

EXCELLENCE *in* ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

*By the National Center for Principled Leadership & Research Ethics
at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

based on the work of C. K. Gunsalus

photo: [Jeremy Thomas](#)

design: Aaron Robinson



Homework

1. Consider interactions you have that you now see as negotiations: what can you do to improve your preparation for these conversations? Record them in your journal.
2. Send us topics of difficult conversations around feedback you find challenging (this session is about giving and receiving feedback).

An overhead photograph of two people sitting at a round, reddish-brown table. The person on the left is wearing a light-colored jacket and is looking at a document on the table. The person on the right is wearing a dark sweater and glasses, looking down at their hands. On the table are two coffee cups on saucers, a blue folder, and some papers. The background is a speckled floor. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue and green gradient.

Giving Feedback

2x3
Points

What characterizes times when you received feedback that were good experiences?

1.

2.

3.

The bad experiences?

1.

2.

3.

Frame Your Feedback for Growth

“In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, oh, I’m going to reveal my weaknesses, you say, wow, here’s a chance to grow.”



Carol Dweck, Mindset: The New Psychology of Success, Random House, 2006.



Leigh, a member of staff, runs into the department head, Ken, in the break room and asks about her performance review.

What did you see?



Good



Bad



How can he **improve** his
feedback?

Kinds of Feedback



Appreciation



Coaching









Evaluation

Are you having the right conversation?

Thank You for the Feedback, Chapter 2

Feedback Best Practices

-  Appropriate time and place
-  Focused, factual, calm
-  About specific conduct, behavior
-  Effects: on others, on success
-  Solicits the other person's views
-  Clear takeaway message/s



Two-Minute Challenge

You have an upcoming review with Professor Skogland, a long-time colleague and friend. His teaching evaluations continue to be very low. Issues include not answering emails, being slow to return graded exams, and a perceived disdain for teaching. One recurring complaint is exams given before students receive grades/feedback from the one before.

You know that this issue is not new, as he's talked to you—before you assumed your current position—about it. He believes student evaluations should be discounted, as his teaching is “old school” and not in the trendy “friend of the student” mode, which he believes is undermining quality standards.

You know that your friend has experienced disruptions in his personal life that may have caused him to get off track. However, you're now in a position where you must meet with him and give him feedback.

6 Questions

Decision-Making
Framework



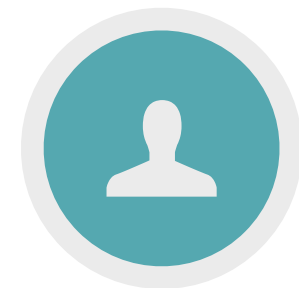
What are the issues?



What policies or rules apply?



What questions or data do you need?



What are your resources?



What are your options?

Who is affected by each?



What action will you take?

What (*exact*) words will you use?



Personal Scripts

Words you have prepared,
in advance, and practiced,
for predictable situations.



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Constructing Personal Scripts—Difficult Conversations

- 1 Soft opening: set tone
- 2 Leave time and conversational opening for response
- 3 Leave room for a misunderstanding
- 4 Use low-key language
- 5 Stay factual
- 6 Use “I” not “you” messages
- 7 Ask questions, ask questions, ask questions!
(listen to answers)



Some Useful Scripts for Giving Feedback

coaching

"...before I provide feedback, share with me how you think this went/ what you think about [the document]..."

"I want you to be successful here. I have noticed two behaviors/concerns that I believe are holding you back. They are X and Y..."

coaching/
evaluation

evaluation

"I have some concerns to discuss. Do you have time right now, or later today at 2 pm, to begin work on that concern?"

"Tomorrow I can talk to you about a number of things you do here that are working well. Today I want to discuss the one area of your teaching/service that seems to be overriding that right now."

evaluation

More Useful Scripts

"I am interested in your success. It is my duty to share a candid evaluation with you so you can assess and adjust going forward."

"I'm not comfortable discussing that."

"Let's agree to disagree for now and both go have a good think about this. Let's try again tomorrow."

"I hear what you're saying and I respect how strongly you feel."

When Someone Disputes All You Say....

