

THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

# Feeding Forward for Effective Feedback



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THE CAREER RESET

# Make Feedback A Priority



Feedback has a big impact on performance. The feedback you receive, the feedback you give others and the feedback you give yourself.

We don't talk a lot about feedback when it comes to performance. I don't remember ever being trained to give feedback or to receive it. I got a lot of feedback on *how I gave feedback* - but it was more don't do this/don't do that.

Learning to effectively give feedback is critically important. It's how we communicate every day. We're always discussing how the team did, or someone on the team did, or what your boss said to you, or what you said to someone else, or what you say to yourself.

If you want to transform your performance, you must learn the art of getting the feedback you need, deciding what you make the feedback of others mean to you and monitoring the feedback you give yourself

***Learning to give and get feedback that inspires productive action is a critical skill that is often overlooked.***

And as a leader, if you want to transform the performance of others, you must learn to see and focus on their potential - point it out to them, and help them reflect on where they want to grow.

Learning to give and get feedback that inspires productive action, is a critical skill that is often overlooked.

This content will change how you show up as a leader and a collaborator in your career.

# How to Give Effective Feedback



Giving feedback is an art. Like a Michaelangelo. I'm not saying it's as hard as painting the Sistine chapel, but giving feedback definitely takes skill and practice.

Effective feedback is well thought out and has focus and purpose.

Unfortunately, most people's feedback is a little more like finger painting, where you just throw paint down and swirl it around and hope it works out.

Which of course, it rarely does.

### **WHAT ARE YOU REALLY TRYING TO ACHIEVE BY GIVING THIS FEEDBACK?**

The very first thing I invite you to think about is what are you really trying to achieve by giving this feedback?

Are you trying to help someone grow and learn and improve their results?

Or are you trying to get something off your chest and move onto the next thing?

Be honest.

It's impossible to do both. One is thinking about YOU and what you need to do. The other is thinking about *what the other person needs*.

When you think about getting something checked off your list, or off your chest and then moving onto the next thing, the resulting emotion is often impatience. Stress. Anxiety. Frustration. You don't want to do it. You think it's going to be hard.

When you really sit down and think *I want to help this person grow and learn and ultimately get improved results*, you're automatically thinking about what THEY need. Not what YOU need. And the emotion generated from that is more generous and patient and thoughtful.

So first, think about what you're trying to achieve by giving this feedback.

### **FOCUS ON WHAT'S WORKING VS. WHAT'S MISSING.**

Second, it's about rewiring your brain as a leader to focus on what's working vs. what's missing.

How people think is at the core of their performance. You know this to be true because you know it's true for you.

You see this in the model.

How you think drives your performance.

How you think drives your feelings and actions and ultimately creates your results.

You can't control how other people think, but as a leader, you can offer them feedback that inspires them to create more productive thoughts.

Criticism rarely works.

The vast majority of criticism has a negative impact. And the obvious reason is that very rarely does someone take criticism well.

By offering constructive feedback and focusing on WHAT'S WORKING, this disrupts the feedback receivers instinct to criticize themselves and helps them focus on new, more generous thoughts about themselves

So it's more effective to notice what people do well.

Acknowledge their accomplishments.

This means you're going to have to actually watch for what they do well. Practice seeing it.

We are so programmed to focus on what's missing or what's wrong.

And that's normal. That's a protective instinct that we needed when we lived in caves because without the protective instinct, we wouldn't have survived.

But we don't need that instinct anymore.

It's time to evolve and train our brains to focus on what's working. And it just takes practice.

Start by giving yourself positive feedback every day.

It all starts with you.

How you feel about yourself is an indicator of how you treat others.

Establishing a new pattern for yourself of noticing what's working will start to go beyond you and spread to you noticing what's working in everything and everyone around you.

And then you start setting the tone. You start being the example.

Extend your 'what's working attitude, and, point out what other people are doing well. It might be a colleague or a report or a boss. If you know that they are trying to change a specific behaviour. Help them by pointing out what they're doing right.

