



Processing Negative Feedback

Criticism and critique never feel good, but constructive feedback from teachers and mentors can provide clear and direct recommendations on how to improve. Accepting it helps develop emotional IQ and prepares us for the workplace.

Stay Calm: Your first reaction will be negative, and that's natural. Let that first emotional wave die down and guard against being defensive. Imagine the feedback isn't meant for you, but for a program or a machine. Detach emotionally and sometimes physically. Take a walk, then take time to look for the positive.

Listen: Don't discount that you might have made mistakes. Being wrong is natural and even a positive thing as long as we learn from it. Focus on understanding how to improve. Repeat back essential points and comments.

Ask: If you imagine negative feedback as industry secrets or clues to success, it can change your mindset. Think of clarifying questions to ask as if a VIP were giving you insider information on how to succeed, because that's what it is!

Thank: Even if you disagree, thank your professor or mentor. This shows respect, as they have often put time and effort into analyzing and verbalizing how you could develop.

Visit: Written feedback can be difficult because it's easy to misinterpret tone. Schedule a visit with your professor or mentor to follow up on questions you have.

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