

This guide describes a set of practices for the giving of feedback. It also explains the online feedback system, and the feedback framework used by the facilitation program.

1.0 FEEDBACK OVERVIEW

1.1 Aspiration

The feedback framework is one of the key foundations of the project’s mission. It is grounded in the principles and practices of AR, and has a nervous system friendly design. It attempts to traverse a tricky line between safety and development. It tries to balance love with truth. It tries to balance care with just the right amount of challenge that we need to become the communicator that we want to become.

We aspire to give feedback with consent, or by invitation.

We value feedback as a force for growth.

We aspire to offer feedback within a context of care, appreciation, connection, and regulation.

We recognise that if a misunderstanding occurs, we aspire to lean into repair.

1.2 Practices for giving feedback

This aspiration is brought to life by the following set of practices:

Consent / invitation	Only offer feedback when the other person wants it.
Regulated state	Give feedback only when you are regulated enough to stay warm, grounded, and connected.
Be specific	Describe concrete behaviours or moments, not traits or generalisations.
Adopt owned framing	Use I statements, eg 'I liked' / 'I loved' rather than 'You did' / 'You were'.

Where there is express consent to offer “room for improvement” feedback, adopt these additional practices:

Express in the affirmative	Say what you would like to see, rather than what didn't work. eg "I'd love to see you..."
Critique first, praise second	Follow your 'What i would like to see you do...' with at least three 'what i liked's
Invite impact	Check by asking “How was that to hear”, and make a space for their response.
Clean up	If, as a product of this feedback, there is an upset, see the difficult conversations guide, for repair details.

Why these practices are important

The above set of practices serves to protect the project container, and to support all of its endeavours. They support the way that members individually and collectively turn their inspiration into emergent creativity.

The practice of consent exists because uninvited negative feedback often functions as discharge, not contribution. Waiting for invitation, means that suggestions for improvement protects the recipient's dignity and regulation. If they expressly and explicitly sought critique, they're signalling capacity and readiness.

We define unconstructive feedback as corrective, or dysregulated in nature, regardless of intent. This includes impact statements that are not owned, that imply someone has done something wrong, or that may not feel comfortable to hear.

Not 'staying in your lane', eg, slipping into interpreting or diagnosing motives, intentions, or personality, is up there with the more common failure modes in feedback. E.g. instead of "You weren't listening" use "I felt less connected when I didn't hear you acknowledge what I said." or better still "I am longing to hear you acknowledge what i said".

Feedback crashes also occur by neglecting to invite response. Offering feedback is only half the dance, receiving it is the other half. A check-in helps prevent misattunement. If the feedback creates distance or misunderstanding, address that before continuing.

'What i liked' goes last, because of brain research that shows that doing it first, the praise tends to get deleted by the impact of what follows. Using the syntax 'what id love to see you do is' is solution oriented and future-facing. The brain can anchor to this more easily, in a very concrete specific, what to do manner. 'What i did wrong' tells me nothing about what i might better do.

Lastly, we recognise that improving feedback is all about repeated practice.

2.0 ONLINE FEEDBACK SYSTEM

This part of the guide explains how the online feedback system works — what it's for, how to use it, and how it supports our learning and development.

2.1 Purpose

Effective feedback is one of the defining features of next generation (so-called teal) organisations. A timely abundant flow of accurate information allows interdependent parts of a system to function as a whole, at their best, and particularly to evolve and adapt to change.

The project's feedback framework is experimental, and has aspirations to being nervous system friendly.

2.2 Design principles

Accuracy: Effective feedback is accurate, frequent, timely, and specific. To allow free individual expression, results are released after the round closes.

Recipient-directed: We believe that feedback works best when it is specifically invited, or where the feedback giver first seeks the recipient's consent. Recipients have input into the question design. By joining the project we give our consent to take part in the program's online and verbal feedback systems.

Safety: Feedback sometimes hurts, and recognising the disproportionate nervous system impact of challenging feedback, we offset it with large amounts of genuine and specific appreciation. Feedback givers are identifiable, so that we are accountable for our feedback. Feedback results are only available to the people who attended the event or program.

2.3 How it works

Feedback relates to such things as practice modules, practice facilitation and pod functioning. Each project event includes a short feedback form with about 5-10 positively framed yes/no questions. The questions assess specific aspects of the practice, and represents the 'accuracy' part of the design. Therefore we invite you to see your discernment here as a gift to the recipient. There is also a text box where you can add further specific things that you liked. This is the 'give more positive feedback than negative' part of the design.