"As I said, on Tuesday the students reported that you did not come to class for 25 minutes."

"Let's look again at this documentation from our previous meetings and the information since that time."

"The next steps are yours. My duty is to submit my recommendation. I hope you will take this information on and modify your behavior."

"I hear that you disagree. You are welcome to submit an appeal per the process."

Concepts, Phrases to Excise

*"You have to understand..."
or "You need to..."*

*"You'll just have to trust
me on this."*

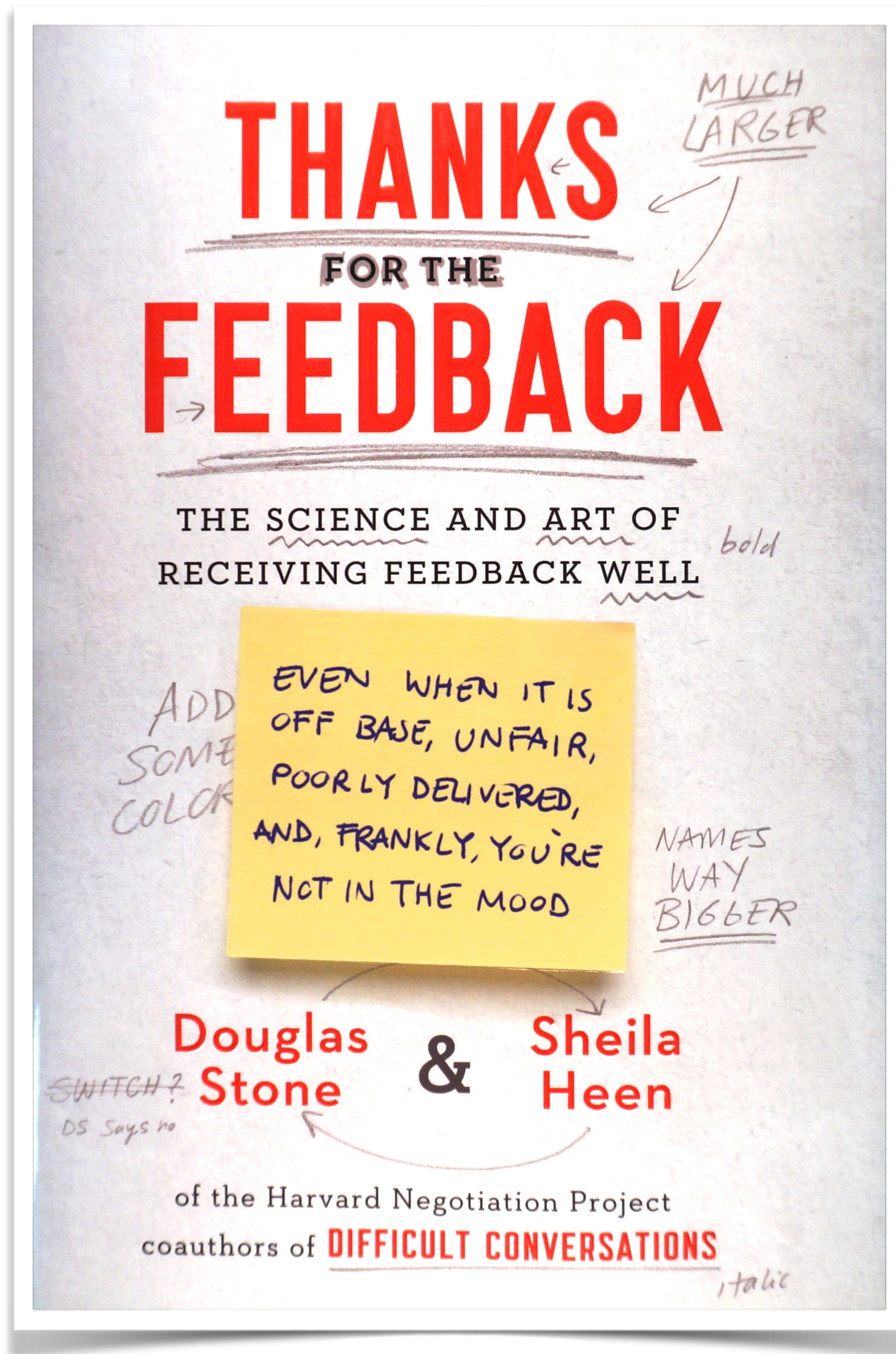
*"I regret that you are
unhappy with my
decision."*

*"This is as hard for me
as it is for you."*

Giving Feedback



Receiving Feedback



Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset



Is this feedback reliable and useful?