Give them honest and sincere feedback of WHAT they did and WHY you thought it was great work on their part.

Don't just say 'great work'.

That's way too general. It won't have the impact you're looking for.

Really think about the what and why behind your feedback. That extra thought and sincerity will go a long way.

***The vast majority of criticism has a negative impact. And the obvious reason is that very rarely does someone take criticism well.***

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Now if you're already thinking...

*"But wait! This is the real world, lady! People make mistakes, and how's anybody gonna learn anything if I don't show them what they did wrong and how to do it right the next time?"*

There's so much going on in a sentence like that.

When you say *people make mistakes* and *what they did wrong*, that indicates that your perspective on the failure of others is that their failure is bad or wrong.

That there should be shame in that.

That they should be disappointed in themselves.

That you must *point it out TO THEM* for them to be able to learn and grow for next time.

I understand that seems like the most direct line.

But if your goal is to create new, more productive behaviours in people, then criticism and shame is not going to work.

How well does it work for you?

What if you changed the question from *How will people learn if they don't see what they did wrong?*

What if you switched that up to be ***How can I help people stop and take learning from what they're doing so they're constantly improving.***

What would you think and do differently in each of those questions? What type of thoughts do each of those questions generate?

Some leaders see their job as achieving the company's objectives by teaching people how to do things and then making sure they do it and minimizing the possibility of anyone doing anything "wrong".

***Our job as leaders is to inspire people to reach their full potential on their own so that they can deliver the best results.***

Some people even think that includes scaring people into being terrified to make a mistake so that they take extra care.

I've done that in my life.

Not proud of it. But it was how I was trained. I was trained through fear.

But the truth is that people are already their own worst critics - they don't need you to beat the crap out of them. They will do that themselves.

Think about how effective it is when YOU beat the crap out of yourself. Look at your models. Think about how your unproductive thoughts impact you.

Our job as leaders is to inspire people to reach their full potential on their own so that they can deliver the best results.

**Focus on accentuating the positive in people.**

They won't become complacent.

They will become inspired.

**If you treat someone as they *aspire* to be, that's how they'll show up more often.**

So - you'll notice that the first two pieces of the work on feedback is mental. It's about training and prepping your brain for giving effective feedback.

It's about creating new habits and brain patterns about how you see the potential in others and yourself.

## The Framework of a Constructive Feedback Conversation



There is a brilliant book called *Quiet Leadership* by David Rock.

His philosophy on leadership aligns with the work you're doing with the Self-Reset Model. And I've embedded many of his ideas into this month's work.

When it comes to having feedback conversations, what I really love about David Rock's philosophy is it's largely about TEACHING PEOPLE TO SEE their performance for themselves.

When people come up with their own insights and solutions, the impact is magnified.

Encourage people to see the learning for themselves, recognize the growth opportunity, decide on a plan forward and who's help they want along the way.

And this isn't just for feedback on *sub-par* performance. It's also an opportunity when you're giving positive feedback.

As a leader, you can make every piece of feedback an opportunity for people to reflect.

Let's start with giving POSITIVE FEEDBACK.

## THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

I want to share a couple of ways you can give positive feedback.

First you can GIVE GENEROUS FEEDBACK in a less formal way. This is **IN THE MOMENT FEEDBACK**. It's something that you do in the first possible moment after you see it happening.

It doesn't always make sense to have a formal dialogue about EVERY piece of feedback, but it's still possible to offer positive generous feedback.

Here are the steps to give *IN THE MOMENT* feedback.

1. Done in the moment
2. Share **WHAT** you noticed
3. Share **WHY** you thought it was effective performance

As an example;

*Sharon, I wanted to tell you that your presentation had a lot of impact (WHAT). You were able to clearly set up what you wanted the audience to take away, you laid out every point, and in the end, you proved your point powerfully (WHY).*

*Well done.*

Always be on the look-out for giving genuine and generous feedback. Remember, treat people as they *aspire* to be, and that's how they'll show up more often.

