

DEALING WITH CRITICISM

1. MENTAL PREPARATION

PREPARE MENTALLY FOR CRITICISM BEFORE YOU PUBLISH SOMETHING. YOU ARE SURELY PROUD OF YOUR WORK AND WANT TO SHOW IT OFF TO YOUR COLLEAGUES, BUT ASSUME THAT THERE WILL ALSO BE CRITICISM. AND WHEN YOU'RE PROUD AND HAPPY, IT'S EXTRA CONFUSING AND UNEXPECTED WHEN SOMEONE CRITICIZES YOU. SO IT DEPENDS ON YOUR STATE OF MIND. BEFORE MEETINGS, EMAILS, PHONE CALLS, ETC., PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE FACT THAT THERE MAY BE CRITICISM. BEING PREPARED FOR THIS TAKES THE TENSION OUT.

2. NO IMMEDIATE REACTION

CRITICISM ALWAYS MAKES YOU FEEL ATTACKED OR HURT. THEREFORE: TAKE YOUR TIME! DON'T SAY ANYTHING, LISTEN CAREFULLY AND LET IT HAPPEN. SPEAK WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY AND YOU WILL MAKE THE BEST SPEECH YOU WILL EVER REGRET. TREAT IT AS IF YOU ARE WATCHING A VIDEO OF FEEDBACK SPEECHES, JUST LISTEN CAREFULLY.

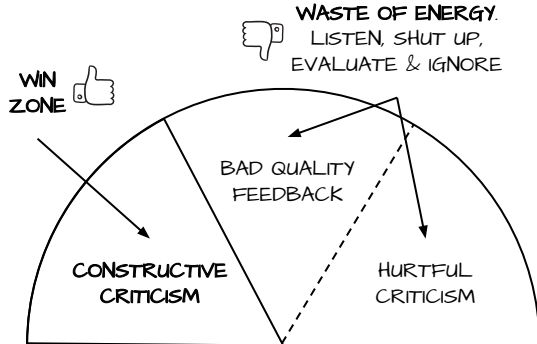
3. CLARIFICATION

ASK QUESTIONS TO CLARIFY IF YOU UNDERSTOOD CORRECTLY, IF YOU ARE ON THE SAME PAGE. MAKE SURE, YOU GOT EVERYTHING RIGHT. DO NOT DEFEND YOURSELF, JUST ASK FOR CLARIFICATION. ASK THEM FOR THEIR SOLUTION AND WHAT THEY SUGGEST INSTEAD.

4. SHOW GRATITUDE

ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL FOR THE FEEDBACK. PEOPLE WILL STOP GIVING YOU FEEDBACK AND HELPING YOU IF THE FEEDBACK PROCESS IS UNCOMFORTABLE FOR THEM BECAUSE YOU ARE DEFENDING YOURSELF INSTEAD OF RECOGNIZING THEIR EFFORTS. REMEMBER: AT THIS STAGE YOU MAY STILL BE VERY HOT-HEADED AND NOT HAVE AN OVERVIEW OF THE ACTUAL BENEFITS OF THE FEEDBACK. SO BE NICE AND SAY THANK YOU FOR THE EFFORTS.

5. FILTER OUT THE GOOD STUFF



CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

THIS KIND OF CRITICISM IS ENTIRELY JUSTIFIED AND, TO PUT IT SIMPLY: TRUE. EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES OR HAS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT. EVEN CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS HARD TO TAKE BECAUSE YOU PUT SO MUCH EFFORT IN AND IT FEELS LIKE FAILING. BUT BE SMART! DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY. OVERCOME EMOTIONS! THAT KIND OF CRITICISM IS A HELPER, A FREE ADVICE: A SHORTCUT.

BAD QUALITY FEEDBACK

OR 'NONSENSE', STUFF THAT WON'T IMPROVE ANYTHING. A LOT OF PEOPLE REALLY MEAN WELL WITH THEIR COMMENTS, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY'RE DOING YOU ANY GOOD. JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE IS NOT GOOD AT SOMETHING DOESN'T MEAN THEY CAN'T ADD THEIR TWO CENTS, RIGHT? AND THEN THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CRITICIZE JUST FOR THE SAKE OF CRITICIZING, THEY WILL ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT.

HURTFUL CRITICISM

HURTFUL CRITICISM IS FEEDBACK THAT GOES BEYOND CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTARY AND INSTEAD AIMS TO INFLICT EMOTIONAL PAIN OR DISTRESS. IT OFTEN LACKS EMPATHY AND CAN BE UNNECESSARILY HARSH, ATTACKING PERSONAL QUALITIES RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON THE SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR OR ISSUE AT HAND. AND WHERE PEOPLE INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE HUMAN PROBLEMS, SUCH AS HURTFUL CRITICISM.