Is it *helpful*?



Is it about the *work*? Or is it about...?

Conflicting Desires in Receiving Feedback



Growth Mindset



Fixed Mindset

You Are the Recipient

- ★ Be prepared: how do I usually react? (Control it!)
- ↔ Separate two key aspects:
 - ▶ feelings or the “story” (what are you thinking?)
 - ▶ what is the actual feedback?
- 💬 Prepare and practice personal scripts

Scripts for Receiving Feedback

it's correct

"I really appreciate you taking the time and effort to tell me. Thank you."

"Thank you for the feedback; I appreciate that you shared it. For a range of reasons, this is not a direction I will be going."

it's inaccurate or uninformed

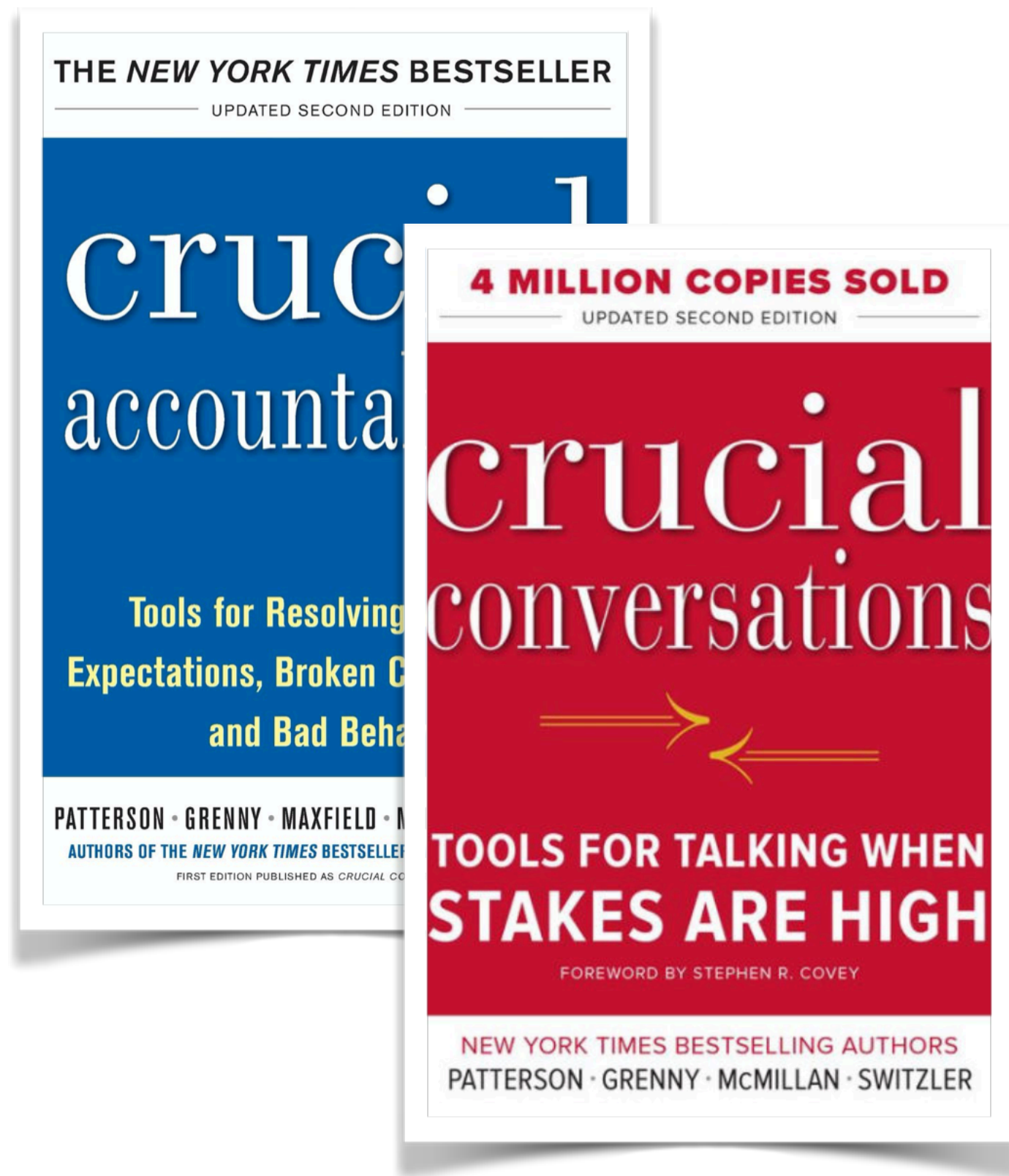
it's not helping; seeking coaching, not evaluation





