief.
3. Provide feedback, but not discussions - Set up a time after the meeting for discussions.
4. Keep a recurring order with conversation - Give everybody an equal amount of time to talk.

Getting Feedback

1. Start by clarifying the objective - Make sure everybody is on the same page.
2. Be specific with the feedback you want.
3. Listen - Keep an open mind, because you're looking for a different insight in the first place.

4. Invite constructive criticism - Remember everybody is on the same team. Don't let your pride get in the way.

5. Take the advice - Not everything, but use what you get to make good changes to your project.

Giving Feedback

1. Be respectful - Follow the golden rule. Take into consideration who you're talking to and the situation at hand.
2. Be specific - Give examples with your feedback; the more specific, the better. If the person can get a better understanding why you want them to change something, they may more readily accept that change.
3. Provide justification - Give reasoning with your feedback. If they know why you feel that way, they may understand it better.
4. Balance the positives and negatives - Keeping a healthy balance of pros and cons keeps everyone happy.
5. "Have you Considered?" - Use this phrase to gently give another opinion. This gives the designer the opportunity to offer their reasoning and not feel "under attack".

Don'ts

- DON'T tell anyone what they can or can't provide feedback on - by doing so you defeat the purpose of having feedback.
- DON'T try to solve problems in the critique room - it's too time-consuming. This is a chance to hear other perspectives.
- DON'T be a jerk, be constructive - This mostly goes without saying. You're all on the same team.

All in all, when it comes to feedback, a respectful relationship is needed. If you respect each other's opinions and feelings as well as keep an open mind, getting feedback on projects doesn't have to be a nightmare.

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Snacking Smart at Work

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protein (at least 10g/serving) energy bars (such as Solo, Kashi Go Lean, Zone bars, or others) or energy shakes (Slimfast, South Beach, Boost, Ensure, etc.) in your desk or the refrigerator at work so that you always have at least one healthy option to choose from. With a little pre-planning, you are less likely to sabotage your healthy dietary efforts when you feel the need to have a snack at work.

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-Ralph Waldo Emerson



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VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money.

These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Snacking Smart at Work

By Elizabeth Daeinck

It's hard enough to think about preparing a lunch for work tomorrow, never mind a snack too! But what if you had a stash of healthy snack foods with you at work so you could snack healthy without having to prepare something the night before?

Snacks provide you with an extra little boost in the morning or late afternoon. When choosing a snack, make sure it contains both some protein and carbohydrates so that you are able to better maintain your blood sugar level and stave off your hunger until the next meal.

Here are a few examples of foods to have on-hand at work for snacking:

- Nuts: Although nuts are high in calories and fat, a handful goes a long way to keep you satisfied. They are power foods in that they also provide healthy fats along with some fiber.
- Apple and peanut butter: An apple is a classic example of a healthy food, Add some peanut butter for dipping, and you have a snack that is well-rounded with both healthy carbs and protein!
- Cottage cheese with 5 baby carrots: Cottage

cheese is a powerhouse for protein, so combined with carrots (or other vegetables such as celery, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, etc.) it provides a nice light, balanced snack.

- Yogurt and Fruit: Yogurt comes in different fruit flavors, but a lower sugar plain yogurt combined with fruit (berries are always a favorite) or granola can provide a satisfying snack.
- Crackers and cheese stick: A few crackers (4-5) with a cheese stick will provide you with a nice snack to help curb your appetite.
- Jerky and a fruit or vegetables: Beef or turkey jerky is a very portable snack coupled with cut vegetables or a peach or dried fruit.
- Edamame with Crackers: Soy beans (edamame) are a vegetable loaded with protein. When you have them with a high-fiber cracker like Triscuits, you have a simple, easy-to-prepare snack that you can keep at work.

The Bottom Line

Consider the snack options above to keep on-hand at work so that you take the guesswork out of snack time. If all else fails, keep a few higher

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

Achieving Happy Relationships: 5 Ingredients for the Mix

By ArticleStreet.Com

It is proven in the field of medicine that tender loving care can heal minor illnesses such as colds or fever. TLC can be attributed to love and it can also be directly relative to harmonious and happy relationships. Happy and meaningful relationships, may it be with friends or family or may it be platonic, romantic, etc. can really have a direct impact to your health.

One proven study from University of Virginia revealed that women whose husbands are emotionally involved in the relationships have happier marriages. It has also been found out that women craved more affection, time and understanding from their husbands than tangible things. Another study from Cornell University showed that those who are in committed and romantic relationships are happier than those who are not.