The second way to give positive feedback is a more formal process. This is something you can do when you're aware of someone's growth goals.

### **STEP 1: ASK FOR PERMISSION**

Before you start, ask the person if you can give them feedback. This is a great way to open the dialogue, plus it allows the feedback receiver to prepare themselves and take accountability for agreeing to receive the feedback.

### **STEP 2: GIVE GENEROUS RECOGNITION**

Share **WHAT** you noticed and **WHY** you thought it was effective performance.

### **STEP 3: INSPIRE INSIGHT**

The goal is for the person to acknowledge and share which skills they used or developed on this project/initiative, etc. It gives them an opportunity to reflect on 'what's working'.

You can ask questions such as;

*What were the critical skills you used to drive this success?*

*What challenges did you overcome to achieve this 'success' and what did you do to overcome it?*

#### STEP 4: OFFER SUPPORT

If it feels appropriate, offer your support. This works best if this is a new skill someone is developing, or if they have identified ways that they'd like to make their approach even stronger.

Ask them if there is anything you can do to help them achieve their goal? If they are unsure, let them know they can always ask if they think of something. And you can always offer to let them know when you notice them doing *'it right.'*

## How to Give Feedback When Someone is Not Operating At Their Best



When giving feedback to someone who's not operating at their best, the steps are similar with a few nuances.

Before you even start the conversation, I invite you to ground yourself in an intentional model to get focused on the purpose and your frame of mind for the discussion.

The more constructive you can make the conversation the better.

Focusing on what's not working is going to cause disappointing thoughts about themselves ... anger at themselves... anger at YOU ... potentially resentment.

None of that is going to get you to the desired result of inspiring more productive results.

So the flow is similar with some slight nuances;

#### STEP 1: SET THE TONE

Ask for permission to give the feedback and if they're comfortable talking about this (*again, it's about setting the groundwork for accountability*). Secondly, you want to let them know they are safe. When people feel safe, they listen with an open-mind. So think about what you need to tell them to feel safe.

- » *There's nothing to be concerned about*
- » *Your job's not in jeopardy*
- » *I'm here to help you get the results you want/fulfill your potential and offer my support*

## STEP 2: ASK THEM TO RATE THEMSELVES

Tell them the project you want to talk about and ask them to rate their own performance on the project or situation you're talking about. Get them to rate it on a scale of 1-10.

## STEP 3: SHARE THEIR OWN INSIGHT:

Ask them why they rated themselves that way.

Listen to their feedback. Ask them what they would do differently next time. Keep the feedback forward-looking.

Marshall Goldsmith has a concept called *FEEDFORWARD*. Instead of discussing an issue based on what happened in the past, it's about focusing on the change you want to see moving forward, and exploring ways to make that possible.

## STEP 4: OFFER YOUR SUPPORT:

You can *ask* them how you can help them. You don't have to *tell them* how you'll help them.

*Ask them to tell you.* Let them make the decision.

If they're not sure in that moment, you can ask them to get back to you at a specific time. And if they suggest something - start with that. Even if you think you have a better idea, your support can evolve for them over time. Be patient and let them take the lead.

Now, it can sometimes happen that your employee isn't really recognizing the opportunity. Perhaps their rating is completely out of sync with where you are.

If that happens, what can you do in that moment?

When this happens the instinct is to help them see by pointing out what went wrong. Or even *what they did wrong*.

But I invite you to stay curious.

Listen to why they rated themselves a certain way. And ask more questions. Keep it forward-looking.

You can also bring it back to the objective

*e.g. the objective of the project was to get the product rolled out by a certain date. We missed that date by 3 weeks. As the leader of the project, what do you think we need to do differently next time to stay on track.*

You might be surprised.

Even though you think that the growth opportunity lies with the person, you may find that the growth opportunity is also in the system or in the objective itself. Or even in your leadership style.

