



Why Leaders Need Feedback

October 28, 2016—Vol. 10, No. 44

We typically do our annual review/evaluation process sometime in the late summer or early fall months. I don't know many folks who necessarily look forward to this process and some probably view it as more of a mandatory and uncomfortable exercise. It certainly can be unnerving to have someone else offer honest, unfiltered feedback about the work one does.

While I can relate to some of those same unpleasant feelings about these type of practices, I've also come to appreciate the opportunity to grow in my own self-awareness and ability as a leader. I'm convinced that leaders need regular feedback if we're to become the leaders God is calling us to be. Because of this, a part of my evaluation process involved a 360 review. Everyone who works with me here at the CGGC office was given the opportunity to give me feedback through an anonymous process that was administrated through an independent third party (the staff review committee that consists of several members of the Administrative Council).

I found the experience extremely helpful in giving me guidance as to how I need to improve as a leader and areas where I need to grow or develop my skills. It helped me understand how I'm serving our team well and areas in which I need to improve upon.

Here's why I think regular feedback is so critical.

As a leader, I need help understanding the areas where I need to continue to grow and develop.

It's funny how often we miss things that others see quite clearly. In my mind, I'm the same person physically that I was when I was 20. Everyone around me has a much more accurate perception of me on this front: they don't see a 20-year old version of Lance but rather they see me as I actually appear today (which involves more than a few extra pounds, shades of gray that weren't there before and sadly, less hair than those beautiful younger days). Every once in a while I catch a glimpse of myself as I walk by a mirror (why do department stores have so many mirrors?). In that brief moment the perspective of the mirror gives me a much more accurate view of my present state which typically leads me to ask "who is that old fat guy?"

The simple truth is that my colleagues can help me see things that I am often blind to because of my propensity to see myself in the best light. When I'm willing to get honest feedback from my coworkers, I get a clearer sense of where I need to improve or what I need to do differently to help our team function at its optimum level. They are able to bring to light certain things that are hard for me to see on my own.

As a leader, I need affirmation in the areas where I'm actually doing well. This process isn't just about the bad news that I don't like to hear. It's amazing what a word of affirmation can do to help encourage. I may think I do certain things well, but when others affirm that or confirm those things in me, it is just more meaningful or legitimate. Just as we're prone to miss some of our growth areas, I believe most of us tend to overlook or underestimate our God-given strengths and talents. We either don't see our strengths or we downplay our strengths with the idea that "anyone can do this." This is where the feedback of others is so helpful in affirming what I do well or helping me see some of the unique gifts that God has given me that can be a gift to others when used correctly.

As a leader, there's power in naming strengths or growth opportunities. It's just helps to name things. I think we all live with the idea that "nobody is perfect, including me." That's not a bad place to start, but it's not very specific. It's much more helpful to name the areas that need attention or growth. Knowing that others see that I'm not very good at offering praise or affirmation is much more directive in helping me make improvement than my honest but vague admittance that I'm not perfect. You can't address something that you haven't identified or named.

I want to encourage you today to resist the temptation to avoid receiving the feedback you need. I've watched far too many leaders wall themselves off from others and resist the evaluation and feedback that they really need. We all need others who love us enough to speak the truth to us, some of which will be affirming and life-giving and some of which will be painful and difficult to hear. I know I'm far too tempted to resist receiving feedback from others, even though I know that it will be helpful to me in my own leadership journey. I don't like hearing that I need to improve in certain areas, but I can't grow and develop if I'm not willing to hear and own the present reality of "what is" so that I can take steps toward "what should be."

It doesn't have to be a formal system of evaluation, maybe you take the first step by asking some of the folks around you to speak honestly into your life and your leadership.

I'd love to hear about your own learnings and experiences with giving or receiving feedback. Leave a comment about your own experience, how it's helped, how it could be done better or what holds you back from seeking feedback from others. Let's learn from each other.

Christ's Peace,

Lance

CGGC eNews—Vol. 10, No. 44

Special Coaching Offer from Brian Miller

One of the best things I've experienced as a leader in recent years has come from coaching - either in receiving good coaching or being trained to use coaching skills in leading others. I would encourage you to check out this special offer from Brian Miller.

An Offer From Pastor Brian Miller: (bmillier@ca-ministries.com)

Because I've noticed your leadership potential, I want to make you aware of a course I'm offering that literally changed my life. I'm a better leader and a better person because of this class. God works though me easier because I've learned the skills to help individuals and teams to move forward toward what God has for them.

This class is called Foundations of Christian Coaching. I'll be teaching this class in Monticello, IN at Faith Covenant Church of God over two full days, Monday & Tuesday, November 28-29, 2016.

Because we serve in the same tribe, the Churches of God, I'm discounting the price from \$450 to \$375. As I price other training around the country, this is a great deal! Even if you're not with the CGGC, if you get this email, use the code. We are very Kingdom minded in the CGGC!

You can register for the class at <http://coachapproachministries.org/product/cam501/>. Use the coupon code, CGGC, to get the \$75 off.

Here's the full scoop below:

If you're ready for a **major upgrade** to how you communicate, lead, and relate, consider Foundations for Christian Coaching. In this 16-hour course, you'll learn all the basics, including:

- What coaching is (and is not).
- How coaching works to create new awareness and boost positive action.
- How coaching is different from counseling, mentoring and consulting.
- Five powerful coaching models
- The six essential coaching skills, including Active Listening and Powerful Questioning
- Provides 16 hours of training that is approved by the International Coach Federation (ICF)
- Taught by professional coaches who have earned certification with the ICF and are pioneers in the field of coaching
- Integrates world-class coaching practices with sound biblical principles
- Mixture of instruction, demonstration, skills practice with feedback, and Q & A