"How can I do Y better? Telling me that X isn't going well doesn't advance the goal of improving on Y."

"That must have taken some courage for you to share. I appreciate that you were willing to do that."




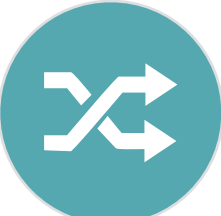


it's hard to hear and did take courage (right or wrong)

Two More Useful Resources...



-  Stay focused
-  Control yourself
-  Control your stories
-  STATE (share facts; tell your story; ask for others' paths; talk tentatively; encourage testing)

Feedback Best Practices

-  Appropriate time and place
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Performance Feedback

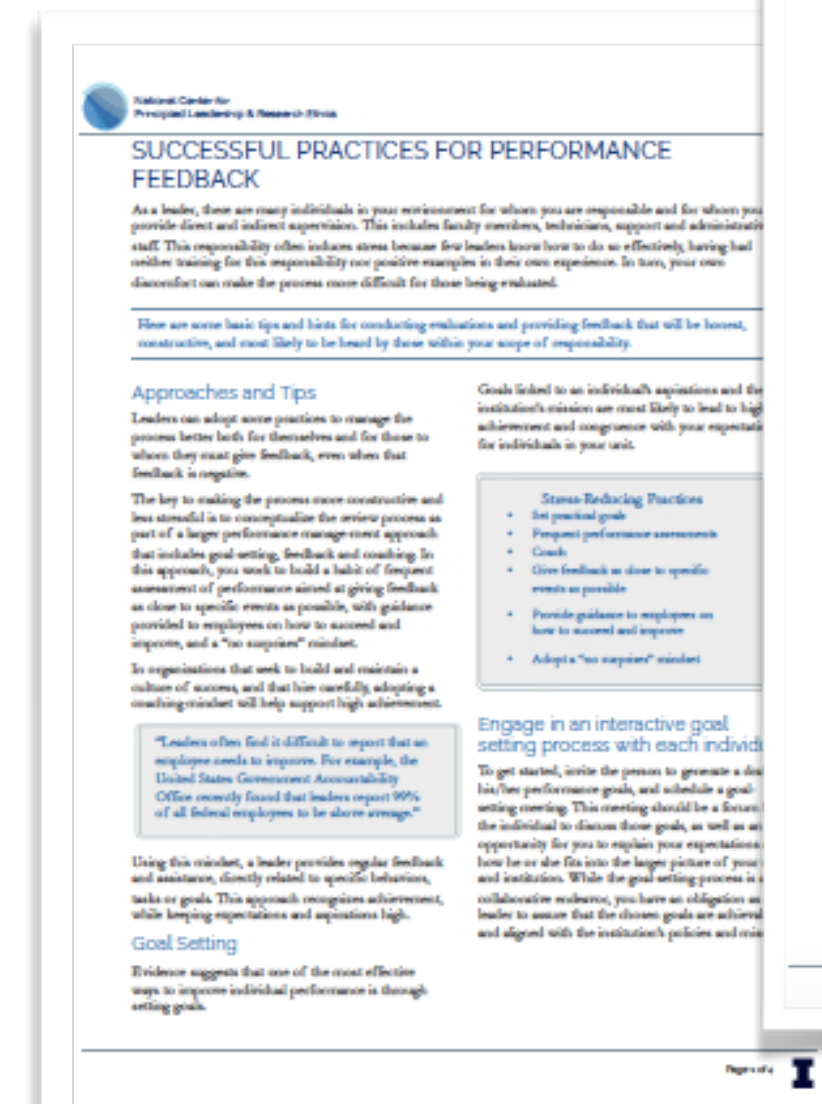