Try not to assume.

Stay open-minded, supportive, curious and forward-looking.

## Getting Feedback to Improve Your Own Performance



Let's shift gears here and talk about *getting feedback* to improve our own performance.

Just because you're really focused on being thoughtful about giving feedback doesn't mean everyone is.

Your boss may not be so skilled at it.

We are not all blessed with fantastic bosses who are trained, brilliant leaders.

In fact, most bosses have a lot of bad habits that they learned from other bosses or cultures that had bad habits.

It's important to remember that your boss is doing the best they can.

Be compassionate. We're all working on 'stuff'.

That being said, you don't have to wait around for your boss to take the leadership role in giving you feedback or even noticing how you're progressing. You might have a boss that doesn't know how to give effective feedback.

You can help them with this.

Your success is not in your boss's hands. Your success is in YOUR hands.

Everything we talked about when *giving* feedback, can be turned around and used as part of *getting* feedback.

You can accentuate the positive **OF YOURSELF** with YOUR BOSS (*or whomever you're asking for feedback*). You can set up time to sit with them and point out what you're doing well, in relation to your growth objectives.

Tell them you want to sit down with them to share some feedback about your own performance.

## THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Share what you believe demonstrated an example of what you're doing well and how you're growing towards your objective.

And then listen.

Your boss may add valuable insight .

They may agree that you're doing well. They may not agree with your assessment.

Either way - listen to what they have to say. Stay curious.

If they don't offer feedback, ask them what they think went well in the scenario you shared, and how you can continue to improve in the future.

Ask them for help.

You can ask them for specific help. Instead of waiting for them to say 'where can I help you reach your goal', ask them specifically for the help you need.

You can ask them to point out when you're doing something well.

Instigate the support you need.

The more consistently you instigate the recognition and ask for help, the more they will notice you.

It may feel awkward at first, but the more you do it, the easier it will get. Ultimately, your boss will appreciate the discussions because you're making their life easier by driving your own performance growth.

All they have to do is add value to help you to continue to grow.

It's genius.

You're getting the feedback you need.

You're reinforcing your performance and growth.

You're getting your boss to help you notice your performance and growth.

And you're getting them engaged in your career.

You are taking control!

# The Exercises







## THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Do an unintentional Self-Reset Model (SRM) with the following circumstance: I focus on what's working in my performance.

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If you want different results, do an intentional SRM with the same circumstance.

*Note: different results can mean getting to neutral, thinking productively, or stretching yourself to think even more productively than you already are*

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## DAY 4: POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Go back to page 7 and remind yourself of the difference between *'in the moment'* positive feedback and *'formal'* positive feedback.

Based on real examples over the last few days, plan a mock example of each kind of feedback.

Here are some examples of how you can reinforce positive behaviour and performance..

**Appreciation:** I really appreciate that you (are trying to/are giving so much effort to/are doing a great job at...)

**Validation:** I can see that you (are trying to/are getting better at/are improving in...)

**Recognition:** It's clear you are ... I noticed that you ...

**Thanking:** Thanks for ... because it ....

### IN THE MOMENT POSITIVE FEEDBACK

PICK THE TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

SHARE WHAT YOU NOTICED (Recognition):

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SHARE WHY YOU THOUGHT IT WAS EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE (Rationale):

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## DAY 5-11: PRACTICE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

For the next 7 days, give two pieces of positive feedback a day; one to someone else and one to yourself

### DAY 5

#### FOR YOURSELF:

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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#### FOR SOMEONE ELSE:

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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### DAY 6

#### FOR YOURSELF:

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**DAY 7**

**FOR YOURSELF:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**DAY 8**

**FOR YOURSELF:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

RECOGNITION:

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**DAY**

**FOR YOURSELF:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

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**DAY 10**

**FOR YOURSELF:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**DAY 11**

**FOR YOURSELF:**

RECOGNITION:

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RATIONALE:

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**FOR SOMEONE ELSE:**

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## DAY 12: PRACTICE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Plan a feedback session with someone who's done a great job. You can refresh your memory on this process starting on page 7.

