



Observation and Feedback

Observation

Observing is for most people something unnatural. We are used to participate at a conversation. Sometimes we reacted without thinking. Sometimes we speak without listening. When we observe, we do the opposite. The easy thing about observing is you can only learn it by doing. The hard part is that you have to do it a lot.

Exercise for at home

You can practice by watching pictures. Take any picture out of the newspaper. Describe the surrounding. The persons, the interaction between the persons.

watching this picture? When you observe, try keeping the follow things interpret, what you feel, In other words try starting your sentences with:

I see/ I hear **Or** I interpret... **Or** I feel ...

"Wrong": it is night. Better: I see a dark environment. I interpret this as being night.

"Wrong": Person X is mad. Better: I see that person X has a strange face. I interpret that he is mad.

Extra: I feel my stomach hurts when I look at him.

This last part of the observation is an internal observation, manly important to learn more about yourself, and to understand why you react to something.

Don't ignore your feelings when you are observing. Write down what you feel and try to understand from where this is coming. Sometimes your subconscious tells you something you don't know yet.

Example: There is a section in the movie Disclosure, where Tom Sander(Michael Douglas) stops a sexual intercourse. When he listens to a recording from it, he realises that his partner was coughing at a moment this typically does not happen. That made him realize she played and planned it all. His subconscious had already noticed it, he just could not see it clear.

As an exercise it is very interesting to limit your observations.

examples:

- only listen: Observe a conversation blindfolded..
- only watch: observe the body language..(listen to music)
- Observe only the (possible) interaction between people, for example try to see who ignores the leader
- Only check if the body language is congruent with what the persons says.
- Are they toughing each other?
- What is the distance between the people?
- Are they watching each other right in the eye?
- Do they laugh a lot?
- What do you notice about the noise they make?



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Feedback

Feedback on the first level is giving back what you see, hear and feel. On the second level feedback is giving back what the behavior of the other does to you.

Example: I saw that your eyes look angry (notice that this is already an interpretation, see earlier) and your mouth was trembling (this is the first level). This anger made me level). In these two levels no evaluation occurs!

The effect of the feedback, even on the first level, is surprisingly strong. The other feels "seen" in a correct way. His existence is acknowledged much more than usually.

The second level of feedback is very relation improving: when I give back to the other what his behavior does to me, he understands what happens, and we are on our way for a real authentic relation. Even if I say really confronting things to the other, this usually enhances the relation. In a lot of situations people avoid this, because we want to "save" the other person. We are afraid to go into an authentic way in a relation.

We are showing our self vulnerable and the reaction of the other can be heavy. Real relations aren't smooth.

Feedback can be given both verbal as non-verbal. Can be positive and negative. Feedback can be given on content or relational aspects of a communication

Example: Ben works very precise and cleans up everything.

Jan gives feedback: I notice that you also watched on this and that, and that you clean up (content feedback) Your work is finished on every detail. (This is already more giving value than content and mainly relational feedback.) I experience this as very pleasant, because I can feel safe that your work is great without I have to control it.

Relational feedback on the second level: Jan tells how that makes him feels)

Feedback rule :

- I see, I hear, ... (facts)
- I interpret, think, feel... (interpret)
- I feel myself (feeling), I experience
- I wish, I hope, I want

Example "You said that the file was ok, and that is not, this and that is missing."

Remark: if you would say here "you are a liar", that is that by our definition not feedback. It is more a reproach: a reproach is partly feedback (you did this so and so), and on the other side there is a present undertone that the persons should have done it differently (a negative evaluation). Saying "you are a liar" is even more, it is an insult, a disapproval of the whole person.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=related&v=kYq2YLRJWSg>



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