

## Quick Tips on How to Receive Feedback Better:

Below is an excerpt from a great article about how to receive feedback better. The article was geared towards leaders, but any individual who wants to grow and learn can use this advice! – Lisa Schaufenbuel, Associate Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action.

Learning to accept feedback requires us to wrestle two conflicting human needs: the need to learn and grow and the need to be accepted as we are. It helps to understand what triggers our defensive reactions, which can block our ability to learn.

These include:

- **Truth triggers.** Do you bristle when someone offers feedback that seems unfair or untrue? If you're told you need to be more proactive and you believe you already are, for example, ask for examples of what prompted the remark instead of getting defensive.
- **Relationship triggers.** What do you think of the person giving the feedback? How do you feel she treats you? That can affect how you receive her advice. When encouraged to get feedback from another person, most people will choose someone they have a good working relationship with. However, that person might not see your rough edges. "Sometimes the best advice can come from the people who annoy you the most."
- **Identity triggers.** How do you usually respond to feedback? How upset do you become? Once you recognize a pattern, you can challenge yourself to identify distorted thinking. Instead of hearing feedback as criticism, consider it an opportunity to learn.

Three simple ways to begin to accept and learn from feedback:

- **Ask for it.** You're less likely to get defensive when you've asked for the information. But leaders should avoid asking "Do you have any feedback for me?" You'll put subordinates on the spot. "They're not sure how honest they're supposed to be." Instead, try asking "What's one thing you see me doing that gets in my own way?" Once a month, ask one person for one piece of advice. Pay attention to the themes that emerge.
- **Coach your coaches.** Let others know the best way to present advice to you.
- **Engage in small experiments.** During the feedback conversation, you don't have to decide whether to accept or reject the advice. "You just have to more deeply understand it." "That takes the pressure off the conversation." Think about it later. If you're not sure if a suggestion would work, pick some low-risk places to practice.

*Taken from the SHRM article Leaders Need Feedback Too, written by Dori Meinert 5/1/2016. The author worked with Sheila Heen, co-founder of Triad Consulting Group and co-author of Thanks for the Feedback (Viking/Penguin, 2014) to create the article.*