Before you start, do an intentional feedback model to focus your purpose for the feedback. Remember it's best to make it about them, and not about you.

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THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Plan your feedback

NAME THE PERSON \_\_\_\_\_

HOW WILL YOU ASK FOR PERMISSION?

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WHAT RECOGNITION DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?

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PLAN SOME QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE INSIGHT FROM THE PERSON GETTING THE FEEDBACK.

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HOW WILL YOU OFFER YOUR SUPPORT?

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## DAY 13: PRACTICE POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Using yesterday's format, pretend you were having that same conversation with yourself? How would that go?

Plan your feedback

WHAT RECOGNITION DO YOU WANT TO SHARE?

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PLAN SOME QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE INSIGHT FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING ON WHAT YOU DID TO IMPROVE/WHAT YOU LEARNED.

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HOW WILL YOU GIVE YOURSELF SUPPORT? WHO WILL YOU ASK FOR SUPPORT?

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## DAY 14: PRACTICE HELPING PEOPLE REACH THEIR BEST

Plan a formal feedback session with someone who hasn't performed at their best. Refer to the format on Page 8.

Before you start, do an intentional feedback model to focus your purpose for the feedback. Remember it's best to make it about them, and not about you.

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Plan your feedback

NAME THE PERSON 

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HOW WILL YOU ASK FOR PERMISSION + SET THE TONE FOR THE MEETING?

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NAME TO TOPIC YOU WANT TO DISCUSS AND ASK THE PERSON TO RATE THEIR PERFORMANCE.

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WHAT QUESTIONS WILL YOU USE TO ASK FOR INSIGHT INTO THEIR RATING? At some point ask them what they would do differently next time. Keep the feedback forward-looking.

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HOW WILL YOU OFFER YOUR SUPPORT?

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PLAN YOUR FEEDBACK SESSION FOR REAL. AFTER THE MEETING, GIVE YOURSELF FEEDBACK ON HOW THE SESSION WENT.

## DAY 15: GETTING FEEDBACK FOR YOURSELF

Plan a feedback session with your boss to share your performance (or choose someone else). Set up time for a coffee or meeting where you can have a formal discussion.

It's important to remember that you can not control the reaction of others. Even though your intention is to demonstrate your progress on a development opportunity, your boss may not share your perspective.

That's ok. Or it can be if you want it to be :-)

The intention can be to start a dialogue with your boss on your growth, get their feedback and engagement and have more input into the perspective on your performance.

When you go into this conversation, I invite you to stay curious about your boss' feedback, and ask questions. It is quite possible that your boss has insight that you may not have considered. Listen for the potential in what they are saying.

In the end, it's up to you what feedback you believe is valuable, and where you want to go from here.

## THE GOAL MINE | FEEDING FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Do an intentional SRM prior to planning this session.

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### PLAN THE CONVERSATION

I wanted to share my feedback on *(insert development opportunity)* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and get your feedback.

Plan the recognition. Briefly share the situation, then your actions and why you believe it demonstrates your progress.

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### YOUR ACTIONS

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YOUR RATIONALE

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Then ask your boss for their insight. Encourage them to 'feed forward' based on how you ask the question. You can say something like;

*I'd be interested in your thoughts. Where do you think I did well in this scenario, and where do you think I can continue to move forward?*

Even if they share past situations and 'mistakes', you can listen with curiosity and then steer the conversation to the future.

You can share ideas on how to move forward from here.

GET SUPPORT: Your boss may ask how they can help. If they don't, ask them for help, e.g. Would you be open to helping me with this?

I offer you the idea to ask them to help you by pointing out when you're getting it right.

By doing this, you're asking for the encouragement you need PLUS you're getting your boss to focus on what's working in your performance.

WHAT SUPPORT DO YOU WANT FROM YOUR BOSS:

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