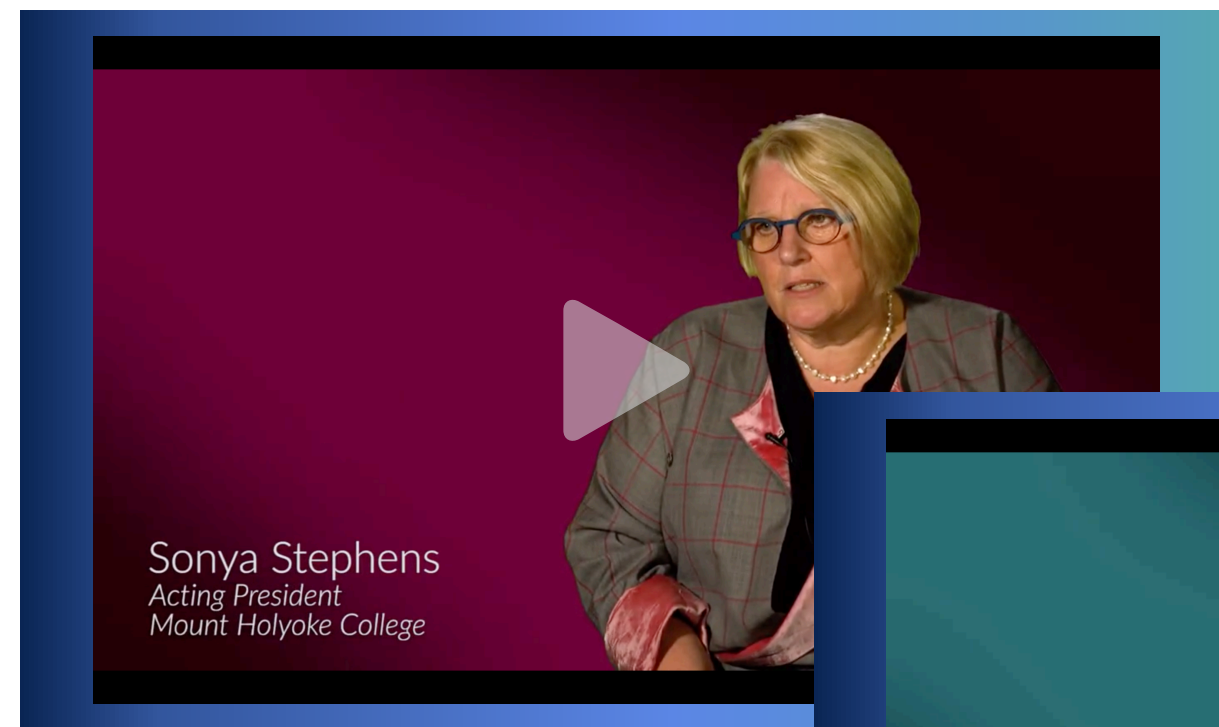
1. Kindness matters.
2. Be prepared.
3. Know your role.
4. This is not the moment for diplomatic euphemisms.
5. Check for understanding.



See also: Executive Briefing on Successful Practices for Performance Feedback

NCPRE Leadership Collection

Maintaining Processes for Managing Careers



Questions or concerns?

Key takeaways?



1. Use your Critical Friends to work on difficult feedback situations, whether giving or receiving. (Feedback is a gift.)
2. Reflect on skills learned so far: practice them! Make notes about their usage in journal.
3. Revisit the Professor Major video; we will open next session with a discussion of the scenario.