

Feeding Minds With Feedback.

The overall concept for the business model we're describing in this book is, "Find great people, bathe them in massive amounts of feedback about their work and performance – then get out of their way to let them get the job done."

They'll make the right decisions. If they don't, they – and the entire organization – can learn from their mistakes. The key is to institute this knowledge by having individuals report what they've learned to the group.

Feedback is the critical counterbalance to the autonomy enjoyed by self-directed teams. This chapter will explain in more detail the elements of the full-feedback environment as we've developed it at The Phelps Group.

There is a direct correlation between feedback and success. So, we want feedback from the same groups we depend on to help measure our movement toward our vision: our clients, our clients' customers, our peers, suppliers, community and ourselves.

Creating a Full-Feedback Environment

The tools we use to gather this feedback include:

External:

- Client survey – of our performance by main client contacts.
- CEO-to-CEO conversations to review agency performance and clients' highest needs.
- Reports on client successes/failures due to our work.
- Supplier survey – of our performance by virtually all who send us invoices
- Family forum – we share our business plan with our families
- Outside classes – teaching and taking classes

Internal:

- 360-degree survey – annual critiques for individuals by their peers/teammates
- Group survey – critiques for the agency
- The Wall – written feedback on the work
- The WallBanger – weekly snacks at The Wall for verbal feedback on our work
- The Brainbanger's Ball – a focus group/brainstorming meeting on the work
- The eBanger – using email or the intranet to solicit ideas and feedback
- The EyeBall – face-to-face, 1-to-1 feedback on the work
- The PlayGround – occasional group creative sessions of art directors, writers and others
- Spring Advance – the agency working as one group off-site for two days to set goals and action plans

Pyramids Are Tombs

- Fall Retreat – off-site event where associates develop individual performance objectives for the year.
- Monthly 1-to-1s – feedback from coaches and team leaders on progress toward an individual's objectives.
- Monday Morning Meetings – to show finished work and deliver educational minutes.
- Safe environment – to encourage candid opinions at any time.