We love your attention to remembering to complete online feedback after events. This system attempts to capture qualitative capacities into quantitative data, for the purpose of informing practice development, facilitation development and pod development.

2.4 A guide to completing the online feedback

Below is an example feedback form to give you an idea. The idea here is try to be accurate. This means noticing any temptation you might have to be nice or encouraging. It means noticing whether your relationship with the person, or unrelated aspects of their nature sway your opinion (for more on this read about cognitive biases). It means noticing whether your blood sugar is low, or something about your mood is altering your perspective. As you can see, this is rather interesting.

Some people find the following process helpful:

- Ask your gut/intuition. Maybe there's some part of your body that speaks to what is a yes.
- Ask your wise mind. There is an orange question mark next to each question that when you hover over it, offers some context factors to consider.
- Try starting by ticking the obvious yes items.
- Then ask if I was to leave two boxes unticked which would best serve the targets focus in the weeks ahead.
- Then double check for any biases.
- Then lastly (because the questions are never perfect) does your overall score best reflect your sense of how ready the target is to meet 100% of their objectives, and if need be, adjust by ticking or unticking another box or two.

2.5 Heads up

We invite you to reflect on why this system can sometimes feel a bit disorienting in the beginning. First, society has some funny ideas about saying what we think. We might very well have been taught to let it all hang out (the horrors of 70s encounter groups), or conversely, to keep our thoughts to ourselves (seen and not heard).

Appreciation to some can feel foreign as well. Maybe because compliments have previously been used as a tactic to change you. The trick to getting around this is to find something, no matter how small, that you actually did like.

2.6 Example feedback form

Which of these feel like a 'yes'?

- They came prepared
- They set context
- They got us into practice early in the session
- I liked the exercises which were well structured and nervous system friendly
- They managed breakout rooms capably
- They made a real effort to reflect
- They avoided explaining and advising
- They managed time well
- They owned the role, but remained flexible
- They seemed calm and friendly

Other things I liked:

3.0 FACILITATION PROGRAM FEEDBACK

The projects facilitation program involves very extensive verbal and online feedback processes. The aim of program feedback is to highlight areas where core competence has been achieved and to gently indicate where further work may be required. In this way it informs our progress, as well as graduation readiness.

The system encourages self directed learning and development. Participants get to learn from feedback and to focus their study and practice accordingly. Each person is ultimately responsible for meeting feedback targets to ensure graduation and accreditation as a project facilitator. We recognise that trainees will traverse the program at different rates, and so participants may redo parts of the program as the need arises.

3.1 Some additional principles

Bear these points in mind:

- In the general sense of AR, we love: “Reveal and own my experience”, eg: I liked the way you did X. Instead of: X was skilful. And “When in doubt, is my share in service of connection?”
- On the program, we prefer invitation to consent. With the use of “Would you like some helpful suggestions?”, the host may feel in a difficult choice of: either accept the feedback (and potentially collapse under its weight), or decline and look avoidant. Waiting for their invitation solves this.
- We understand that specific, and genuinely enthusiastic appreciation, complete with cues of safety, is a work in progress, and which therefore requires repeated practice to master. It is precisely this practice that establishes the foundation for our capacity to give more edgy feedback.

3.2 End of session feedback

There is 20 minutes allocated at the end of each program session. It comprises three parts.

Part 1: Online feedback

Here participants have 5mins to complete a the online feedback form. This data is used to track our improvement over time, and ultimately our graduation. Therefore attendance and feedback completion are factors in how soon we graduate.

Remember that its totally normal that our scores will start low and trend upwards over the course of the program. If we were perfect at the start we could all go home. Sessions are a chance to learn by making mistakes, and we give each other that space to muddle along, try different things out, iterate and generally exercise a spirit of experimentation. You can't make an omelette without cracking a few eggs.

Part 2: Host self debrief

Having spent a little time contemplating the session, the session host is now invited to speak to:

- what they learned by hosting today
- things they might do differently next time
- things they did well

Part 3: Verbal feedback

Now that the host has themselves opened a door for feedback, finally the group is given space to share specific things that they liked. At the hosts discretion, they may invite suggestions for improvement. You should only do this if you can also hold the groups need to wind down the arc of the session, and leave with the best possible regulation, integration and collective attunement. Ending the session with a gratitude focused practice is a great way to do this.