



## Giving and Receiving Effective Feedback: Receiving Feedback

This resource is all about being on the **receiving end of feedback**.

While you may be searching for guidance on how to **GIVE better feedback**, knowing what could run through a feedback recipient’s mind can be a helpful guide to how you frame your feedback.

### How to Receive Feedback Gracefully

*(How to Accept Constructive Feedback for Growth (Without Being Defensive - LinkedIn))*

Receiving feedback can feel like a personal attack – whether it’s about how we do things or our behavior... even if that isn’t the intention. It’s easy to get defensive and react in one (or more) of the following ways:

- Minimize
- Avoid
- Counter
- Attack
- Deflect
- Invalidate
- Exaggerate
- And more...



We can feel defensive to feedback because our brains have developed over time to minimize threats and maximize rewards.

The SCARF Model highlights the triggers which can activate this threat or reward response...

### Our Threat Response: SCARF

*(Use the SCARF Model to Understand Our Individual Triggers – Child Care Technical Assistance Network)*

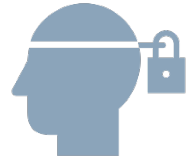
<b>S</b>	<b>Status</b> is about where you are in relation to others around you.
<b>C</b>	<b>Certainty</b> concerns being able to predict the future.
<b>A</b>	<b>Autonomy</b> provides a sense of control over events.
<b>R</b>	<b>Relatedness</b> is a sense of safety with others, of friend rather than foe.
<b>F</b>	<b>Fairness</b> is a perception of impartial and just exchanges between people.

### 3 Types of Closed-Mindedness

*(Signs Someone is Closed-Minded and 4 Ways to Handle It – Leaders.com)*

When receiving feedback, we can also become **closed-minded**.

Being **closed-minded** means having a **rigid** or **inflexible belief system** that resists new ideas, perspectives, or information. Typically, it is typically encountered in three ways:



- ❑ **Experts**
  - Feel they have all the answers.
  - Are reluctant to try new things or challenge themselves.
  - Have strongly held beliefs.
- ❑ **Conscientious Thinkers**
  - Thrive on details, information, and data to make sense of their world view.
  - Take great pride in their past work.
  - Respond sharply to criticism of it.
- ❑ **Attainment Focused**
  - Looks to see what they are getting out of a situation or what is in it for them.

## What to Do Instead

*(Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 2 – Intentional Leaders, LLC)*

When we recognize that we are experiencing a SCARF threat response, or closed mindedness, we can take these steps to help:



- ❑ **Take a Breath (aka take a Pause)**
  - Breathing and pausing allows you to respond rather than react.
  - This is a choice that must be made deliberately.
  - Pauses can be seconds, minutes, or a day.
    - If you need time to process--take ownership over the timeframe; set a time to follow up.
- ❑ **Notice Your Thoughts**
  - Observe your thoughts and reactions
  - Remember the SCARF model and examine what might be triggering a threat response.
- ❑ **Seek to Understand**
  - Remain calm.
  - Try to separate the content from the messenger and/or the way the message was delivered.
  - Find the nugget of truth or learning.
  - Avoid attempting to rationalize your actions.
- ❑ **Express Gratitude**
  - Feedback is a gift and those that can give and receive it have the strongest and most trusting relationships with others.
  - Be graceful and grateful for the opportunity to learn.

## Want to Learn More About Feedback?

This is the **third resource out of three** that can help you on your feedback growth journey. Scroll back up to review giving feedback, tips, and common pitfalls.

If you're still in looking for additional feedback support, reach out to [OrganizationalDevelopment@cityofmadison.com](mailto:OrganizationalDevelopment@cityofmadison.com) anytime!