We are not dealing solely with romantic relationships. They are only one of the numerous kinds of relationships which can make people happy. Happy relationships are the product of a person's state of mind. You may be into a relationship, but you can choose to be, or not to be happy. Here are some ingredients needed to be incorporated into happy relationships:

1. Have a positive attitude! Face it, being a pessimist affects your whole being. How can you be happy when you have negative thinking and a bad attitude? You cannot build a happy relationship if there is no love within you. Start the day right! Smile and seize the day! Treasure every moment that passes and enjoy! Get a hobby, go into sports and

go through all the things that you are really fond of.

2. Always remember that happiness is not a future state. Many of us relate happiness to getting a good paying job, a handsome husband, a hot car and a beautiful home in the near future; but these things are not necessary in achieving happy relationships. Cultivate the attitude of

“Happiness is like perfume: You can't give it away without getting a little on yourself.”

-Anonymous

life appreciation. Be contented with what and who you are at present. Appreciate and savor each moment and always remember that you are blessed.

3. Do something useful. You can feel your importance when you are engaged in worthwhile activities. People often feel happy when they have contributed to the development of a community or a person's growth. Building small acts of kindness like giving up your seat on the bus can be a good way to achieve a feeling of worth. You can join the church choir, clean drive or engage in any social or volunteer work that can increase your feeling of self worth.

4. Examine the alternatives. One of

the differences between a happy and an unhappy person is that the former choose to have fun! Options are endless; it's just a matter of choice. Cultivating friends, increasing fun filled activities and just talking to a neighbor can lead to happiness when done with a light heart and happy disposition. There is also a study that persons who use computers are less likely to be sad than those people who don't. (Don't ask me why!).

5. Nurture your spiritual self. Having a spiritual life and a healthy respect for the world around you, can lead to contentment, and serenity which can all lead to happiness. Relationships can be nurtured, new friends can be welcomed and arguments will be lessened.

Happiness is a state of mind; it starts within one's own self. A wife can choose to have a happy married life or ruin it by thinking about future problems that may not occur. Decide to be happy now because the future is yet to come. As Abraham Lincoln puts it, "You are as happy as you make up your mind to be." With a little mutual work happy relationships are achievable.

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INNER HEALTH

Charisma: What is it? What will it do for you?

By Tony Alessandra, CSP, CPAE

Charisma is easy to spot but hard to describe. Nailing down a definition is like trying to define America. And the effort is made more frustrating because we all tend to overuse the term, lavishing it indiscriminately on insolent athletes, glamorous film stars, and fanatic cultists, as well as on genuinely enchanting and inspirational personalities like, say, John F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Princess Diana.

Here's my definition: Charisma is the ability to influence others positively by connecting with them physically, emotionally, and intellectually.

I'm convinced that, popular wisdom to the contrary, charisma is not in your genes-and it's not beyond your grasp. You already have charisma, but it's not configured the same way in you as it is in the person next to you.

Think of it this way: Each of our personalities consists, let's say, of a series of containers, like cups or glasses. If all the glasses were filled to the top, you'd be so charismatic people would think you were a god-and you'd probably think so, too. Some really, really gifted people may come close to this ideal. But, for most of us, some of the glasses are nearly empty, some brimming, yet others are partially filled to varying degrees.

Together they constitute our charisma, or at least our potential charisma. Still, I've wanted to be able to describe charisma more concretely. So I've thought a lot about it, done applied research and formed some opinions. I've also studied

the literature, going back decades, and compared the conclusions of scholars with my own observations.

Though the results may not be strictly scientific, I've sought to reduce charisma to its bedrock. What I've come up with are seven qualities that I'm convinced are at its core.

Here's how I see those seven main components of charisma or, the "glasses," if you will:

• **Your silent messages:** You make a

“Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better.”

-Bill Bradley

statement about yourself even before you open your mouth. This is your "silent message." It's the way you carry yourself, physically, emotionally, and intellectually.

• **Your ability to speak well:** You may have a terrific idea, but who will know if you can't articulate it?

• **Your listening skills:** Rarely taught and infrequently practiced, listening is nonetheless a key to communicating and making others feel special in your presence.

• **Your persuasiveness:** This is your

skill at motivating others to follow your lead or adopt your idea. No idea, however great, ever gets anywhere until it's adopted.

• **Your time and territory smarts:** How you honor or violate another person's personal space and time will affect the amount of tension or trust between you.

• **Your adaptability:** Building bridges to others is impossible without understanding how to treat others the way they would like to be treated.

• **Your vision:** What do you feel passionately about? What do you care really deeply about? Whatever your objective, you'll never influence anyone to change their ideas or take action if you don't feel strongly about it yourself.

You can apply these seven elements of charisma to your personal life, your job, or in any setting where the ability to influence others positively is beneficial. And the wonderful thing about charisma is that it makes you powerful without making others less so. That's because the kind of power I'm talking about is personal power, rather than position power, the kind of power that doesn't take power away from others, but gives you and them the power to achieve favorable outcomes.

The potential to be more charismatic is within you. And the payoff for doing so has never been higher.

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